

**FRUITLAND PARK CITY COMMISSION BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING  
MINUTES  
August 3, 2015**

A workshop meeting of the Fruitland Park City Commission was held at 506 W. Berckman Street, Fruitland Park, Florida 34731 on Monday, August 3, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.

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

**Also Present:** City Manager Gary La Venia; Interim City Treasurer Dianne Riechard, City Treasurer Jeannine Racine Michaud; Police Chief Michael Fewless; Lieutenant Dennis Cutter, Sergeant David Cox, Police Department; Fire Department Tim Yoder, Community Development Director Charlie Rector, Public Works Director Dale Bogle, Fruitland Park Library Director Jo-Ann Glendinning; Deputy City Treasurer Sue Parker, Human Resources Administrator/Deputy City Clerk Marie Azzolino; Finance Clerk Teri J. Bogle, and City Clerk Esther B. Coulson.

**1. CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Commissioner Lewis gave the invocation and Chief Fewless led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

**2. ROLL CALL**

After Mayor Bell requested that Ms. Coulson call the roll.

**3. 2015/16 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET**

**A. Budget Message**

After discussion, Ms. Riechard expressed appreciation to the city commission and staff for the opportunity given for in serving as the interim city treasurer. She recognized the FY 2015-016 budget of \$10,094,000 and gave a power-point presentation on same, a copy of which is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.

Following further discussion on the year-to-year comparisons and current projections, the city commission considered setting the millage rate at 4.7372.

**B. General Fund Revenues**

Discussion was held on the electric franchise fee payments and Mr. Rector agreed to research the issue on the City of Leesburg's electric street light fee charge to the City of Fruitland Park.

Ms. Michaud referred to the spreadsheet reflecting the revenues report by account code and fund type for local, FY ended September 30, 2013 which was not

## Fruitland Park Budget Workshop Minutes

Page 2 of 4

August 3, 2015

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included in the budget at the time of printing. (A copy of the spreadsheet is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting)

Commissioner Gunter pointed out the propane utility tax and appropriations revenues of \$1,700; recollected the city commission's previous decision to eliminate same, and suggested that contact be made to Ace Hardware regarding the city commission's decision.

- Executive - Communications

Following much discussion, staff indicated that the printing and copying item reflecting zero will be reviewed.

With respect to legal fees, the suggestion was made to address at the next meeting the reduction of funding (special magistrate) as there were no appearances. It was recognized that the community development department has increased activity; that five older houses need to be condemned to meet voluntary compliance, and that the amount needs to be reduced to \$10,000.

City Clerk

Later in the meeting, Mayor Bell referred to Ms. Coulson's salary of approximately \$45,000 and stated that he believed that she was, when retained, approved for more. He disseminated the August 8, 2013 special meeting verbatim transcript and requested that the city commission review same with the plan to address the issue at the August 4, 2015 workshop. (A copy of the transcript was filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.)

- Fire Department

Mr. La Venia described the county's fire assessment process for the city at a rate established for all residents including The Villages – using a model like the Town of Lady Lake's – and a similar assessment method based on the amount of funding in the contract and billed with one study.

Commissioner Ranize expressed preference for the \$1,000 allocated towards the scholarship program to be earmarked for the volunteer fire department or reserve police department employees as part of their educational/training classes. After it was recognized that the funds would still be in the budget, he indicated his plan to address the matter on a future agenda.

After discussion and **by unanimous consent, the city commission agreed to place on the wish list under rental the purchase of a small ice machine for about \$4,000.**

## Fruitland Park Budget Workshop Minutes

Page 3 of 4

August 3, 2015

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Following much discussion and after concerns were raised on the inadequate amount of \$2,000 for the firefighters' training; a request was made for the amount to be increased and included as part of the city's policy. It was also suggested that staff take the training course and execute a two-year employment commitment with the city; otherwise, a 50 percent payment would be required upon leaving the city's employ.

- Law Enforcement

Commissioner Lewis referred to the statement in the budget resulting in the initial three percent increase and the intent to retain four additional law enforcement officers as the city's population grows. In addition to his suggestion that the proposed salary increases, implemented over subsequent years, be in line with other agencies, it was recommended that staff utilize the capital grant.

After Mayor Bell recognized the calls relating to crime aimed towards the elderly, a description was made of a 1,000 square foot Fruitland Park Substation for law enforcement purposes which may become available by August or September 2015.

Following further discussion and with respect to education credits towards bachelor's degrees, Chief Fewless addressed his plan to present same as he had a meeting with the department employees.

- Building and Zoning

Mr. Rector cited reasons why the salaries of community development administrative assistant and executive staff assistant ought to be increased and that the building tax receipts should be handled by the city clerk.

Mayor Bell suggested that the general funds revenue and public works department's budget be reviewed at the August 4, 2015 workshop.

**By unanimous consent, the city commission recessed the workshop at 8:30 p.m. and reconvened at 8:45 p.m.**

- Library

Ms. Glendinning suggested correcting the word "librarian" to read: "library director" and for the two positions frozen four years ago to remain in the budget.

Ms. Glendinning requested, once the new library is constructed, changes in the library opening hours including Saturdays; agreed to accept \$71,000 for the two funded positions for FY 2016-17, and suggested that their salaries be increased recognizing the training that they received. She

## Fruitland Park Budget Workshop Minutes

Page 4 of 4

August 3, 2015

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stressed the importance of the children services position and recognized the losses in revenue made on checkouts.

Referring to the promotional supplies and recognizing that the Fruitland Park Library will be 100 years old in 2016, Ms. Glendinning expressed her desire to commemorate the occasion during the week of the Lake County Bookfest unless the city commission would like to celebrate the event during Fruitland Park Days.

After discussion on the location of the original library, Ms. Glendinning explained why the \$500,000 construction grant application for the proposed library was not accepted and she addressed her plan to prepare a letter relating to same.

Following further discussion and after Ms. Glendinning identified the newly installed camera system at the library and gave a background of previous incidents at the library, Commissioner Gunter suggested that arrangements be made for the police department to patrol the area.

#### 4. **OTHER BUSINESS**

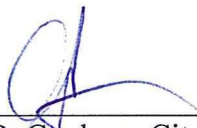
On behalf of the city commission, Mayor Bell expressed appreciation to Ms. Reichard for her assistance who welcomed the city commission to call her if they have any questions.

#### 5. **ADJOURNMENT**


There being no other business to come before the city commission at this time, the workshop concluded at 9:05 p.m.

The minutes were approved at the October 22, 2015 regular meeting.

Signed

  
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Esther B. Coulson, City Clerk

Signed

  
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Christopher Bell, Mayor