



**CITY OF PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2009 9:00 A.M.**

**COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:** Friedman, Albers, Wallace, Goldberg, McCormick

**CITY EMPLOYEES PRESENT:** Dave Drury, Finance; Rick Keeney, Public Works; Tom Jackson, Utilities; Phil Wickstrom, Human Resources; Dennis Murphy, Growth Management; Kathy Dailey, City Manager's Office; Butch Arenal, Police; Robert Hancock, Fire; City Attorney Levin; City Manager Kunik; City Clerk Foster

Mayor Friedman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Invocation was given by Mr. John Burrage, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS**

**Bike Week**

**Councilmember Albers** presented the proclamation to Ms. Danne Varel and Ms. Nancy Prafke.

**Southwest Florida Fashion Week**

**Councilmember Goldberg** presented the proclamation, which was accepted by Ms. Darlene James and Ms. Joanne Cetrangelo.

**Florida Surveyors & Mappers Week**

**Councilmember Wallace** presented the proclamation.

Mr. Steve Ford, Charlotte County Surveyor and Mr. Jerry Burns, President of Charlotte County Surveyor's Association accepted same.

**Arts and Humanities Council**

**Councilmember McCormick** presented the proclamation to Mr. Stephen Wierhake and Ms. Judy Malbuisson.

**Economic Impact – Arts & Humanities Council of Charlotte County by Stephen Wierhake, Board President**

Mr. Wierhake explained the Arts & Humanities (A&H) Council had ongoing programs such as maintaining an artists' directory, Artsensation, weekly news column, Art in Public Places and Arts in Education grants. He provided a brief description of each program, stating another incentive involved "Arts are Good for Business" which on a

national level contributed to a better economic climate. He then provided information on the local impact of arts and cultural endeavors, as delineated in the agenda material. He concluded that A&H promoted artists, art and music education in the local schools and provided a vital impact to the economic and tourist development in Charlotte County.

#### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**SRC-01-08 Preliminary Plat – A request by Monroe J. Haltaman, Jr. and Richard Cernoch, Owners, for preliminary plat approval to subdivide a parcel of land containing 117,341 square feet (2.6937 acres) into eight buildable lots with a minimum lot size of 8,840 square feet to create a subdivision to be called ‘Punta Gorda Estates’ located in Block 113, Punta Gorda, commonly known as 455 W. William Street, Punta Gorda, Florida. Long Legal Description is available by contacting the Growth Management.**

City Attorney Leven presented the request for preliminary plat approval.

Ms. Teri Tubbs, Zoning Official, explained the request to subdivide the property into eight buildable lots, noting same would exceed the minimum size and have access to platted public streets. She further explained development was not planned at this time, noting the plat provided for necessary drainage and utility easements. She concluded the request would not create any non-conformities and met the criteria within the code, thus staff, the Development Review Committee (DRC) and the Planning Commission recommended approval.

**Mayor Friedman** called three times for public comment.

Councilmember Abers **MOVED** to close the public hearing, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Goldberg.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

Councilmember Goldberg **MOVED** approval, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Wallace.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

**SRC-01-08 Final Plat – A request by Monroe J. Haltaman, Jr. and Richard Cernoch, Owners, for final plat approval to subdivide a parcel of land containing 117,341 square feet (2.6937 acres) into eight buildable lots with a minimum lot size of 8,840 square feet to create a subdivision to be called ‘Punta Gorda Estates’ located in Block 113, Punta Gorda, commonly known as 455 W. William Street, Punta Gorda, Florida.**

City Attorney Levin presented the request for final plat approval.

Ms. Tubbs noted this was the final plat for the above mentioned property.

**Mayor Friedman** called three times for public comment.

Councilmember Albers **MOVED** to close the public hearing, **SECONDED** by Councilmember McCormick.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

Councilmember Albers **MOVED** approval, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Goldberg.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

### QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARINGS

City Clerk Foster swore in all participants for the following quasi-judicial proceedings.

**V-09-08 – Request to grant a variance to the Land Development Regulations per Section 26-16.10., Page 26-196, of the City Code to allow the maximum building height for the mixed used buildings which are located in the center of the proposed ‘Public Works Campus’ mixed use project to be no greater than 5 stories and 54 feet in height as measured from Base Flood Elevation (BFE) to the top of the roof structure, and to allow the office use buildings located along Maud Street to be no greater than 4 stories and 40 feet in height as measured from BFE to the top of the roof structure; and to allow the multi-family buildings which will face Shreve Street to have no more than 3 habitable floors and be no greater than 40 feet in height as measured from BFE to the top of the tie beam; instead of 2 stories and 35 feet in height as allowed in the Neighborhood Center (NC) zoning district, per City Code Section 26-3.8.(g)(11), Page 26-18, located on property commonly known as “The City of Punta Gorda Public Works Campus”. Legal: A portion of Trabue Subdivision, Blocks 51, 52, 53, 55, 56 & 78 as recorded in Plat Book 1, Page 1, Section 12, Township 41 south, Range 22 east, of the public records of Charlotte County, Florida. Long legal description available at the City of Punta Gorda, Urban Design Division, 126 Harvey Street, Punta Gorda, Florida.**

Continued from December 17, 2008

Continuance from January 21, 2009

WITHDRAWN BY APPLICANT

Mayor Friedman announced the withdrawal.

**SE-03-09 – A Special Exception request by Mike Onushco, per Section 26-16.8. of the City Code of Ordinances to allow artificial turf to be installed in the right-of-way, as permitted by Special Exception approval per City Code Section 26-12.3.(n) at 1220 Via Tripoli, in a General Single Family (GS) zoning district. Legal Description: Block 82, Lot 16, PGI Section 7.**

City Attorney Levin presented the artificial turf request.

Ms. Tubbs explained the request was to install artificial turf in only the right-of-way (ROW), adding the applicant had shown same would meet or exceed all the required

criteria, including but not limited to, minimum tufted weight, green color, minimum eight year warranty, drainage rate, method of anchoring and no use of infill material. She stated if the request was approved a separate ROW permit would be required prior to commencing work. She concluded staff, the DRC and Planning Commission recommended approval with the understanding the City had no responsibility to replace same in the event of work being performed in the ROW.

**Councilmember McCormick** inquired as to the code requirement for replacement.

Ms. Tubbs responded a minimum warranty of eight years was required; however, replacement would be based upon observation by code enforcement officers.

**Mayor Friedman** called three times for public comment.

Councilmember McCormick **MOVED** to close the public hearing, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Wallace.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

Councilmember Albers **MOVED** approval, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Goldberg.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

#### ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION

##### **No Public Hearing Required**

**A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Punta Gorda, Florida, amending Resolution No. 2679-07, reducing the fee for Certificate of Appropriateness applications submitted for Historic Preservation Advisory Board review pursuant to amendments to Chapter 26, Land Development Regulations, Article 16.3 Application for Certificate of Appropriateness and providing an effective date.**

City Attorney Levin read the resolution by title.

Ms. Tubbs explained due to changes to the Land Development Regulations (LDRs) negating the need for public hearings, the fee for Certificates of Appropriateness was being reduced from \$250 to \$50.

Councilmember Wallace **MOVED** approval, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Albers.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

#### CONSENT AGENDA

**Councilmember Goldberg** pulled item E-1.

**Councilmember Albers** pulled item E-2.

Councilmember McCormick **MOVED** approval of the remainder of the consent agenda, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Wallace.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

#### **A. CITY CLERK**

1. Approval of Minutes:

- a. Regular Meeting of March 4, 2009
- b. Special Meeting of March 9, 2009

**B. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

1. A Resolution of the City of Punta Gorda, Florida approving the Amended Interlocal Agreement between the City of Punta Gorda and Charlotte County for Traffic Signal Maintenance; authorizing the Mayor to execute the agreement; and providing an effective date.

**C. FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

1. Award of Amendment #1- Specific Authorization #PLSA33 – Linear Park Phase II – Design, Permitting and Construction Administration Services, in accordance with Agreement #U06120 Public Works Engineering Library, to CPH Engineers.

**D. UTILITIES DEPARTMENT**

1. A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Punta Gorda, Florida, approving the Amended Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority, Charlotte County, and City of Punta Gorda Kings Hwy/Shell Creek Regional Interconnect Agreement; authorizing the Mayor to execute the agreement; and providing an effective date.

**E. GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

1. SCA-02-09 – Request by White Line Magazine to hold Punta Gorda Bike Night II “Takin’ it to the Streets” Event by utilizing W. Marion Ave., Taylor St., Herald Ct. and Sullivan St. right-of-ways on Saturday, May 9, 2009.
2. SCA-03-09 – Request by Punta Gorda Days, Inc. to hold the Annual Block Party utilizing W. Marion Ave., Taylor St., Herald Ct. and Sullivan St. rights-of-way on Saturday, April 18, 2009. The event organizer is also requesting approval for special signage for this event two weeks prior to the date of the event.
3. A request by Punta Gorda Land Holdings, LLC to allow the Project Coordination Unit to remain in place at 2950 W. Marion Avenue to allow for pre-sales of residential units for the Vivante Development.
4. A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Punta Gorda, Florida, approving a Temporary Right of Entry for Charlotte County to access City owned property; authorizing the Mayor to execute the agreement; and providing an effective date.

**F. HUMAN RESOURCES**

1. A Resolution of the City of Punta Gorda, Florida amending the Deferred Compensation Plan with Nationwide Retirement Solutions to allow plan participants to enter into loan agreements with the Plan Administrator; authorizing the Mayor to sign the amendment; and providing an effective date.

2. A Resolution of the City of Punta Gorda, Florida amending the Deferred Compensation Plan with The Hartford Company to allow plan participants to enter into loan agreements with the Plan Administrator; authorizing the Mayor to sign the amendment; and providing an effective date
3. A Resolution of the City of Punta Gorda, Florida amending the Deferred Compensation Plan with ICMA-RC to allow plan participants to enter into loan agreements with the Plan Administrator; authorizing the Mayor to sign the amendment; and providing an effective date

**G. LEGAL DEPARTMENT**

1. Statement of Icard, Merrill, Cullis, Timm, Furen & Ginsburg, P.A. for services rendered by David M. Levin, Esq., through March 10, 2009.

**ITEM E-1: Councilmember Goldberg** spoke of the participation during this event, noting the event was planned for the downtown area, requiring blocking off the streets. He voiced concern the event would be detrimental for the businesses in downtown Punta Gorda due to the time necessary to block off the streets. He pointed out the struggle businesses were experiencing due to the economy, opining it was not appropriate to move the event into the downtown area. He noted both the Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Merchants Association had expressed concern.

Mr. John Wright, Downtown Merchants Association, mentioned closure of the streets for this event conflicted with the Farmer's Market held on Saturdays in the downtown area. He added the closure of the streets for the Block Party in the same month would provide two poor weekends for local businesses. He encouraged organizers to locate the event in Laishley Park.

Maria Von Atzigen, Downtown Merchants Association, concurred with comments made by Mr. Wright, adding the Farmer's Market was a boon to area businesses and should be allowed to continue without interference. She then suggested the event be held in May.

City Manager Kunik reported he had held the last Bike Night in Laishley Park that was well attended and quiet. He stated bikers wished to be downtown such as was done in Fort Myers. He stated he had urged the organizers to move the event to the downtown area due to the fact attendees to the event would see what was located within the downtown area. He pointed out a Downtown Get Down had recently been held in the downtown area with the road blocked off, questioning how this event was different. He acknowledged the timing so near to the Block Party was unfortunate; however, the event was successful in other areas.

**Councilmember Goldberg** reiterated his comments as the interests of the local merchants must be considered. He pointed out Fort Myers had a much larger area in their downtown, while Punta Gorda was much more congested. He mentioned Laishley Park was available on the night this event was planned.

**Councilmember Wallace** stated he felt the Farmer's Market could be accommodated in the morning hours. He opined the event would bring many people to the downtown area. He spoke in favor of the event.

**Councilmember Goldberg** stated Taylor and Sullivan Streets would be blocked off during set up.

Mr. Ken "Shadow" Fish, event organizer, stated the event only included the first 100' of Taylor Street, thus the Farmer's Market would not be impacted, nor would the entrance to the Sunloft parking garage. He stated they have been approaching the area businesses to become involved, adding the food vendors would be local businesses. He added they were beginning the event at 4:00 p.m. to bring people into the area during the dinner hour. He explained they would only use one side of the street for bike parking, thus leaving the fronts of the businesses open for pedestrian traffic. He mentioned he had worked with the Fire Department toward emergency access to the area. He reiterated he would work with the local businesses to ensure their involvement, adding same was the manner in which Fort Myers businesses made money during their event.

**Councilmember McCormick** inquired as to the location of the stage.

Mr. Fish denoted same on the map, noting they would work with staff on same.

Ms. Tubbs added the organizer was to work with the Fire and Police Departments toward the final layout of the event.

**Councilmember Wallace** stated so long as the Farmer's Market was not affected, he had no problem with the event.

**Councilmember Goldberg** confirmed Taylor Street would remain open.

**Councilmember Albers** inquired as to the time of street closings.

Mr. Fish stated they planned to close Marion Avenue at 9:00 a.m.

**Councilmember Albers** pointed out same would interfere with patrons of the Farmer's Market.

Mr. Fish stated Marion Avenue was planned for bike parking rather than vendors, acknowledging he could wait until later in the day to close same. He offered to make any concessions necessary to hold the event.

Discussion ensued with regard to the use of Herald Court for Farmer's Market traffic.

Mr. Fish expressed concern with the possibility of rain should the event be held in Laishley Park. He then distributed a City-wide survey done in Cape Coral related to the economic impact from Bike Night as well as the letter being distributed to area businesses to encourage participation.

**Councilmember Albers** stated his concerns were related to the Farmer's Market and the inconvenience of having Marion Avenue closed all day, adding if those could be resolved, he was more comfortable with the proposed event.

Councilmember Wallace **MOVED** approval with there being no impact to the Farmer's Market and that Marion Avenue not be closed until 2:00 p.m., **SECONDED** by Councilmember Albers.

**Councilmember Albers** recommended downtown merchants be surveyed following the event to see if there were any adverse or positive impacts from the event.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

**ITEM E-2: Councilmember Albers** stated he felt a discussion should be held with regard to the \$3,000 contribution for the Block Party in light of the economic climate.

City Manager Kunik explained the City required payment of \$20,000 from the Block Party for services provided by the City, noting an approximate \$5,000 in excess was budgeted.

**Mayor Friedman** concurred with Councilmember Albers in that decisions must be made with regard to the upcoming budget which could impact employees, voicing concern with the contribution.

**Councilmember Albers** acknowledged the Block Party donated funds to local charities; however, he was concerned with taking funds from employees to provide to local charities.

Ms. Brenda Ryan spoke of the financial needs of the Block Party, pointing out it was the City's event.

**Councilmember Wallace** inquired if the cost of admission had been increased.

Ms. Ryan advised this year's admission had been raised to \$3.00 so same was affordable to families who could then spend money at the participating vendors.

**Councilmember Albers** inquired as to the funds contributed to charities.

Ms. Ryan stated she did not have those figures at this time.

**Mayor Friedman** stated the question being raised was whether to take \$3,000 of tax funds to give to charity. He opined the Block Party would be able to survive without the contribution.

**Councilmember Wallace** inquired if staff could work with the organizers toward reducing the costs for the necessary City services.

**Mayor Friedman** reiterated his concern with utilizing tax funds.

City Attorney Levin advised his firm would contribute \$1,000 toward the necessary funds.

Councilmember Albers **MOVED** approval of the event with the elimination of the in-kind services, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Goldberg.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

Discussion ensued with regard to parking for the event.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Fiscal Year 2008 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report**

Mr. Dave Drury, Finance Director, drew members' attention to the report, as delineated in the agenda material, stating there were no noteworthy issues to discuss. He recalled there were no recommendations in the previous year's management letter to comply with; however, a comment had been made this year related to the contract with Marine Park for the Laishley Park Marina. He noted a staff member was working toward correcting same.

Councilmember McCormick **MOVED** acceptance, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Goldberg.

**MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

**NOTE: A short break was called at 10:20 a.m.**

#### **Fiscal Year 2010 Budget Alternatives**

**Mayor Friedman** stated the City Manager would provide background information prior to members discussing the proposed alternatives.

City Manager Kunik displayed a PowerPoint presentation, as delineated in the agenda material, stating three scenarios existed with regard to the projected gap between revenues and expenditures as follows: adopt roll forward rate, gap of \$1,679,367; homestead taxable value increasing 0.1%, non-homestead value decreasing 10%, gap of \$1,901,367 and non-homestead value decreasing 15%, gap of \$2,109,367.

**Mayor Friedman** pointed out staff had estimated the revenues; however, the listed estimate for expenditures was assuming no changes would be made from this year's expenditures. He stated the purpose of this discussion was to reduce the expenditures in an effort to close the gap.

**Councilmember Wallace** stated he did not feel the revenue figures were unrealistic.

City Manager Kunik then indicated the Utility Fund was estimated to have a \$2,439,205 gap while the Canal Maintenance Funds were projected to have a gap of \$333,254 for the Punta Gorda Isles (PGI) fund and \$63,305 for the Burnt Store Isles (BSI) fund.

**Councilmember Wallace** inquired if further information was available with regard to the allocation of the gas taxes between the City and County.

City Manager Kunik responded in the negative.

Ms. Kathy Dailey, Assistant City Manager, then provided a detailed review of the Employee Self-Assessment Follow-up, as delineated in the agenda material, stating the employees had provided many ideas on revenue enhancements and expenditure savings. She noted 61.5% of the ideas included within the business plan were implemented or were in the process of being implemented. She then displayed a list of suggestions provided by employees this year, as delineated in the agenda material, noting some had been included in the proposed alternatives to be discussed this date.

City Manager Kunik then stated administrative restructuring was proposed for the 2010 budget which included Human Resources being a division of the City Manger's Office, merging Facilities Maintenance and Parks and Grounds, eliminating a supervisor position and moving fire inspections into the Building Division, eliminating an inspector's position.

**Mayor Friedman** commended staff on the advance preparation toward the 2010 budget. He then stated the objective this date was to provide enough direction to bring the City Manager within striking distance of closing the gap, suggesting each alternative be considered and placed in one of three categories: items to be implemented as soon as this year if possible; items that should be prioritized toward possible consideration and items that should not be considered. He then stated he viewed members' responsibility as the policy decisions such as whether wage increases would be awarded rather than consideration of particular position changes.

City Manager Kunik then stated he had proposed no changes to City Council as the salary was set by ordinance.

**Councilmember Wallace** stated if employees' wages were reduced, Councilmember's should be reduced as well.

City Manger Kunik then stated the City Clerk had offered a \$5,000 reduction in operating costs as well as a reduction in hours for one employee.

Consensus of members was to accept same.

City Manger Kunik then detailed the operational reductions and reduction of hours of the Assistant City Manager's hours.

Consensus of members was to accept same, with the provision that the reduction of the Assistant's hours should be the City Manager's decision.

City Manger Kunik presented a \$100,000 reduction in the Information Technology division, followed by a \$38,000 operational reduction in the Finance budget.

Consensus of members was to accept both proposals.

City Manager Kunik detailed the proposed alternatives to the Public Works operating budget, as delineated in the agenda material.

Consensus of members was to accept same conditioned upon contracting out the mowing presenting a savings.

City Manager Kunik provided detail on reductions proposed for Growth Management and Fire Departments, as delineated in the agenda material.

Consensus of members was to accept same, reminding the City Manager that changes to employee hours would be his decision.

City Manager Kunik presented the proposed alternatives for the Police Department, noting one alternative was to transfer some costs for Marine Patrol to the PGI and BSI canal maintenance funds. He advised the E-Citation alternative would not be ready until the following year and should not be considered.

Consensus of members was to approve only the \$60,000 in operational reductions.

City Manager reported \$250,000 of undesignated reserves could be utilized for the 2010 budget, adding a portion of the \$35,000 budgeted for economic development would remain this year, thus nothing should be budgeted in the next year.

Consensus of members was to agree with same.

City Manager Kunik then presented alternatives for a lower cost HMO, denoting the proposed savings.

Consensus of members was to accept same.

City Manager Kunik presented a proposal to reduce the City's portion of dependent coverage from 50% to 40%.

Consensus of members was to consider same as a possibility at a later date.

City Manager Kunik presented his proposal to eliminate three paid holidays and allow employees to use vacation time to take same off. He advised an attempt would be made to select holiday with less impact on the employees.

Consensus of members was to accept same.

City Manger Kunik then presented a proposal to increase the general employee's pension contribution from 5% to 7% and the Police and Fire from 8% to 10% in order to offset the City's contribution based upon the economic climate.

**Councilmember Albers** suggested same be split, approving half of the increase at this time and considering the remainder at a later date if necessary. He pointed out all of the alternatives being considered impacted the employees.

**Councilmember Wallace** countered he felt the entire amount should be accepted.

**Mayor Friedman** stated he concurred with Councilmember Albers based upon the number of impacts to the employee's income.

Consensus of members was to concur with Councilmember Albers.

City Manager Kunik advised all of the items under discussion would require negotiating with the bargaining units. He then proposed a freeze on wage increases for all employees.

**Councilmember McCormick** then inquired as to certification increases.

City Manager Kunik advised same would be considered as a promotion which would include a wage increase.

Consensus of members was to accept same.

City Manager Kunik presented a proposal to decrease wages as follows: under \$50,000 - 0%; \$50,000 to \$69,000 - 1%; \$70,000 - \$89,000 - 2% and \$90,000 and above - 3%.

**Mayor Friedman** stated in light of the other impacts and the upcoming ones, same should not be considered.

Consensus of members was to agree.

City Manager Kunik presented an alternative to require a one week, unpaid furlough for all employees.

**Mayor Friedman** suggested this be considered as a possibility if needed to bridge any gap, adding same should be delayed until after the first quarter as the reserves may be more than was estimated.

**Councilmember McCormick** stated he did not feel same should be applied to those positions that have had their hours reduced.

**Councilmember Goldberg** stated if additional reserves were realized, he felt same should be allocated to road work.

Consensus of members was to concur.

City Manager Kunik presented an alternative to require reimbursement for assigned, take home vehicles in the amount of \$25 within the City and \$50 outside of same.

Consensus of members was to approve.

City Manager Kunik noted a savings by eliminating uniform cleaning, noting same would require bargaining for Police and Fire.

**Councilmember Albers** suggested splitting the costs.

Consensus of members was to hold off on consideration unless necessary.

City Manager Kunik reported \$1,495,000 in general fund savings thus far. He then stated the following suggestions would result in service level reductions the public would notice. He stated the first was the cost of televising Council meetings, or as an alternative, reducing the airing to one time per week.

Consensus of members was not to consider same.

City Manager Kunik then proposed the elimination of an Administrative Assistant in the City Clerk's Office, noting same would hinder other proposals.

Consensus of members was not to consider same.

City Manager Kunik then proposed the elimination of three firefighters, noting same may negate the savings of overtime by the move up program.

Consensus of members was not to consider same in light of the possible consideration of Advanced Life Support program in the future.

City Manager Kunik then displayed a proposal for reducing the School Resource Officer program, noting the savings included sale of vehicles and equipment.

**Councilmember Goldberg** spoke of the valuable resource of same, suggesting if it was necessary to do so that only one officer at the high school be eliminated.

**Councilmember Albers** suggested the costs of same be split with the School Board or to utilize Volunteers in Policing (VIP).

**Mayor Friedman** mentioned a reduction in hours may reduce the total costs.

City Manger Kunik requested a figure to work toward.

**Councilmember McCormick** stated same should be equal to one of the officers at the high school. He noted the campus size would be reduced in the future.

Discussion ensued with regard to the number of officers.

Mr. Butch Arenal, Police Chief, advised the School Board would have no additional funding. He then spoke with regard to the configuration of the high school campus during the current construction, adding when the new building was completed in 2011 providing coverage would be easier.

Discussion ensued with regard to the possibility of utilizing VIPs for some aspects of the program such as DARE.

Consensus of members was not to consider same.

City Manager Kunik mentioned elimination of the part time Administrative Assistant positions in Growth Management and Procurement.

Consensus of members was to leave the decision to the City Manager.

City Manager Kunik proposed elimination of the annual contribution to United Way to local charities.

**Councilmember Albers** acknowledged the program was great; however, he had a problem with funding charities with tax dollars. He suggested same be reduced by half with the knowledge that same would be eliminated the following year.

**Councilmember Wallace** countered he did not consider Cooper Street a charity.

**Councilmember Goldberg** pointed out the funding was provided to United Way, thus there was no guarantee the funds would be provided to Cooper Street.

**Councilmember McCormick** stated he did not want to see Cooper Street's ability to receive grants hampered by losing the connection to the City.

**Councilmember Albers** responded there would always be a connection as the City owned the property.

Consensus of members was to reduce the allocation by half this year and eliminate same in full the following year.

City Manager Kunik denoted a proposal to eliminate the Police Department special teams such as bike, dive and SWAT, noting same removed the officers from the street. Consensus of members was not to consider same, unless the City Manager felt same was an operational improvement.

City Manager Kunik then denoted the proposed employee reductions in the Utility Fund, as well as consideration of outsourcing meter reading if feasible, resulting in elimination of three more positions.

Consensus of members was to approve same.

City Manager Kunik then proposed to relocate Billings & Collections to the Public Works complex or into City Hall to eliminate one position, noting same would require the City Clerk's Office to collect payments. He reported approximately 1,700 residents utilized the drive through window.

Discussion ensued with regard to the appropriate location.

Consensus of members was to announce the closing of the drive through window as soon as possible and to move forward with the elimination of the position.

City Manager Kunik advised retention of the current PGI canal maintenance fee of \$400 required the elimination of one position and reductions in the reserves and stabilization work.

Consensus of members was to consider same after discussion with the PGI Canal Advisory Committee with regard to their recommendation to increase the fee.

City Manager Kunik proposed the use of reserves to maintain the current BSI canal maintenance fee.

Consensus of members was to consider same following the BSI Canal Advisory Committee's recommendation.

Mr. Drury reported the general fund reductions were \$1,500,000, adding the Utility Fund reductions were \$1,224,000 at this time.

**Mayor Friedman** added the items to be considered at a later date were \$554,500 for both the General and Utility Funds. He suggested prior to the next budget meeting it

be determined which proposals were preferred by employees. He noted the items to be determined by the City Manager totaled \$77,000. He recommended no further decisions be made until it became clearer as to what the taxable values would be.

City Manager Kunik reported staff would be able to provide a recommendation to members with regard to water and sewer rates at the next meeting based upon decisions made this date.

**Councilmember Wallace** stated while employees would be faced with many of the reductions, they did still have a job.

**Mayor Friedman** added it would not become worse than what was discussed this date, as far as the employees were concerned.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CITY OFFICERS**

#### **CITY MANAGER**

City Manager Kunik reported the home rule potential tax impact analysis had been prepared, noting a letter would be prepared for the local delegation and governor. He then stated the City Marketplace (TCM) had been informed of the process necessary for a pay for parking lot on the property; however, the property had been chained off to prohibit parking without permits or compliance with the code. He advised the property owner had been noticed of the violations and would be cited if same were not in compliance this date. He added there was one area of the chain that encroached into the ROW that would be removed following notice to the property owner.

**NOTE: Councilmember Albers left the meeting at 12:13 a.m.**

**Councilmember Goldberg** stated the Main Street proposal dealt strictly with landscaping and aesthetics.

**Mayor Friedman** pointed out the City had provided the requested information to the property owner with regard to the pay for parking lot; however, no communication had occurred prior to them installing the chain.

#### **CITY ATTORNEY**

City Attorney Levin advised staff was moving forward with the due diligence on the Public Works Property.

**NOTE: Councilmember Albers returned to the meeting at 12:15 p.m.**

City Attorney Levin continued the City would provide the closing documents, adding the seller was responsible for the title work.

### **BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

#### **Announcement of Vacancies**

Historic Preservation Advisory Board (2)

City Clerk Foster announced the vacancies.

Punta Gorda Housing Authority (2)

City Clerk Foster announced the vacancies.

Utility Advisory Board (2)

City Clerk Foster announced the vacancies.

### **Nominations**

There were none.

### **Appointments**

Utility Advisory Board

Voting forms were distributed.

City Attorney Levin announced Mr. Jeff Weiler had received the most votes and was therefore appointed to the Utility Advisory Board.

## **POLICY AND LEGISLATION**

### **Request by Councilmember McCormick to change the order of the agenda for regularly scheduled City Council meetings.**

**Councilmember McCormick** explained Mr. Bill Hughes had suggested New Business be moved ahead of the public hearings on the agenda. He suggested same be added to a future agenda after consideration by members.

**MCCORMICK:** Referenced a report related to Truth in Millage Rate, noting he felt same had a bearing on the value of property thus the need for comprehensive tax reform.

**GOLDBERG:** Commented Councilmember McCormick had represented the City on the request for grant funding for the day docks, asking when same would be considered by the County Commission.

**Councilmember McCormick** responded March 24, 2009.

## **CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

Mr. Ray Rose spoke of the outstanding level of service provided by the employees of the City who went above and beyond to provide same, pointing out that the budget proposals discussed this date severely impacted the employees. He stated he felt there should be consideration to the taxpayers giving up something in order not to penalize the employee at such a great level.

**Councilmember Wallace** countered the impacts were minimal, noting there were many people in much worse shape than the City's employees.

**Mayor Friedman** added until the revenue figures were known, it was unsure as to the level of reductions necessary.

Mr. Tom Carroll spoke of staff's work on the budget reductions, voicing concern with pitting the citizens against the employees. He pointed out the citizens had given up

the repair of seawalls or roads due to the economic situation. He pointed out most of the residents had significant reductions in their retirement funds.

**Mayor Friedman** stated he felt the point was whether the employees should bear all the results of the economy or whether the taxpayers should share in the burden.

Mr. Noel Hyde opined the expense for school resource officers should be funded by the School Board rather than the City paying same for discipline in the schools.

City Manager Kunik stated same was more than discipline as it included education, as well as much information being gained from the students.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

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Mayor

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City Clerk