

**FRUITLAND PARK CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING  
MINUTES  
May 12, 2015**

A workshop meeting of the Fruitland Park City Commission was held at 506 W. Berckman Street, Fruitland Park, Florida 34731 on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 at 7:00 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, City Treasurer Tannette Gayle, Interim Police Chief Todd English, Lieutenant Dennis Cutter, Fire Chief George Fernandez and Tim Yoder, Fire Department; Community Development Director Charlie Rector, Public Works Director Dale Bogle, Parks and Recreation Director Michelle Yoder; Fruitland Park Library Director Jo Ann Glendinning, and City Clerk Esther B. Coulson.

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

Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.; gave the invocation and Commissioner Gunter led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

**2. ROLL CALL**

At Mayor Bell's request, Ms. Coulson called the roll and all the city commission members were declared present.

**3. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**- Fruitland Park Library Plans**

Mr. La Venia referred to previous city commission discussions regarding the Fruitland Park Library plans; the review of \$572,700 initially earmarked in grant funding for expansion to the existing library and the decision to pursue the construction of a new library.

Mr. Rector pointed out previous discussions staff had with a number of architects on the city's concept and needs relating to the construction of a new library. He described the estimated costs based on the potential population, the library building's scope and size requirements, and the drainage as well as any existing problems within that vicinity.

Mr. Rector identified the new library's location to be on the site of the existing Casino Community Building at 604 West Berckman Street. He referred to his communication with T.A. Youngblood and Sons Building Movers, Inc and their visit to the subject location on May 8, 2015 regarding the relocation of the Casino building.

After Mr. Rector addressed his plan to communicate with Pastor Kenneth Wells, First United Pentecostal Church, to find out if there was an interest in the Casino Community building, Commissioner Ranize, referred to his approach to Pastor

Sidney Brock at Heritage Community Church, who indicated that he did not seem enthusiastic, recommended not relocating the Casino Community Building to Veterans Park, and requested that the city commission consider doing away with same.

In response to Vice Mayor Cheshire's inquiry, Mr. La Venia recognized that the Florida Department of State's Division of Historical Resources, Florida National Register Review Board will be considering, at its June 12, 2015 meeting the review of nomination proposal for the Fruitland Park Casino.

Mr. La Venia referred to his meeting with Ms. Anita Geraci-Carver (the newly selected city attorney), regarding the Quit Claim Deed he received which was referred to City Attorney Scott Gerken. Mr. La Venia conveyed the consensus reached on the provisions in the QCD that the property is to be used to accommodate the community, a copy of which is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.

Mr. La Venia addressed staff's plan to obtain prices to demolish the property located on 207 West Berckman Street (which is not part of the former Gardenia Hotel).

After much discussion and upon Vice Mayor Cheshire's suggestion, **the city commission, by unanimous consent, agreed to consider the relocation of the Fruitland Park Casino Community Center; donate the building to First United Pentecostal Church located at 107 College Avenue, and accepted the Community Development Director's recommendation to provide more information on the church's decision at the next city commission meeting.**

Following considerable discussion, and after Mr. La Venia identified the opportunity to apply for more grants funding of approximately \$114,000 and with reference to Mr. Rector's comments regarding the site for \$1.6 million, Ms. Glendinning relayed the suggestion by Ms. Wendy Breeden, Lake County Department of Public Resources Director, to apply for \$500,000 for furniture and apply for additional grant funding of \$135,000 to be submitted by June 1, 2015.

Mr. La Venia referred to Ms. Glendinning's submittal of a grant funding application with supporting documents and her discussions with the state for a \$500,000 matching grant that the city would need to apply for.

Ms. Glendinning indicated, in the affirmative, that she would find out from the state whether the city could use the value of the property as in-kind grant funding and Mr. Rector concurred that \$100,000 (as site preparation) could be taken out of stormwater funding and applied towards the grant.

Subsequent to extensive deliberations, Ms. Glendinning addressed her intent to follow up on the process and anticipates receiving more information on the

application's review activity. She indicated that FY 2015/16 funding decisions are expected to be made on the state's budget at the 2015 Legislative Session and grant funds would be anticipated during 2016.

- **WWTP Connection Lines to Lady Lake Contract**

Mr. Rector identified the location of the water wastewater connection lines and reviewed the costs involved from CR 466A to the city's existing plant pumping station; a copy of Booth, Ern, Straughan & Hiott, Inc.'s (BESH's) costs are filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.

Mr. La Venia outlined the following revenue costs:

- Ad valorem - \$773,000 (at least \$1.5 million build-out with The Villages of an increase with ad valorem).
- Electric - \$1 million to \$1.5 million for The Villages housing construction with no commercial.
- Electric franchise fee and electric tax electric utility tax – \$600,000 anticipated at build-out and garbage franchise fees \$45,000 doubled to \$100,000 from The Villages (excluding revenues from the Community Redevelopment Agency, Capital Improvement Program or additional construction).
- The city's obligation of \$150,000 per annum to The Villages for fire which is excluded (city losses \$90,000 in debt service paying for the library).
- Funds expected from impact fees for police and fire to be used as capital items for equipment with enough to build a new police and fire building at approximately \$1.9 million.
- Public works department - four additional personnel; police department four additional personnel, and other town staffing needs approximately another \$400,000.
- City services improvements and infrastructure (streets and public works building) initial debt service, one cent sales tax to be enacted in 2015 to be dedicated for \$250,000 where a decision is required from the city commission.

Mr. La Venia indicated that he has not been in contact with the Florida League of Cities. He referred to his meeting with Mr. Steve Knowles, Center State Bank, and addressed the intent to explore options to borrow \$2.5 million from a commercial lender or banking institution which Mr. La Venia considers to be the most practical. He gave examples of how the city could dictate its borrowing, with the low interest rates over a short term, and payment of the debt over time with revenues coming from construction.

After discussion, Mr. La Venia anticipated that the state legislature would make its decision on available funding for the legislative grant for phase III of the CR 466A roadway improvement project and the city would have the revenue to cover the debt service by 2017.

Following further deliberations, Mr. Rector reported on the number of Certificates of Occupancy received by The Villages and referred to a recent Lake County meeting he attended with Mr. Bogle on the county's plans to submit a proposal in December 2015 for the phase I of US 441. Mr. Rector explained that the city ought to be prepared in January 2016 to expand or relocate its utility line for roadway improvements to start in March 2016; noted the need for adjustments to be made, and for water and sewer engineering work to be complete.

Mr. Rector referred to BESH's engineering estimate of \$38,527 and stated that staff is currently unaware of what would be required as the plans are obsolete. Mr. Rector explained that it appears Messrs. Bogle, Duane K. Booth, BESH, and himself believe that most of the intersection at Dixie Avenue and Miller Boulevard and the area in front of the post office to be the location of major concern and that micro utility connections can be made separately. He relayed his request to Lake County Public Works Director Jim Stivender, Jr. that he be informed in advance of said project.

Mr. Rector requested the city commission's approval for engineering from CRA funds; referred to the three BESH contracts; namely, \$151,070 for the lift station which includes surveying and engineering costs for CR 466 to the WWTP to connect with the town; \$126,400 for the town's connection agreement for engineering, and \$38,500 for phase I.

After Mr. La Venia explained, in response, that the \$38,500 would be included in the borrowing, Mr. Rector conveyed his remarks to Mr. La Venia the possibility of The Villages being able to cover in advance the \$151,007 for the design as such funds would ultimately be received from them; however, he questioned the commission on how it wishes staff to proceed.

After discussion, Mr. Rector requested that the city commission authorize staff to proceed with expediting the \$126,000 contingent upon the town executing the agreement which Mayor Bell suggested ought to be placed on the next city commission's regular agenda for consideration.

Ensued discussions followed and, Mr. Rector identified Mr. Robert E. "Bobby" Farner, Farner Barley and Associates Inc.'s, as an alternative on the subject quotes, and not BESH, who had to request modifications and permitting process on the 1,500 foot connection line extension to the lift station for The Villages.

Subsequent to extensive deliberations, and upon the suggestion of Mr. La Venia, **the city commission, by unanimous consent, agreed to consider at the May 14, 2015 regular meeting:**

- **proceeding with the construction of the Fruitland Park Library;**
- **earmarking funds dedicated to the penny sales tax for infrastructure improvements and public facilities (in order to identify to the bank said funds as a source of revenue to pay off that borrowing) in order to get the project underway contingent upon the Town of Lady Lake ratifying the Water Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Connection Project agreement (thus, the reason to pursue the CR 466A connection to the city's WWTP), and**
- **authorizing staff to:**
  - o **facilitate with the borrowing of funds from a bank of a maximum of \$2.5 million** (reference was made to the city commission's previous action in 2014 on the acquisition of properties located on 207 West Berckman Street and staff obtaining prices to proceed to procure bids to demolish same before September 2015);
  - o **apply for additional grant funding** from the Florida Department of State's Division of Historical Resources to be submitted by June 1, 2015 to proceed with the Fruitland Park Library construction noting that the distribution of the Local Government Infrastructure Surtax Use (previously dedicated towards the recreation center) changed to infrastructure and public facilities (with the suggestion for signage to the public "penny sales tax at work" with identification on what the funds would be used for), and
  - o **make a decision on the Casino Community Center.**


**4. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business to come before the workshop at this time.

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

The minutes were approved at the regular June 11, 2015 regular meeting.

Signed   
 Esther B. Coulson, City Clerk

Signed   
 Christopher Bell, Mayor