



**CITY OF PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2011 9:00 A.M.**

COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT: Goldberg, Albers, Wallace, Friedman, Keesling

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

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

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

PROCLAMATION/PRESENTATIONS

Charlotte Symphony Orchestra Month

Mayor Goldberg presented the proclamation, which was received by Ms. Cheri Leitch and Mr. Francis Wada.

NOTE: City Council recessed and reconvened as the Community Redevelopment Agency. (See corresponding minutes)

ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION

No Public Hearing Required

GA-22-10 - An Ordinance of the City of Punta Gorda, Florida, rewriting in its entirety Chapter 23, "Traffic", of the Punta Gorda Code; providing for conflict and severability and providing an effective date. **SECOND READING**

City Attorney Levin read the ordinance by title.

Councilmember Friedman **MOVED** approval, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Keesling.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

ZA-20-10 - An Ordinance of the City of Punta Gorda, Florida, amending Chapter 26 Punta Gorda Code known as "The Land Development Regulations", Article 12, Landscaping Standards, amending Subsection 12.4, Types of Landscaping, amending Sub-subsection 12.4(k) and adding (l) providing for soil stabilization in instances where demolition of a structure has occurred; amending Subsection 16.5, Application for Demolition Permit, removing exemption for demolition

permit for swimming pools and adding (e) providing for soil stabilization method requirements for properties where demolition of a single family residence has occurred; adding (f) providing for soil stabilization for multi-family and commercial properties; providing for conflict and severability; and providing an effective date.

SECOND READING

City Attorney Levin read the ordinance by title.

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

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Albers **MOVED** approval of the consent agenda, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Friedman.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

A. City Clerk's Department

1. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of January 19, 2011.

B. City Manager's Department

1. Memorandum of Understanding with IAFF Local 2546

C. Finance Department

1. Award Agreement to ET MacKenzie of FL, Inc. of Punta Gorda, FL for construction of the Booster Pumping Station Relief Force Main (BPF) Relief Force Main.

D. Growth Management Department

1. Approval to proceed with Lien Foreclosure for 412 Allen Street

E. Legal Department

1. Invoice of Allen, Norton & Blue, P.A. for services rendered in November & December 2010
2. Invoice of the Farr Law Firm for services rendered in December 2010
3. Monthly Litigation Report

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Strategies to Enhance Paramedic Retention and Addition

City Manager Kunik drew members' attention to the information provided in the agenda material, stating the questions were what could be done to retain the paramedics currently on staff and what could be done to increase the number for future use in Advanced Life Support (ALS). He stated the two proposals were to provide incentive pay for the current paramedics and to sponsor a certain number of staff to become trained upon an agreement to stay employed by the City for a certain number of years following certification. He stated neither proposal was budgeted for the 2011

year, adding if same were approved it would have to be funded from the general fund reserves.

Councilmember Albers asked if the training being proposed included the required preceptor training.

Mr. Rob Hancock, Fire Chief, responded that would be separate and would be undertaken closer to inception of the program.

Councilmember Keesling inquired as to the schooling.

Mr. Hancock responded same was approximately one and one half years.

Councilmember Friedman stated he felt those who were currently certified as paramedics should be rewarded and to encourage others to gain the certification as the City did not presently have enough to move forward with ALS. He stated he felt staff should be encouraged to take the training at the City's cost and at their time in preparation of having enough to implement ALS.

Discussion ensued with regard to staffing needs to implement ALS.

Councilmember Albers opined he would not like to go through another budget year without implementing ALS for at least one station.

Mr. Hancock reported a committee had been formed to develop a plan to work toward implementation of ALS.

Mayor Goldberg questioned the impact on the 2011 budget to fund same.

City Manager Kunik stated the schooling would impact the 2012 budget based upon commencement of the training; however, the incentive pay would impact the 2011 general fund reserves.

Councilmember Friedman inquired if \$4,000 was an adequate incentive in knowing that the City was moving forward with implementation of ALS.

Mr. Hancock responded affirmatively.

Discussion ensued with regard to retention of employees.

Consensus of members was to support both aspects of the plan and to consider costs during the budget discussions.

Presentation of the 100% Design Plans for Shreve Street Multi-Use Recreational Trail (MURT)

Mr. Mike Giardullo, Weiler Engineering, displayed a PowerPoint presentation, as delineated in the agenda material, stating this portion would provide connectivity for the Ring Around the City project. He stated the MURT was a ten foot wide asphalt path running along Shreve Street with signage for pedestrian safety, two seating areas, landscaping improvements and compass roses at the intersections. He estimated construction costs at \$577,000, noting there were certain items that could be

eliminated or delayed to reduce the costs in the amount of \$200,000. He then stated all information had been provided to staff to enable the project to go out to bid.

City Manager Kunik stated the estimated cost was approximately \$100,000 over budget. He stated once the bids were received, members could look at the individual items.

Councilmember Keesling stated she felt the intersection at Henry and Shreve Streets had been improved for pedestrians in the current plan.

Mayor Goldberg commented value engineering could be utilized to bring down the cost.

Councilmember Wallace stated he felt the seating area at West End Drive was unnecessary.

Consensus of members was to take the project out to bid, after which time members would review the components if the overall bid was not within budget.

Councilmember Albers and Mayor Goldberg concurred the seating and compass roses were not necessary at West End Drive.

Consensus of members was to eliminate the seating area and compass roses at West End Drive prior to putting the project out to bid.

Note: A short break was called at 10:29 a.m.

Explanation, justification and discussion of last meeting's (January 19, 2011) defense of the utility rate increase

Councilmember Friedman displayed several charts, as delineated in the agenda material, stating the top chart reflected the financial plan including the 3% increase instituted in October of 2010 with a reserve of over \$6,000,000. He noted \$1,000,000 in reserves existed following the five year projection. He then drew members' attention to the chart denoting the increase taking effect in 2015, noting same would show a shortfall of \$328,000. He stated staff had indicated the increase was necessary to reduce the amount to be borrowed in the way of interest, countering the 3% increase amounted to approximately \$400,000 where the interest was only \$16,000. He pointed out capital improvements projects (CIP) had no bearing on the proforma as same was considered under both scenarios with adequate funding. He then displayed charts depicting CIP under various scenarios provided by staff, as delineated in the agenda material, with the 3% increase in 2011 or 2015 or a 9% increase in 2015. He maintained one 9% increase in 2015 was better than a 3% increase in 2011 which must be paid each of the ensuing years, adding the ratepayer was more deserving to hold on to the money not immediately needed by the utility. He reiterated the capital improvements would not be impacted by a delay in imposing an unnecessary increase

at this time. He asked members if they agreed the final chart was correct, if they would prefer ratepayers to pay 3% over the next five years more so than wait until 2015 to institute an increase of 9% or less.

Councilmember Albers noted the reserves in the last scenario were under the \$1,000,000 mark, thus the increase would be more than 9%. He stated he was not in favor of a large increase, thus if the chart were correct, he would prefer to institute two smaller increases in years 2014 and 2015.

Councilmember Friedman stated he had no problem with same, adding his point was that there was no need for a 3% increase at this time and same should be rescinded.

Councilmember Albers mentioned the proforma only considered a 3% increase in personnel costs over the entire period, opining rising health care costs could increase that amount as well as the possibility of pay increases.

Councilmember Friedman concurred, stating those items were projections and could be amended as facts became known. He stated he was simply asking if members felt the current 3% increase was unnecessary at this time.

Councilmember Albers pointed out the increase was not a big impact on the normal utility bill.

Councilmember Wallace stated he felt all of the projected figures should be reviewed, citing the fact expenses were increasing at a greater rate than revenues as an example. He requested additional information on the projected CIP costs prior to any decision being made.

Mayor Goldberg stated he felt the decision was one of philosophy as to how to manage the reserves in that they should be used to lower rates or to assist with funding of CIP to alleviate the need to borrow as much. He stated a decision had been made during the budget process to avoid significant, large rate increases so as not to have a significant impact on the ratepayers based upon the information provided at that time. He requested additional information as he was unsure if the information provided warranted a different action than had been decided upon two years prior.

Councilmember Albers stated many decisions had been made to reduce costs by postponing expenditures, pointing out those expenditures would be necessary at some time. He opined as there were no public complaints with regard to the increase in rates, he felt same should be left in place in hope of ameliorating future expenditures.

Councilmember Wallace suggested same be left in place and reconsidered during the upcoming budget process for the 2012 budget year.

Mayor Goldberg stated the proforma provided by staff indicated another rate increase would not be necessary until 2016 if the present increase was left in place.

Mr. Don McCormick pointed out \$1,000,000 in reserves must be maintained for bond issues, recommending a figure well above that be maintained so as to be available for emergencies.

Consensus of members was to have the Utility Advisory Board (UAB) review the proforma provided by staff and the charts provided by Councilmember Friedman for accuracy and to provide additional information to members for consideration during the 2012 budget process.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion regarding overnight parking in City parks.

Ms. Teri Tubbs, Zoning Official, explained a situation had arisen where a resident had been parking two of their many vehicles overnight at the Nature Park on Aqui Esta Boulevard as they did not have sufficient room on their own property for all vehicles. She advised the code was silent with regard to whether same was permitted, asking members if they wished same to be allowed or to amend the code to prohibit same.

Councilmember Wallace voiced concern allowing same might cause homeless to sleep in their cars in City parks, stating he did not see any positives.

Councilmember Albers stated the prohibition should include recreational vehicles (RVs) as well, adding he felt Laishley Park should only prohibit RVs as many fishermen remained on the water for long hours.

Consensus of members was to direct staff to amend the ordinance.

Discussion regarding the provision that allows vehicles for human habitation to be parked overnight in the Special Residential Overlay District.

Ms. Tubbs explained while the code allowed automobiles to be parked overnight in the right-of-way (ROW) but off the paved roadway with a permit, the same permission did not exist for RVs. She advised staff had received a request for same as sufficient space in the property owner's driveway did not exist for their RV. She requested direction from members as to whether they desired a code amendment to allow same.

Councilmember Albers stated the only properties with sufficient ROW to park an RV were corner lots, thus he was not in favor of the proposed amendment.

Consensus of members was not to amend the ordinance to include RVs.

RECOMMENDATION FROM CITY OFFICERS

CITY MANAGER

City Manager Kunik reported East Grace Street in the area of the Health Department had been restricted to one way traffic during construction of Charlotte High School, which was now completed, thus staff would like to return the roadway to a two way street.

Councilmember Keesling inquired if the on-street parking would be lost.

City Manager Kunik responded affirmatively.

Mayor Goldberg responded he was in favor of returning to two way traffic.

Mr. Rick Keeney, Public Works Director, stated the change had been made following Hurricane Charley to provide parking for the Health Department which was no longer needed.

Consensus of members was to return the street to two way traffic.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Announcement of Vacancies

Historic Preservation Advisory Board – Alternate

City Clerk Foster announced the vacancy.

Utility Advisory Board (2)

City Clerk Foster announced the vacancies.

Nominations

Building Board Alternate

Councilmember Friedman **MOVED** to nominate and reappoint Mr. Grossman, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Albers.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

Punta Gorda Canal Advisory Committee

Councilmember Friedman **MOVED** to nominate and appoint Mr. Hoffman, **SECONDED** by Councilmember Keesling.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Mr. John Burrage announced Mr. McCormick had been elected as President of the South County Coalition.

Mayor Goldberg then advised the meeting would be recessed at this time to be reconvened as a Shade Meeting to consider litigation matters.

The meeting was recessed at 11:43 a.m.

Mayor

City Clerk