

**FRUITLAND PARK CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP  
MEETING MINUTES  
July 13, 2017**

A workshop meeting of the Fruitland Park City Commission was held at 506 W. Berckman Street, Fruitland Park, Florida 34731 on Thursday, July 13, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

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

**Also Present:** City Manager Gary La Venia, City Treasurer; Jeannine Racine; Police Chief Michael Fewless; Captain Eric Luce; Administrative Assistant Karen McKillips, Police Department; Interim Fire Chief Don Gilpin; Community Development Director Charlie Rector, Public Works Director Dale Bogle and City Clerk Esther B. Coulson.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Cheshire called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Chief Fewless gave the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by Interim Chief Gilpin

**2. ROLL CALL**

At Mayor Cheshire's request, Ms. Coulson called the roll.

**3. FY 2017-18 BUDGET - Introduction**

Continuing from the June 12, 2017 budget workshop meeting, Mr. La Venia referred to the structure to the proposed public works department building which will be addressed later in this meeting.

Ms. Racine reviewed the summary of budget changes addressed at the July 12, 2017 workshop; a copy of which is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.

Legislative

**Page 64, Verizon, Five Tablets/Phones**

Vice Mayor Gunter referred to the Verizon charges as it relates to the six tablets and requested that staff explore the ability to lower the costs and combining same on one bill.

Commissioner Ranize suggested that staff identify the location of the tablet and ensure that the city is not paying for the tablet assigned to him which he announced that he does not have.

Executive

**- Administrative Assistant**

After Commissioner Ranize suggested combining and multi-task the part time positions (executive and code enforcement department) into one full time position for efficiency, Mr. La Venia confirmed, in the affirmative, the implementation of same as a possibility.

- **Social Media - Facebook Archive**

Discussions were held on the social media platform; its use as communications tool between the citizens and the city, and the cost effectiveness and the requirement in archiving said page.

- **City Manager - Verizon Phone/Tablet**

After discussion and in comparing the costs of the tablets and telephones addressed earlier in this evening's meeting, Commissioner Ranize requested that staff review the variables and cost differences in the programs' networks and pointed out Vice Mayor Gunter's suggestion to obtain one internet service with one bundle for the departments.

Finance

Ms. Racine explained that Ms. Parker is currently a salaried employee which was excluded in error.

- **Four Adding Machines, Three Printers**

Ms. Racine explained the purpose of replacing the existing printers where it was addressed that the lease would be considered.

Legal Counsel

The city commission noted that there was no change.

Other General Government Services

- **Vehicle Repairs/Maintenance**

Mr. Bogle identified the 2000 Ford Tauris utilized by the custodian.

- **Custodian**

Commissioner Ranize referred to the custodian's starting hourly rate of \$12.01 per hour.

- **Personal Services**

Commissioner Ranize believed that the public works department employees ought to receive more compensation than the starting pay and recognized the total including benefits to be approximately \$46,164. In recognizing the number of city buildings located outside city hall, Commissioner Lewis concurred with his suggestion on the possibility of reviewing the outsourcing of companies in providing janitorial services to which Mr. La Venia concurred in the affirmative indicating that said issue was discussed with Mr. Bogle.

Later in the meeting and after much discussion, Mr. La Venia indicated that if budgetary funds remain, staff will provide quotes to retain custodial service for city commission review to determine whether it would be cost prohibitive and Mr. Bogle confirmed that he would work on same.



**By unanimous consent, the city commission directed staff to provide quotes to retain janitorial/custodial service for review.**

- **Verizon Tablets/Phones**

Commissioner Ranize reiterated the reference to the Verizon tablets and telephones.

After ensued discussions with Mr. Bogle, and **by unanimous consent, the city commission agreed with staff's request for the 2003 air conditioning units at city hall to be replaced for approximately \$30,000 as soon as they become inoperable.**

Law Enforcement

- **Physical Follow-up – Travel Per Diem**

Commissioner Lewis referred to Chief Fewless' request before the city commission at its June 20, 2017 workshop regarding personnel shortage and the need for five additional law enforcement officers for FY 2017-18 and gave his understanding of the vacant lieutenant officer position and two additional officers.

In response, Chief Fewless identified the position as the replacement previously held by former Deputy Police Chief Dennis Cutter which has already been filled and addressed his plan for FY 2017-18 to add two additional personnel.

After discussion, Chief Fewless suggested that instead of five additional law enforcement officers, he recommended two for October 2017 and two in April 2018 and as the population grows, the police department would be allowed to increase its personnel when they are needed and the requirement for vehicles would be postponed until FY 2018-19.

Following further discussion, Commissioner Lewis recognized the approximately \$70,000 impact to the budget; pointed out the city commission's discussions on conserving its operating revenue to the unrestrictive cash reserve, and suggested increasing same.

Subsequent to ensued discussions, Commissioner Ranize identified the number of law enforcement agencies involved with the City of Leesburg to curtail crime south of the city; voiced his concurrence with Chief Fewless' suggestion to which Commissioner Bell indicated that same could be addressed mid-year April 2018 at \$35,000 and the other officer from contingency to which Ms. Racine and Mr. La Venia concurred.

After much discussion, Ms. Racine relayed the recommendations of the current auditor that three months' reserve balance ought to remain.

In response to Commissioner Ranize' inquiry, and **by unanimous consent, the city commission accepted the Police Chief's proposition to:**

- o **lower the new officers' starting pay to \$18 per hour (\$39,400 per annum) -- resulting in savings for each officer;**

- **increase the salary for the position of the executive administrative assistant (who assumed the former police department administrative assistant's role previously addressed to the city manager) to \$15 per hour (\$31,000 per annum) -- a difference in savings on the officers' pay, and**
- **reduce \$1,200 from the reserves officer's budget.**

**and expend said funds from the police department's reserves.**

After much discussion, Commissioner Ranize recalled the comparisons conducted on the police chief's salary; referred to the city commission's consensus at its June 20, 2017 workshop requesting the market rate of pay for police chiefs of comparable municipalities in the area, and recognized that the FY 2017-18 budget has not been adjusted.

In response, Mr. La Venia referred to his July 11, 2017 memorandum regarding the police chief's salary and his request for \$90,000 per annum; voiced his concurrence on the need for him to be compensated commiserate to other similar municipalities, and complimented him on his accomplishments and background. (A copy of the memorandum is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.)

After discussion, Mayor Cheshire suggested giving Chief Fewless the payment to the level of where the prior chief was being compensated.

- **Communications**

Following further discussion and after Vice Mayor Gunter referred to the Verizon wireless for the police department, Chief Fewless addressed his goal to meet with Sergeant David Cox, who will be serving the department at the administrative level, to resolve the issues and find a cost-effective method of utilizing the existing Verizon telephones.

- **Restricted Funds for New Engine**

In response to a question posed by Vice Mayor Gunter, Interim Chief Gilpin confirmed in response that the earmarked amount of \$5,000 is inadequate.

Vice Mayor Gunter suggested increasing the budget as he believes a new engine would be needed in approximately three years to which Commissioner Ranize similarly recognized the need to replace 25 airpaks (the breathing air storage system) for approximately \$400,000 per annum.

In response to Commissioner Lewis' reference to previous discussions on not retiring the primary engine, Interim Fire Chief Gilpin addressed the need for same to be utilized as a secondary engine.



After Mr. La Venia cited reasons why he concurred with Commissioner Lewis' remarks on the extended life in replacing fire engines, Fire Chief Gilpin explained how fire departments are governed by the National Fire Protection Association and how the fire department will be utilizing said engines.

In response to Commissioner Lewis' remarks regarding an attack vehicle Ford F450, Interim Chief Gilpin referred to the previous request to the city commission for the fire department to be equipped with a vehicle; described the current use of the brush truck which is presently being worked on, and gave an overview on the origins of the vehicles.

Following further discussion on identifying other funding sources earmarked for the fire department, Mr. La Venia referred to Commissioner Ranize' suggestion made at the July 12, 2017 workshop meeting on the utilization of impact fees and recommended creating a dedicated fund for the purchase of equipment.

Subsequent to further discussion and following Mayor Cheshire's recollection of the city commission's discussions at its January 26, 2017 -- regarding City Attorney Anita Geraci-Carver's research on utilizing police and fire impact fees and equipment purchase to accommodate the additional capacity by growth -- Mr. La Venia explained the allocation of fire assessment funds reserved for fire services for each of the communities; namely, Fruitland Park and The Villages; the city's legal right in budgeting over and above any dollar amount in capital, general or restricted funds for fire services, and other funds budgeted outside that scope which may be raised through capital or a separate account.

After discussion, Mayor Cheshire referred to the July 12, 2017 Daily Commercial article entitled: *Lake County Wants Fire Fee on Vacant Land* due to its revenue shortfall of approximately \$672,000 for fire services and questioned the county's funding sources if the city chose the county to provide fire protection and rescue services. (A copy of the newspaper article is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.)

Subsequent to ensuing discussions and at Mr. La Venia's request, Ms. Racine reviewed the FY 2017-18 budget CIP fund reflecting the airpack system, automated external defibrillators, and a vehicle, to which Mr. Gilpin indicated would be a suburban utility vehicle primarily for the use of medical calls; a copy of which is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.

Following further discussion, Mayor Cheshire referred to Commissioner Ranize' statements made at the July 12, 2017 workshop referencing his previous question relayed to Ms. Geraci-Carver that if the city builds the public works building and still collects funds on every permit on the identification of the expenditure and the outcome of the public safety impact money.

Commissioner Ranize conveyed Ms. Geraci-Carver's statements in the negative to Mayor Cheshire's comments that part of said funds cannot be used for the vehicle.

Answering Vice Mayor Gunter's reference on the life of five years and in responding to Commissioner Ranize's remarks that the city can expend same, Mr. La Venia suggested that such question ought to be reserved for the July 27, 2017 regular meeting.

Commissioner Ranize quoted Ms. Geraci-Carver's response by text message on the impact fee funding usage; copies of which are filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.

### Community Development

#### - **Contractual Services**

Following considerable discussions on contractual services and the permits due to the acquisition of homes at The Villages and recognizing that funds are available, Mr. Rector gave reasons for funds be included in the budget for staff salary increases of \$1 per hour.

Mr. Rector referred to his previous conversations with Mr. La Venia on acquiring a vehicle for the code enforcement officer who is employed twice a week and described, at length, the research he conducted on comparable cost-effective vehicles to which Mr. La Venia addressed his intent to provide three quotations on same.

Mr. Rector outlined the need for membership/educational training and travel costs to be allocated in the budget for \$300 for one staff member who has currently attained the Association of State Floodplain Managers National Program Certification of which United States Federal Emergency Management Agency is a partner.

Subsequent to extensive deliberations, and **by unanimous consent, the city commission agreed with the community development director's recommendation for staff increases, education and travel costs, and a vehicle purchase to be earmarked for the community development department's FY 2017-18 budget.**

#### - **FY 2017-18 CRA Budget Meeting**

After much discussion and in agreement with Commissioner Bell's inquiry, the city commission determined that the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) will be addressing its FY 2017-18 budget at a future CRA meeting.

#### - **CIP - Revenues/Expenditures**

Earlier in the meeting and in recognizing the emergency generators in the five-year CIP, Mr. La Venia concurred with Commissioner Ranize's statements on the likelihood of including same in the FY 2017-18 budget in the five-year CIP for future discussions on the public works building.



**4. OTHER BUSINESS – Generator/Proposed Public Works Building Site**

Mr. La Venia referred to Commissioner Ranize' statements made earlier in this evening's meeting regarding a generator for city hall.

Mr. La Venia reviewed the proposed public works building site's preliminary costs and the site clearing estimate addressed at the July 12, 2017 workshop noting that the \$650 in architectural fees and the building size of 14,990 square feet at \$46.27 square feet were not included; a copy of which is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.

In response to Commissioner Lewis' comments on one of the drawbacks with engineering on the proposed public works building for site clearing and bringing it back to the current location of the current public works department building, Mr. La Venia expressed staff's concerns on the expense of managing the sand and utilities to the proposed site.

After Mr. Rector described the reduction in costs for the proposed site, Mr. Bogle mentioned the advantages of the building after reviewing its features and design with Mr. Rector.

After Mr. La Venia noted the fourth rendition of the proposed building's study plan and described the costs of constructing the truck bay, Mr. Bogle, in response to Mayor Cheshire's inquiry on configuring everything into one place, confirmed that he would accept five bays and addressed the ability to expand in the future.

In response to a question posed by Commissioner Bell, Ms. Racine identified \$350,000 from capital and recognized that the city commission previously budgeted an amount of \$250,000.

Following much discussion and after the city commission acknowledged paying \$675,000 for five bays on the public works department building construction, Mr. La Venia recommended that before obtaining a figure from James P. Senatore, architect retained by the city, staff would determine the use of combining retained earnings with the remaining funds coming from CIP.

After Commissioner Lewis noted the remaining funds from what the city previously borrowed due to the grant received from the state for sewer construction, Mr. La Venia addressed the likelihood of including debt service to which Ms. Racine, in concurring, indicated that it would be a question to refer to Ms. Geraci-Carver to reprogram same.

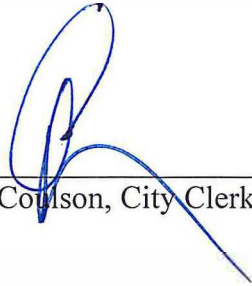
Subsequent to ensued discussions, and after Mr. Rector referred to the issue of generators, Mr. Bogle pointed out the requirements under the Florida Building Code, for a standby generator; addressed his plan for such building to be self-sufficient during emergencies, and referenced the city's purchase of a generator in 2010.

**5. ADJOURNMENT**

**There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.**

The minutes were approved at the December 14, 2017 regular meeting.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Esther B. Coulson, City Clerk



Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chris Cheshire, Mayor

