

City of Gulfport Florida
City Council Workshop Minutes
Thursday, April 28, 2011

A Workshop Meeting of the Gulfport City Council was held on Thursday, April 28, 2011 in the City Hall, City Council Chambers, located at 2401 53rd Street South, Gulfport, Florida.

Mayor Michael J. Yakes called the workshop to order at 3:00 p.m. All councilmembers present.

Mayor Yakes explained the procedures for speaking publicly at workshops and opened the public session.

Public Session.

Bob Newcomb, 921 Freemont Street S., commented that in his opinion, raising fees to increase revenues would have a greater impact on lower/middle class people than a tax increase. Mr. Newcomb suggested the city look into privatizing the IT functions and having an economic development specialist.

Lee Stapella, 3025 York Street S., spoke on the trolley contract and suggested the council take a bus trip to the City of Vero Beach to view their Mooring Field.

1. Discuss 2011-2012 General Fund Program and Budget.

City Manager O'Reilly said the first step in the budget workshop series, as he and staff formulates a proposed budget, is to start a discussion and receive guidance from council on acceptable levels of service and possible changes in service or methodologies which they would like to be considered. He acknowledged there is a 1.6 million dollar short fall, but at the same time there are also expectations of the community on provided services. City Manager O'Reilly asked council for clear direction, and if there were changes to the service model, to please convey them to him today.

Council provided an overview of their thoughts on the city manager's proposed mitigation strategies, to which he gave an overview of his recommendations which have the potential to address the forecasted budget revenue condition for FY 2012 and begin to address the ongoing structural gaps in revenues versus expenditures.

No proposed increases in employees' salaries and benefits.

There was a consensus of council to go along with the city manager's recommendation. Councilmember Salmon stated she liked the idea of a one percent increase and City Manager O'Reilly stated he would take this as a direction of no, or a one percent if the city could afford it.

Utilization of PILOT fund transfers to the General Fund totaling \$650,000 – Sanitation Fund PILOT \$150,000, Marina Fund PILOT \$400,000 and Utility PILOT \$200,000.

There was a consensus of council to utilize a minimum of \$650,000. Councilmember Salmon was not in favor except for part of the marina fund.

Management consolidation within the Library: Estimated to reduce deficit \$100,000.

The consensus of council was to consolidate. Councilmember Salmon wanted to ensure that a professional librarian would be hired as director of the library.

Utilization of F.S. Chapter 175/185 Funds to fund the City's Fire and Police Pension contribution: estimated to reduce deficit \$150,000; pending state legislative action.

City Manager O'Reilly explained the difference between the 175/185 funds and the city's stabilization funding which are two different funding sources. There was a consensus of council to use the funds. Councilmember Salmon stated she was not comfortable doing this.

Elimination of the Summer Teen employment program: estimated to reduce deficit \$10,000.

The consensus of council was to eliminate the program. Councilmember Henderson said he would like to see a portion of the savings go to the Little League Program, and Councilmember Salmon said she was not in favor as currently written; she would like to see the expenses put into the program in terms of how it is priced.

Consolidation of City's Police 911/dispatch into Pinellas County Sheriff's dispatch - Estimated to reduce deficit \$200,000 - Reduction in Information Technology budget/staffing if 911 outsourced - estimated to reduce deficit \$75,000.

In response to a request by council, Police Chief Robert Vincent provided an overview and answered questions from council on the current dispatch operations and service changes that would take place in going to the Sheriff's Department.

City Manager O'Reilly said he would like to look at the consolidation closer with the Chief, and will bring back additional information to council for discussion. There was a consensus of council to revisit this item at a future workshop.

Utilization of automated phone system: estimated to reduce deficit \$10,000.

The consensus of council was not to use an automated phone system.

Fee and Rate Increases: increase all general fund user fees 10% = approximately \$50,000 in additional revenue - increase sanitation and recycling fees 10% = approximately \$170,000 in additional revenue.

City Manager O'Reilly explained the proposal is to raise fees and rates by 10 percent. The consensus of council was to go forward with the increases. Councilmember Salmon said she was fine with the 10 percent increase in user fees, but questioned the sanitation/recycling fees.

Outsourcing of Park's Lawn mowing: estimated to reduce deficit \$115,000; reduces staffing.

The consensus of council was to contract out the mowing service. Councilmember Henderson was against the outsourcing.

Utilization of reserve fund: estimated in the amount of \$70,000.

Councilmember Henderson spoke on utilizing reserves if it meant saving positions and not losing the level of services and Vice Mayor Hastings said the reserve fund balance is for a rainy day and he did not want to give up any of it if council did not have to. He may be supportive of a one percent increase for employees using the fund only if everyone was in agreement.

2. Discuss 2011-2012 Capital Improvements Program and Budget.

City Manager O'Reilly reviewed and discussed with the city council the elements of the proposed Fiscal Year 2011/2012 Capital Improvements Budget. Projects included:

Fire Engine replacement
Police vehicles replacement (3)
General facility improvements
Sidewalk repair & replacement
Street resurfacing/brick restoration
Recreation Center lower roof - Phase 1
Shore Blvd. Beach/Pier Archway repair

Shore Boulevard Parking improvements
Stormwater Improvements

Beach Playground replacement
49th Street Drainage Project
49th Street CDBG Redevelopment App.
Police Dept. relocation
Mooring Field
Seawall repairs
Fuel sump replacement

Dan Carpenter, Administrative Services Director, explained the usage of Penny for Pinellas Funds.

City Manager O'Reilly addressed the city's selection by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to receive funding from the State Revolving Loan Program for infiltration and inflow corrections to the city's sewer system.

3. Discuss schedule for Budget Workshop Meetings and review May Meetings Calendar.

City Clerk DeMuth reviewed the proposed schedule for the 2011-2012 Budget. A budget workshop was scheduled for Monday, May 16, at 3:30 p.m., with additional budget discussion being scheduled during council's regular workshop meetings of May 26, June 23, and July 28 at 3:30 p.m. It was noted that City Manager O'Reilly will deliver the proposed budget to council and discuss a tentative millage rate and budget hearing dates during the July 5, council meeting.

In response to a question from Councilmember Banno about September council meeting dates, City Clerk DeMuth said there will be special meetings in September in addition to council's regular meetings. City Manager O'Reilly explained the city cannot schedule budget hearings on the same days as Pinellas County's or the School Board's budget hearings dates.

City Clerk DeMuth reviewed the May meetings calendar.

4. Discuss Spirit of Gulfport Awards Program.

City Clerk DeMuth provided and reviewed the requested background information on the Spirit of Gulfport Award's Program which was established in 1997.

Councilmembers felt they were able to determine if their nominee's met the award criteria without a vote by council. Council agreed by consensus that councilmembers will publicly present their nomination for the award and the city clerk will then contact the nominee to schedule them for recognition at a council meeting.

5. Discuss Keep Pinellas Beautiful Litter Survey.

City Clerk DeMuth stated she has contacted Bill Sanders, Keep Pinellas Beautiful, and would like to schedule the litter survey for Thursday, June 2. She explained the survey process, and stated the survey would start at 8:30 a.m. and last approximately three hours. City Clerk DeMuth asked council to decide who is going to participate in the survey.

City Attorney Salzman referenced a case regarding school board members who were looking at rezoning issues on a bus tour and the 5th Circuit ruled it to be a meeting subject to the Sunshine Law based on the fact that the individuals were forming their decisions based on looking at the potential rezoning areas. City Attorney Salzman advised that if two or more councilmembers attend the survey it should be noticed as a public meeting, the vehicle they are traveling in must be large enough to carry additional people and minutes must be taken. He explained if council sent someone else to gather information, there is no issue.

Council discussed who would participate in the survey. Vice Mayor Hastings volunteered to attend as the elected official, and each councilmember would send a representative from their ward. City Attorney Salzman asked everyone to understand that no one is being given any authority to do anything or make any decisions on the council's behalf; they are just gathering information.

6. Any other business.

In response to a question by Councilmember Banno on rules that would apply to council participating in a bus trip to Vero Beach, City Attorney Salzman said he would like more time to review the 2008 case he referenced earlier, as it is contrary to everything that has been taught in the past and there are several Attorney General Opinions that are contrary to it. Councilmember Salmon said her preference would be to see an operating mooring field that is adjacent to or incorporates a beach area.

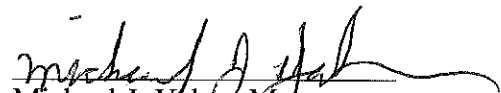
7. Adjournment.

Motion by Councilmember Henderson, second by Councilmember Banno to adjourn.

UNANIMOUS APPROVAL BY ACCLAMATION

Date Approved: 8-16-11


Lesley DeMuth, City Clerk


Michael J. Yakes, Mayor