

**FRUITLAND PARK CITY COMMISSION SPECIAL
MEETING MINUTES
September 21, 2018**

A special meeting of the Fruitland Park City Commission was held at the Community United Methodist Church, 309 College Avenue, Fruitland Park, Florida 34731 on Thursday, September 21, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor Chris Cheshire, Vice Mayor John L. Gunter, Jr., Commissioners Christopher Bell, and Rick Ranize.

Member Absent: Commissioner Ray Lewis

Also Present: District 1 Commissioner-Elect Pat DeGrave, District 2 Commissioner Candidates John Mobilian and Fred Collins; City Manager Gary La Venia; City Treasurer Jeannine Racine; Interim Police Chief Erik Luce, Executive Assistant Karen McKillip, Sergeant David Brown and Officer Paul Sandbakken, Police Department; Interim Fire Chief Donald Gilpin, Deputy Fire Chief Tim Yoder, Madison Leary, and Lieutenant Michael Howard, Fire Department; Public Works Director Dale Bogle, and City Clerk Esther B. Coulson.

1. CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

After Mayor Cheshire called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., Reverend John LeCain, Community United Methodist Church, gave the invocation and Interim Police Chief Luce led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

2. ROLL CALL

At Mayor Cheshire's request, Ms. Coulson called the roll and a quorum was declared present.

By unanimous consent, the city commission excused the absence of Commissioner Lewis from this evening's meeting.

Mayor Cheshire announced the decorum for this evening's meeting.

3. SPECIAL AGENDA

Mayor Cheshire gave a power-point presentation on the following:

- The six-year millage trend, FY 2018-19 Millage Rates in Lake County, the Lake County Taxing Authority, the general fund revenues for FY 2018-19, the six-year millage budget expenses trend, personnel expense, population versus recommended police officer ratio, fire assessment, general fund restricted fund balances, commercial and growth and additionally the new library's revenue and expenses. He reviewed the statistics during FY 2017-18 on programs and activities at the current Fruitland Park Library and called for the public to be heard:

After Mr. Jim Lagrone, Villages of Fruitland Park (VOFP) resident, addressed his presence to request how revenues are generated by the general funds, Mayor Cheshire welcomed the opportunity for the public to provide input and pointed out such forums previously held such as *Coffee with the Mayor* event. He anticipated this evening's meeting proceeding to continue until 9:00 p.m. and the opportunity for public to provide input.

Ms. Mary Ann Mobilian, VOFPP resident, explained the transfer of homestead exemption for property owned and occupied in Florida known as the *Save Our Homes* exemption.

In response to Mr. Lagrone's inquiry, Mayor Cheshire announced during the following item, the order of business to come before the city commission.

PUBLIC HEARING

By unanimous consent, Mayor Cheshire opened the public hearings.

(a) Resolution 2018-035 FY 2018-19 Adopted Fire Assessment Rates

After Ms. Geraci-Carver read into the record proposed Resolution 2018-035, the substance of which is as follows, Mayor Cheshire called for the public to be heard:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK, FLORIDA, RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF FIRE SERVICES THROUGHOUT THE CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK; ESTABLISHING THE ASSESSMENT RATE FOR FIRE SERVICES ASSESSMENT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2018; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
(Continued from the September 13, 2018 regular meeting.)

After discussion, **a motion was made by Vice Mayor Gunter and seconded by Commissioner Ranize that the city commission adopt Resolution 2018-035 as previously cited.**

In acknowledging the city and the VOFPP as one governmental entity and after recognizing The Villages Community Development District (VCDD) Public Safety Fire Rescue advance life support (ALS) responders, Commissioner Ranize gave an outline of the city's fire department's certified firefighter personnel, their compensation and the basic life support (BLS) services provided. He acknowledged the implementation of the city's fire assessment and described the process for ALS and fire-rescue related services with an ILA among the VCDD and the City of Leesburg where he believed that such process may no longer exist due to affordability.

Commissioner Ranize expressed preference for the fire assessment fee to be separated for the city's fire department and utilized for ad valorem. He anticipated that the new District 1 Commissioner present at evening's meeting, would work

with the city and attempt to resolve the city's ALS response time which is his concern. He stated that the city has enough funds for FY 2017-18; questioned same for FY 2018-19 and voiced the need to address said issue before the budget process.

Mayor Cheshire, in concurring with Commissioner Ranize' concerns, addressed the need for the new city commissioners to review the fire rescue services in a workshop-setting earlier in the 2019 year. He explained that with respect to taxes and fire fees, the separation of the city is used solely for illustration purposes.

Upon the request of Ms. Lynn Marsh, VOFB resident, the city commission members gave self introductions.

After Mr. Lagrone referred to page 106, line item 01522-30345, (Contractual Villages) from the August 6 and 7, 2018 FY 2018-19 proposed budget, Ms. Racine noted the typographical error and misprint identifying FY 2017-18 on the city's payment to The Villages and recognized \$166 multiplied by the 2,555 residents with 190 homes which the city is paying should read: "\$194" collected by the city.

Mr. William Edgabear, City of Fruitland Park resident, gave reasons why he believed that all city residents ought to pay equal amount for receiving the same fire service.

Mr. Don Brozick, VOFB resident, recognized the city's ILA with VCDD; outlined the distinction of shared fire services provided in The Villages in comparison to the historic area and noted the fee difference charged in Sumter County paid by the VOFB for same. He felt the city commission could consider, in future, reviewing in the historical area -- various locations in the City of Leesburg and Lake County -- the provision of a similar type of shared service at a much lower rate.

In concurring with Mr. Brozick's remarks and in response, Vice Mayor Gunter believed that with the newly elected officials, the city commission intends to review said service to which Mr. La Venia outlined the cost effectiveness of VCDD's operations; noted the problem to support operating and addressed the provision of similar services to the historic area residents recognizing that \$660 a year to be considerable.

Commissioner Ranize pointed out concerns previously raised by a resident and gave an overview of the former formulation of and recommendation from the fire services advisory committee by supermajority vote for the provision of the city's fire rescue services to be retained in-house and not transferred to the county.

Commissioner Ranize recognized that Lake County Fire Rescue (LCFR) Station 53 to be the busiest station in the county; noted that the fire truck is not at said location and indicated that LCFR Station 59 tanker truck remains at the station covering areas not served with fire rescue services. He believes it would be cheaper to retain fire rescue services in-house and voiced concerns on the management of the

firetruck in the city. Commissioner Ranize addressed the lack of guarantee from the county in that regard and mentioned the need to reexamine the issue again.

In asking for clarification, Mr. Mike Waltervitz, VOFB resident, referred to Mr. Lagrone's request for explanation; noted the response that the county charges to collect the money and indicated that the budget documents are incorrect.

At Mayor Cheshire's request, Ms. Racine referred to the details section in the proposed budget carried over from year to year; outlined the charges collected from the county and cited the correct number of 194 homes calculated by Governmental Services Group Inc., consultant retained by the city.

Ms. Eva Peterson, VOFB resident, referred to Mayor Cheshire's comments on the preference to retain the fire department; pointed out Mr. Brozick's suggestion to possibly pool the city's resources and addressed her view to approach the county first.

After discussion, **Mayor Cheshire called for a roll call vote on the motion with the city commission members voting as follows:**

Commissioner Ranize	Yes
Commissioner Bell	No
Vice Mayor Gunter	Yes
Mayor Cheshire	Yes

The motion was declared carried on a three to one (3-1) vote.

(b) First Reading and Public Hearing Resolution 2018-052 – FY 2018-019 Tentative Millage

It now being the time advertised to hold public hearing to consider the adoption of proposed Resolution 2018-052 and after Ms. Geraci-Carver read into the record the following title, Mayor Cheshire called for the public to be heard:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING A TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATE OF 3.9863 LEVYING OF AD VALOREM TAXES FOR LAKE COUNTY FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (Continued from the September 13, 2018 regular meeting.)

Mayor Cheshire announced the city's preparedness to set the tentative millage rate of 3.9863 (a 1.86 percent increase over the roll back rate of 3.9134) and that the ad valorem increase is due to increase in taxable value generated by The Villages and other developments.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Gunter and seconded by Commissioner Ranize that the city commission adopt Resolution 2018-052 as previously cited.

Mr. Gary Drake, VOFP resident, submitted a chart featuring the property tax (ad valorem) revenue from FY 2015 to 2019 and outlined concerns on the total tax revenue increases, ad valorem tax revenue, growth taxable home values and proposed millage of 3.9863 to which Mayor Cheshire interjected 1.86 percent. (A copy of the chart is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.)

Mr. Drake noted the higher millage rates with other municipalities; gave reasons why he believed the city ought to reduce its millage rate and questioned the justification for the annual increases for not further reducing the millage rate.

After Commissioner Bell explained the city's justification to keep the millage rate down noting the double increase in population, Vice Mayor Gunter addressed the need to expand the size of the police department.

Mr. Brozick clarified -- in correcting Mayor Cheshire's statements -- Lake County's millage rate being higher than Sumter County's which he stated is the distinction of their ambulance rates. In describing the amenity fees paid for by VOFP residents, Mr. Brozick outlined the services provided by the city to be high; noted other components in the budget from FY 2015 to FY 2019 that the VOFP residents did not use which the city commission ought to review and relayed the VOFP residents' questions on the reason for not reducing the millage rate.

Mr. Mike Galls, VOFP resident, gave reasons why he believed that with the continued high millage rate, it increased due to property values and inquired about the percentage of police services provided to VOFP versus the rest of the city to which Mayor Cheshire responded can be provided to him. Mr. Galls considered the costs of providing public safety services to be high which he feels the city commission ought to review and questioned how the funds are allocated.

Ms. Sally Jensen, VOFP resident, referred to her visit to the city's substation located in The Villages Moyer Recreation Center and her pursuit of a law enforcement officer. She relayed the comment that a detective is at the location for two hours; noted the funds expended for police services and questioned whether the law enforcement personnel are all in the city.

At Mayor Cheshire's request, Interim Police Chief Luce recalled the concept, when the substation opened in 2016, to have a local place for residents needing service to

report to and not for an officer to be present for extended periods during the day. He noted the process for a volunteer (stationed at the center) to call a law enforcement officer and recognized that an investigator also works at the center who would be able to meet the residents and provide needed services.

Mr. Lagrone pointed out the unassigned fund balance in the general fund from the September 30, 2017 Audited Financial Statement which revealed \$471,116 as surplus funds the city collected.

After Ms. Racine confirmed in the affirmative to Mr. Lagrone's inquiry that the contingency fund is also known as a miscellaneous account, he reviewed same in the FY 2018-19 budget within the departments and questioned reducing the millage rate.

Ms. Racine explained, in response, the recommendations from the state and the auditor for the city's fund balance to be more than the three months minimum range of operating expenditures

Mr. Lagrone referred to the September 20, 2018 newspaper article *The Villages' Newest Residents Complain About High Taxes in Fruitland Park* and quoted Mr. La Venia's statements on the additional tax dollars being devoured by other expenses.

After Ms. Racine explained that the funds coming from the \$471,116, Mr. Lagrone recognized the excess funds from FY 2017-18; noted that the financial audit is not yet complete for 2018 and questioned the United States Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) reimbursement to the city to which Mr. La Venia anticipated would be received in FY 2018-19.

For FY 2018-19, Mr. Lagrone voiced his belief that the city has excess cash which should be transferred to a reduced millage rate. He believed the \$157,301 in contingency funds ought to be more specific as well as the \$151,256 to which Mr. La Venia stated that the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) funds have not yet been dedicated.

Mr. Daniel Peterson, VOFP resident, expressed his appreciation towards the city's law enforcement for controlling the speeding traffic in the area and noted the other opportunities in utilizing the police department. With respect to Mayor Cheshire's statements on the large percentage of the budget earmarked towards public safety, he believes it does not match the amount placed; however, he expressed his willingness to pay for same. After Mr. Peterson conveyed the public's sentiments to review the expenditures of the tax dollars, he expressed gratitude for Mayor Cheshire's clarification on the 'meet and greet'. Mr. Peterson gave his understanding that The Villages are not using and placing an added burden on the city.

After Mayor Cheshire, in response, noted that there will be two members representing the VOFPP serving on the city commission in November 2018; he recognized the amount of work before the city commission and besides patrolling the city, noted the traffic increase especially on the major thoroughfares.

After Mr. Peterson voiced his gratitude on law enforcement's patrol services, Interim Police Chief Luce, in response to his inquiry, explained the city's law enforcement's responsibility for services on any state or county roads travelling through the city's jurisdiction.

Answering a question posed by Mr. Ron Abend, VOFPP resident, on the meaning of 'tentative' resolution, Ms. Geraci-Carver addressed the statutory requirements to adopt a tentative millage which is what the city commission anticipates taking action at its final hearing and recognized the opportunity between this meeting and the next public hearing to make a change on the final millage to which Mayor Cheshire noted the same venue reserved to consider same.

Mr. Marc Vandembark, VOFPP resident, referred to Mayor Cheshire's statements on the increase in population; questioned the percentage of non-homeowners utilizing the infrastructure and noted the steps taken to increase or obtain additional revenue due to the city's population.

In response, Vice Mayor Gunter recognized the population at approximately 3,800 prior to The Villages, the small increase at the older section of the city and the subsequent additional increase of 100 percent from VOFPP.

After Mr. Ray Dal Lago, VOFPP resident, relayed concerns on the land purchased by The Villages to pay for housing, Mayor Cheshire recognized that the land is owned and was purchased by the First Baptist Church (FBC) and Commissioner Bell recalled the annexation of said land, formerly a dairy farm, where the property belonged to FBC; thus, the city never received any money from same.

Ms. Rita Ranize, City of Fruitland Park resident, addressed the State of Florida's mandate for law enforcement services according to the number of law enforcement officers assigned for the mileage area. She indicated that the city did not make a request for officers when the property was purchased; mentioned that The Villages developed and predicted the need for their services and noted the current dilemma the officers experience.

Ms. Ranize recollected the former years of historical home structures which have been lost; referred to the residents' remarks at this evening's meeting on the separation of the city and the citizens of the old city's current taxes and addressed the need to maintain the roads and water and wastewater system without complaint.

Mr. Jim LeGrove conveyed the residents' remarks on the city's excessive funds where it is felt that they are not spending wisely. He referred to the

November 14, 2013 special meeting minutes regarding the city commission's decision on the purchase of electricity from the City of Leesburg and the agreement to purchase its distribution system opting for the five-year renewable term.

In response, Mayor Cheshire in clarifying Mr. Le Grove's statements, gave his unfavorable view on the method of placing the franchise fee on the bill and that he believed cities should not own their sown utilities.

After Mr. Le Grove addressed the opportunity for the city to purchase said system in 2019 and create a fund from the franchise fees collected, he questioned whether the city established a study commission, Commissioner Ranize compared The Villages' electric system with the city's antiquated system and explained the consequences if the city upgraded same and Vice Mayor Gunter recalled the city commission's previous consideration (March 22, 2007 regular meeting) to purchase the system and its action to expend funds to conduct a study which failed as it was not feasible at that time.

Mayor Cheshire pointed out the city commission's FY 2018-19 budget workshops conducted in August 2018 where all the items addressed by the public were considered. He believed that the city commission representatives from districts one and two would make the public better informed.

Ms. Peterson expressed her surprise when she moved in to The Villages that it had a ZIP code for Fruitland Park where she was paying taxes for said entity.

Mr. Edgabear expressed gratitude for law enforcement services; the elected officials' role and the city services received.

Mr. Doug French, VOFPP resident, in recognizing the increased population, gave reasons why he believed the millage rate ought to be reduced to which Mayor Cheshire explained the difference with the ad valorem from FY 2017-18 to FY 2018-19 as the same amount received which is determined by the state to be approximately \$41,000 more with the roll back rate of 3.9134.

Mr. Wyatt Spam Jr., VOFPP resident, gave reasons why he believed Mayor Cheshire did not keep this evening's meeting under control and that the decorum he announced earlier was not adhered to.

Ms. Nancy Miller, VOFPP resident, recognized the VCDD's reduced budget; noted the city's increased revenue and believed the city's millage roll-back rate ought to be reduced. She referred to previous newspaper articles relating to the city's voting districts; the change made with the at-large representation and residency requirements and the percentage of voters within the districts.

After Ms. Miller expressed concerns on the lack of current representation for the VOFP, Mayor Cheshire explained the imminent change after November 2018 where she will have a voice.

In response, Commissioner Ranize clarified by correcting Ms. Miller's statements that he represents her as the district 1 commissioner; pointed out his telephone call with her and referred to her email to him in that regard. In agreeing with her statements, he addressed how he became informed before being elected as a commissioner and addressed his attempts to do his best until Commissioner-Elect Patrick "Pat" DeGrave replaces him.

Ms. Mobilian referred to Mr. Lagrone's appearance earlier in this evening's meeting demonstrating the FYs 2015-2019 total tax revenue and ad valorem tax revenue increases. She recognized the FY 2017-18 budget hearing revealing increases in revenues and taxable values and pointed out a VOFP resident's request for a roll back rate of 3.66 which was not considered noting an increase in the millage rate was for 3.98.

Ms. Mobilian recognized the city's growth in taxable values and revenues; expressed concerns that the city's expenses did not increase due to The Villages and voiced her pleasure in being part of the city.

Mr. Ron Cullum, VOFP resident, referred to residents' questions on how the base costs or the amount of money is collected which he believed has almost doubled and the millage rate staying the same. He questioned what is planned with the extra funds.

After discussion and in response, Commissioner Ranize addressed his intent to request that Ms. Racine provide him with the funding source of \$1.6 million from The Villages of which \$880,000 is law enforcement; noted city's water and waste water treatment plant (WWTP) where \$240,000 of ad valorem was transmitted to the Town of Lady Lake, and recognized the city's debt on said plant of \$933,000 which is due to be dismantled leaving \$1.2 million.

Commissioner Ranize recognized the city commission's efforts in keeping the rates low; mentioned his review of the city's budget and referred to the email received earlier this day from Ms. Racine regarding the dollar amount difference of \$47,244 between the millage rate of 3.9863 and the rollback rate where he explained why he plans to request that the city commission vote on the rollback rate recognizing the police department to be the largest expenditure with the anticipation of taking some of the funds to help offset the cost of the fire department. (A copy of the email is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.)

Commissioner Ranize recalled, when he initially was a city commissioner, the city virtually having no funds in reserves which would be reimbursed from FEMA – recognized that the 2004 hurricane took years to recoup – and addressed his desire

for the public to have attended the city's budget workshops as there may be a need to eliminate staff positions if one goes below the roll back rate which he does not want to do.

Vice Mayor Gunter explained the purpose of the contingency funds; the potential impacts to residents homeowners' insurance rates and the franchise providers increases to the city which is transmitted to the residents. He stressed the need for the public's presence at the city commission meetings and budget workshops.

Mr. Ray Liberty, VOFP resident, recognized the increase from law enforcement due to The Villages and noted their service provided to The Villages. He recognized the 224 units in VOFP of Pine Hills and the budget hearings were issued simultaneously to the TRIM notice being issued. In referring to Mayor Cheshire's earlier presentation and the budget he has reviewed, he believes they are incomplete. Mr. Liberty explained that the increased population and assessed valuation at 100 percent at FY 2016-17, correlating an increase in property values and the city's expenditures, does not make sense to him. He requested more specifics as to why there is a variance when there is a 100 percent increase in property value and believed that with the 100 percent increase, the millage rate should not dramatically decrease.

Mayor Cheshire announced that at the next meeting, there will be a presentation in graphic form revealing where all the departmental increases have been made to which Ms. Racine indicated that a chart has already been prepared in that regard and pointed out Commissioner Ranize' statements revealing that the information he has identifies where all the increases have occurred in The Villages.

Ms. Shannon Harris, VOFP resident, gave reasons why she believed that the residents' taxes are providing 65 percent increase in the city's revenue; that the cost of their homes and taxes are high as compared to the population in the old Fruitland Park area and that she felt that they are being taken advantage of.

Mayor Cheshire recognized himself and Commissioner Ranize' previous position taken on the intent for a roll back rate; addressed the plan to have more information at the next meeting and indicated that the residents will have more representation on the commission.

In response to a question posed by Mr. Brozick, Mayor Cheshire addressed the city commission's commitment to consider a roll back rate for the next meeting.

Mr. Carl Yauk, VOFP resident, referred to the city commission's remarks on the city or the county maintenance of the roadway in VOFP to which Mayor Cheshire recognized as curb to curb.

After Mr. La Venia addressed the residents' responsibilities on the bond they pay, he explained, in response to Mr. Yauk, that the city sweepers for the streets would be considered as a topic for the city commission to consider in the future.

Mr. Marshall Smith, VOFD resident, noted the previous discussions on the city's personnel and in addition to law enforcement, he described the increased service work provided by the VCDD. He addressed his desire to invest and alluded to previous comments made on the viewing of his property which related to the increased taxes on his home.

In answering, Mayor Cheshire recognized the public's comments and the city commission's attempts to keep the rates as low as possible. With respect to the other governmental entities, he suggested that the public similarly attend their meetings.

Mayor Cheshire restated the motion on the floor to adopt Resolution 2018-052 as previously cited and recognized the intent to make an amendment.

Ms. Geraci-Carver, in response to Mayor Cheshire's inquiry, recognized the resolution adopting a tentative millage rate of 3.9863 and addressed the need for the maker and seconder to amend the motion on the floor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bell and seconded by Commissioner Ranize that the city commission amend Resolution 2018-052 adopting a tentative millage rate deleting 3.9863 and amending it to read "3.9134".

Mayor Cheshire called for a roll call vote on the motion with the amendment and declared it carried unanimously.

Upon Mayor Cheshire's suggestion and **by unanimous consent, the city commission recessed its meeting at 8:41 p.m. and reconvened at 8:52 p.m.**

(c) First Reading and Public Hearing Resolution 2018-053 – FY 2018-019 Tentative Budget

It now being the time advertised to hold public hearing to consider the adoption of proposed Resolution 2018-053 and after Ms. Geraci-Carver read into the record the following title, Mayor Cheshire called for the public to be heard:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018-2019; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

(Continued from the September 13, 2018 regular meeting.)

A motion was made by Commissioner Bell and seconded by Commissioner Ranize that the city commission adopt Resolution 2018-053 as previously cited.

After Ms. Geraci-Carver questioned the plan to reduce the budget by \$47,244, **by unanimous consent and upon Mayor Cheshire's recommendation, the city commission agreed with the city treasurer's recommendation to identify the funding source from contingency.**

Ms. Drake referred to the following:

- a report that was given by the city manager regarding the construction costs of the new library;
- the press releases revealing the library's size, history and components including a restaurant, commercial kitchen and retail book store;
- the ILA outlining the use of the library project;
- the American Library Association regarding its costs, and
- Resolution 2018-033 representing the deposit for the library furniture

Ms. Drake outlined the costs involved for the library furniture and the suggestions made by the Fruitland Park Library Director on the utilization of city and state funds to pay for same; believed the city ought to reveal the actual library costs and questioned the origin of the funds.

After Mayor Cheshire referred to the power-point presentation on the new library, Mr. La Venia reviewed the library revenue; a copy of which is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.

Following further discussion and in response to Ms. Drake's inquiry, Mr. La Venia and Ms. Racine explained that the library director is still working on the new figures.

Ms. Drake questioned the status of the old library furniture in the existing library, the opening day costs and the relocation expenses and recognized that the city is overbudget.

Ms. Mobilian referred to Ms. Drake's comments and reviewed the FY 2018-19 proposed budget for the library. She explained her calculations on the library construction, grants and furniture and the restricted funds for storm water grants and public service impact fees and how she reached the total amount of \$1,113,364 where she believes the city is over budget for the library.

After Ms. Mobilian outlined the costs for the new library furniture and questioned the actual cost to operate same, she requested that the city commission review its future expenditures as she believed that the city is going out of control.

After discussion and in response, Mayor Cheshire suggested that Ms. Racine and Mr. La Venia obtain from Ms. Mobilian the figures she cited and review same. He pointed out Ms. Mobilian's reference to the total believing that there may be

discrepancies; addressed the need to come together to determine how same was derived and concurred with Commissioner Bell's remarks that the bid for the Fruitland Park New Library Construction Site Work was not included in the total cited by Ms. Mobilian.

Commissioner Bell explained the city's plans to develop the entire downtown area to include the public safety complex and hold city-related events.

Ms. Linda (inaudible), Blaise Terrace VOFP resident, referred to Mayor Cheshire's presentation noting the limited commercial business and the need to attract same; recognized the inefficiencies addressed at this evening's meeting and noted the lack of readily available information. She recommended that the city commission establish a task force for the new district commissioners to address methods in identifying inefficiencies relating to the Fruitland Park Library and the population growth; questioned the CR 466A roadway improvement costs, and commended Commissioner Ranize on his performance.

In response, Commissioner Bell recognized the election process for the candidates who filed to run for office in June 2018 prior to the city commission's budget workshops and indicated that the county is responsible for CR 466A.

After Mr. Yauk referred to the city commission's discussion of the electric franchise agreement with the City of Leesburg at its September 13, 2018 regular meeting, Mayor Cheshire, in response to several of his questions posed on the city tax and franchise fees, described the process involved and pointed out his presentation made earlier in this evening's meeting.

Following extensive discussion, Mayor Cheshire explained that Ms. Coulson will conduct a research and provide more information on the determination of the 9.84 percent rate; whether there is a franchise fee or a city tax and if it was voted on by the residents by the next meeting.

Mr. Craig Peters, VOFP resident, expressed concerns on the issue of taxes on their utility bills which he believes is misleading.

Mr. Brozick questioned whether the city commission considered the implications as it related to the Fruitland Park library construction and whether the library director directed to conduct a proforma statement on the revenue. He addressed concerns on the potential liability to the city as it relates to the restaurant and requested that the city commission re-examine same, change the scope and restore it back to the library.

Mr. Waltervitz addressed the possibility of comingled funds relating to the library and questioned whether a proforma was conducted on the potential income revenue from developing a town square.

In response, Mr. La Venia, Vice Mayor Gunter and Mayor Cheshire identified the new library and proposed public safety building; the town square with existing city-related events around the library planned to be added to that area.

Mr. Waltervitz believed that the city's future operational costs will exceed the population and that the city's expenditures are not sustainable. He questioned whether the city has conducted a long-term outlook or proforma.

Ms. Drake believed the Fruitland Park Library's plan to be a commercial restaurant/café, book store and catering kitchen; expressed concerns on the operational hours and potential costs.

In response to inquiries posed by Mayor Cheshire and Ms. Racine, Ms. Drake pointed out a press release she has on the issue. After Mayor Cheshire addressed the Fruitland Park Library Director JoAnn Glendinning's plan for outside vendors to operate at the restaurant and questioned the source of the press release as he is not aware of a book store, Ms. Drake cited the last sentence of the March 4, 2018 Daily Commercial article entitled *Fruitland Park Breaks Ground on New Library Thursday* on the plans for the new center.

Ms. Joanne Raimo, VOFP resident, pointed out the projected percentage increase in medical premiums outlined in the FY 2017-18 budget and questioned the percentage of the employees' contributions and the cost to renegotiate better premiums.

In response, Mayor Cheshire explained the rationale for low compensation and adequate benefits and Mr. La Venia confirmed in the affirmative that premium negotiations are conducted annually which can be provided to the public.

After Mr. La Venia suggested in response to a question posed by Ms. Christy Cochran, City of Fruitland Park resident, that a special assessment could be an option to decrease ad valorem taxes electrical taxes, Commissioner Bell recalled the unsuccessful collection method utilized by the city where said funds are police and fire service fees refund.

By unanimous consent, Mayor Cheshire closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Ranize referred to the city commission's budget process for FY 2017-18 and the two public works positions added to maintain the median on US Highway 27/441 which were not removed. He pointed out Mr. La Venia's previous discussions that if the city accepts the highway maintenance memorandum of agreement with the State of Florida Department of Transportation, the positions can remain.

Commissioner Ranize referred to the creation of a new part-time administrative assistant position for FY 2018-19 without city commission approval and relayed

his previous request for same to be removed to which Mayor Cheshire confirmed no longer exists; the position is not funded and the \$47,000 is restored back into the budget.

Ms. Racine concurred with Commissioner Ranize' request to review the current library's electrical costs and whether it was included in the FY 2018-19 budget.

Mayor Cheshire reiterated the amendments to the FY 2018-19 tentative budget for staff to verify the removal of the part-time administrative assistant for the public works department; that adequate funds are available for the existing library's electrical cost and that figures for the proposed new library's furniture would be reviewed prior to the next meeting.

After discussion, **Mayor Cheshire called for a roll call vote on the motion to adopt Resolution 2018-053 as previously cited and declared it carried unanimously.**

END OF PUBLIC HEARING

SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA

(d) Resolution 2018-033 Fruitland Park Library Furniture Deposit – FY 2017-18 Budget Amendment

It now being the time advertised to hold public hearing to consider the adoption of proposed Resolution 2018-033.

After Mayor Cheshire recommended said proposed resolution be postponed, he accepted Commissioner Ranize' suggestion for same to be considered and, Ms. Geraci-Carver read into the record the following title:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE 2017/2018 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET PURSUANT TO SEC. 6.07 OF THE CITY CHARTER; TO INCREASE OR DECREASE BUDGETED ITEMS PROVIDING FOR THE AMENDMENT OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018 BUDGET; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (Postponed from the August 30 special and September 13, 2018 regular meetings.)

A motion was made by Commissioner Ranize and seconded by Commissioner Bell that the city commission adopt Resolution 2018-033 as previously cited.

Ms. Mobilian recommended that the city commission postpone the subject proposed resolution to review the library issue as a whole prior to approving its final expenditures.

In response, Commissioner Ranize, in recognizing the city's library as a quality-of-life issue; referred to the February 27, 2017 Library Interiors of Florida Inc.'s invoice showing handwritten statement dated August 14, 2018 from Ms. Glendinning regarding the down-payment/proposed purchase for the library furniture which was not considered before the city commission and pointed out his previous inquiries on the subject issue giving reasons why he could not approve same. (A copy of the respective document is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.)

Noting the lack of a plan and a project manager, Commissioner Ranize gave an overview of procurement process; pointed out the award on the site development of a new public library facility construction, which was over the bid amount and alluded to the city commission's approval of grant funding which transferred the library's furniture grant to construction and the city's reapplication of same which was subsequently denied.

In referencing the figures addressed by the residents earlier at this evening's meeting, Commissioner Ranize questioned what the city is purchasing and explained that he did not see any of the figures that derived from the city commission's previous approval as it related to:

- the proceeds from the two properties previously acquired by the city for the new library;
- the casino property (formerly known as the Fruitland Park community building) with the stormwater retention pond that was transferred to Veterans Park utilizing the \$500,000 matching grant and
- Ms. Racine's financial report.

Commissioner Ranize believed the figures came from different funding sources to offset the costs; referred to his September 21, 2018 email to Ms. Coulson requesting public records relating to a café in the library and addressed his intent as the maker of the motion to vote against it. (A copy of the email is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.)

Ms. Geraci-Carver gave her opinion, in response to an inquiry posed by Commissioner Bell, that due to the current investigation of an elected official, the comments raised is not retaliatory against whistleblower.

Mayor Cheshire called for a roll call vote on the motion with the city commission members voting as follows:

Commissioner Bell	Yes
Vice Mayor Gunter	Yes
Commissioner Ranize	No
Mayor Cheshire	No

The motion failed to carry on a two to two (2-2) vote.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

After Mayor Cheshire responded to Ms. Drake's inquiry that the furniture's condition at the existing Fruitland Park Library is in disrepair, she gave reasons why she does not believe the costs correlate.

Mr. Waltervitz pointed out his earlier comments on the city's proforma and reiterated whether the city has conducted any long-range performance, a 15-year plan versus growth and revenue streams, or expenses, or business projections as he believed that none were implemented for the library.

Ms. Pam Smith, VOFP resident, cited subsection 286.011(2), Florida Statutes: *minutes of a meeting of any such board or commission . . . shall be promptly recorded, and such records shall be open to public inspection.* She noted that the current minutes of the city commission's meetings posted on the website are sporadic.

Mayor Cheshire indicated in the affirmative to Ms. Smith's request that the city can consistently post the minutes of meetings in a timely manner.

Mr. Brozick questioned whether a commitment could be attained from the city commission on the Fruitland Park Library's costs, a proforma and the issue of the café and book store to which Mayor Cheshire referred to the March 4, 2018 article where the indication of the Barnes and Noble is overboard.

After Mr. Brozick suggested that Mayor Cheshire communicate with the project manager regarding his concerns on the funding of the library and voiced his anticipation to receive answers on same from the city commission, Mayor Cheshire reiterated his earlier statements under Item (c) with the direction to staff and responded in the affirmative.

With respect to comments relating to the library costs and public safety services, Ms. Jolene Peters, VOFP resident, noted the failure in mentioning the school district. She gave her understanding of the existing Fruitland Park Elementary School in the city. Ms. Jolene questioned the city's rationale in pursuing \$3.5 million for a library; inquired on the city commission postponing or denying the library system and suggested earmarking the funds towards public safety, improved enforcement or for its school.

In referring to the public's comments on the library, Mr. Vance Jochim, Lake County resident and owner of Fiscal Rangers.com, described the county's library system and how the municipal library facilities within the county are evolving; noted the problems within the city in going through the planning phases and implementation of same and mentioned his attendance at the county meetings recognizing its grant funds distributed periodically through the library system as part of its library impact fees and noted the county's lifecycle and combination of different funding sources. He suggested that the city commission provide a better informational package to explain to the public.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

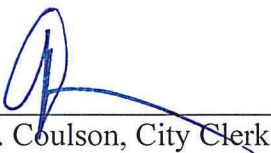
Mayor Cheshire thanked Messrs. Joey Landstedt, Bob Turner, Bogle, the fire department staff, and Senior Pastors Reverend Daryl W. and Deborah "Debbie" L. Allen,

Mayor Cheshire announced that the city commission will be meeting on September 28, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. with the anticipation of making more information available to the public.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:12 p.m.

The minutes were approved at the January 10, 2019 regular meeting

Signed 

Esther B. Coulson, City Clerk

Signed 

Chris Cheshire, Mayor