

City Council
Special Meeting
August 19, 2003

The City Council of the City of Titusville, Florida met in special session in the Council Chamber of City Hall, 555 South Washington Avenue, on Tuesday, August 19, 2003.

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Mayor Ronald Swank called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. Present were Vice-Mayor Jeff Rainey, and Council Members Christopher Broome and Ken Ward. Also in attendance were City Manager Tom Harmer and Finance Director Bob Erickson. Member Conrad Eigenmann was absent.

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Mayor Swank asked for a moment of silence. The entire assembly stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

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The purpose of the meeting was to conduct the second of two budget workshops on the proposed City of Titusville Operating and Capital Improvement Plan budgets for Fiscal Year 2003/2004 between City Council and Staff.

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City Manager Harmer presented council an overview of the budget workshop process. He outlined that during this workshop, the City's two largest departments, Public Works and Water Resources would be presenting their proposed Operating and Capital Improvement Plan budgets for Fiscal Year 2003/2004. City Manager Harmer referenced other cities throughout the state who have struggled meeting their respective budgetary requirements. Mayor Swank commended all City departments on their ability to balance the budget and operate effectively.

City Manager Harmer introduced Karan Rounsavall, City Clerk and Rick Roberts, Management Information Systems Director, who briefed council on a proposed implementation plan toward a paperless agenda as requested by council at the previous budget workshop conducted August 2, 2003. The implementation plan outlined a two-year phase in-plan that identified the first year being the establishment of intranet service, already funded, and in the second year, the acquisition of agenda management software and issuance of notebook computers to council members. Mayor Swank had some questions. Member Broome asked if a paper agenda for the public at the public library would still be made available. Mrs. Rounsavall replied yes. Member Ward asked about the agenda management software and what it would do. Mrs. Rounsavall replied that more research would have to be accomplished as well as describing document tracking processes that may be available in such software. Member Ward stated he would like to see a published agenda on a web page and in a format that would allow anyone to view the agenda and related documentation. He also felt the City should explore obtaining wireless laptops. City Manager Harmer felt the process should be phased in slowly and supported the

two-year phase in plan. He would take Member Ward's idea and research what was available to perform such a transition properly.

City Manager Harmer introduced Finance Director Bob Erickson who addressed how electric billing within City government facilities was recorded and budgeted. Mr. Erickson also briefed council that upon closer review of the calculations, corrections to the budget would be made which actually lowered the overall budget by over \$100,000.

City Manager Harmer presented the Community Redevelopment Agency Fiscal Year 2003/2004 budget to council and reported that funding for conference attendance was in the budget. Mayor Swank reported that the Community Redevelopment Agency approved its budget as written.

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City Manager Harmer introduced Jim Herron, Public Works Director, who presented his department's proposed budget. Mr. Herron began his presentation with an overview of his department. He briefed his department's mission and core services that include: maintenance, engineering, solid waste, and the city marina, and included a description of each division's responsibilities. He then highlighted his department's major accomplishments over the past year that include: road repaving projects, sidewalk repair as part of infrastructure accomplishments; State Road 50 landscaping project; and downtown signage as far as curb appeal.

Mr. Herron briefed council on his department's goals and objectives for supporting the five City strategic issues of: Fostering a Positive Work Environment; Positioning our Community for Quality Growth Opportunities; Sustain Financial Wellness; Promoting our Community; and Promoting a Safe and Secure Environment.

Mr. Herron identified future Public Works department plans for program enhancements in the areas of: Inspection services; Street sweeping enhancement; Solid Waste Business Plan; and Rate study initiatives; Capital Improvement projects and programs; Gas Tax Fund; General Construction Fund; Roads and Streets Fund, both new and projects carried forward; and the Municipal Marina Fund.

Mr. Herron summarized the Public Works department proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2003/2004 as \$7,633,671.

Mayor Swank asked questions that Mr. Herron addressed concerning specific items being: a decrease in funding for street striping; street sweeping and street sweeping equipment; an increase in funding for repair and maintenance services; and the Street Superintendent reflecting a decrease in revenue and an increase in expenditures.

City Manager Harmer clarified that street sweeping was currently contracted out using funds from Stormwater and Public Works and it was proposed to start using an existing employee to perform these duties.

Member Ward asked Mr. Herron if the Florida East Coast Railroad provided the City any notice of repair or maintenance projects to crossings within the City. Mr. Herron replied that there was

no formal notification procedures in place and that possibly a 30-day notice could be received. Member Ward was concerned that the Florida East Coast Railroad planned projects that the City must pay for. Member Ward asked Herron if his department ever attended trade shows and felt that it was important to do so. Mr. Herron replied that trade show attendance was funded in the proposed budget.

Member Broome applauded the Public Works Department. He had seen improvements made. Member Broome also reported that some newly repaved roads, approximately 1.5 miles, appeared to not be holding up well. Mr. Herron replied that the contractor who paved the streets would be repaving the streets at no cost because the original paving was performed using the incorrect asphalt mix.

Vice-Mayor Rainey requested a cost estimate for the Park Avenue widening project. Mr. Herron replied that the design from Barna to Draa should cost approximately 4.5 million.

With there being no further questions, the Public Works Department's presentation was concluded. Mayor Swank called for a break at 7:43 p.m. The meeting went back in session at 7:50 p.m.

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City Manager Harmer introduced Raynetta Curry-Grant, Water Resources Director, to present her department's proposed budget for fiscal year 2003/2004.

Mrs. Grant began the presentation by acknowledging Administrative Secretary Fanita Mitchell and the other members of her staff for the assistance provided in the preparation of the proposed budget.

Ms. Grant briefed the department's mission and core services. She briefed past accomplishments as follows: received awards of over \$850,000 in grant funds for stormwater management; implemented a program to accept hauled septic waste at Blue Heron Water Reclamation Facility; increased marketability of laboratory services through reputation for excellence and broad scope of accreditation; re-engineered the Water and Sewer Field Operations Division; attained acceptance of paper for presentation at the National Water Reuse Association Conference; completed Park Avenue Flood Control Capital Improvement Project. She then briefed council on her department's goals and objectives in supporting the City's five strategic issues.

Ms. Grant then briefed her department's proposed Fiscal Year 2003/2004 budget as \$8,295,381. She highlighted that her department reduced 16.5 employees through attrition over the past four years; energy costs stabilized; the cost of purchasing water from the City of Cocoa should decrease due to the active well field program and a wholesale rate was being negotiated with the City of Cocoa.

Mayor Swank reported that at a conference last week he saw radio meter reading equipment and suggested Ms. Grant look into it and she acknowledged to do so.

Member Ward praised Mrs. Grant with the progress he has seen. He felt the accomplishments were worth mentioning. He concurred with the example of wireless reading.

Henry Thomas, Utility Billing Consultant from Public Resources Management Group, Inc., presented council the Fiscal Year 2003/2004 Water and Wastewater Rate Study and the Capital Improvement Plan through 2008.

Operations & Maintenance Expense – Total expenses for 2004 compared to 2003 were down \$97,240. Adopted rates for Water were 11 percent and Wastewater three percent. Revised rate increases for Water was eight percent in 2004 and three percent in 2005 and Wastewater was three percent.

Mr. Thomas proposed Water and Waste Water Residential, Multi-Family, and Commercial rates. He showed comparison charts for both Water and Waste Water rates on the East Coast of Central Florida. Mayor Swank mentioned the radio meter reading again for future use. Ms. Grant acknowledged.

Member Ward asked what population growth rate was used in the determination of rate increases and Mr. Thomas replied, 1.5 percent. Member Broome asked Mr. Thomas to explain what must occur in order to allow rates to decrease. Mr. Thomas explained that significant growth would allow for a decrease in rates with the current debt service. Member Broome, frustrated, exclaimed that he did not know how to explain to citizens why their water bills were so high with no decrease in cost foreseeable in the near future.

Vice-Mayor Rainey stated that due to the water treatment plant only being used at half capacity rates would not be able to change as drastically as desired. Member Broome again stated for clarification that due to inflation and operating cost increases, no or little decrease in rates can be expected unless drastic growth would occur. Member Ward shared Member Broome's passion for the high sewer rates in the city. He requested the City Manager to ascertain what the city's current percentage of growth. He further requested options on other means to find customers for the water treatment plant. Mayor Swank requested Mr. Thomas to create a scenario to show what rates would look like if growth occurred. City Manager Harmer stated that although the wastewater issue is a long-term problem, the Water Resources Department saved more money than any other city department. The Water Resources presentation concluded.

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In closing, City Manager Harmer hoped council saw how important the strategic workshops were in giving staff the guidance for the budget preparation. He was hopeful the process will help staff remain focused on goals. He announced two public hearings, September 11, 2003 and September 25, 2003 with a vote to adopt the budget. The new budget was effective as of October 1, 2003.

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Comments from the public present: Joan Wheeler spoke in opposition to an across-the-board pay raise for all City employees. She presented council with three charts depicting comparisons

of annual cost-of-living increases between different salary ranges. She stated she identified 38 City employees whose annual salary was less than \$20,000 and felt employees should not be paid so little.

Ms. Wheeler made the comment that the City had a sewer plant that can't be filled with customers but the City does not have water and must buy it. She then stated she regretted not having more time to speak.

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There being no other citizens to speak, Mayor Swank adjourned the meeting at 9:12 p.m.

Ronald G. Swank, Mayor

ATTEST:

Karan J. Rounsavall, City Clerk