



CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FL
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION
Held in City Hall Chambers, 1600 Nela Avenue

Tuesday, August 25, 2021, * 6:00 pm
MINUTES

Present was:

Nicholas Fouraker, Mayor
District 1 Commissioner – Ed Gold
District 2 Commissioner – Anthony Carugno
District 3 Commissioner – Karl Shuck
District 4 Commissioner – Randy Holihan
District 5 Commissioner – OPEN
District 6 Commissioner – Jim Partin

Absent was:

District 7 Commissioner – Sue Nielsen

1. Call to Order and Confirmation of Quorum

Mayor Fouraker called the workshop to order at 6:00 pm, and the Clerk confirmed quorum.

Also present were City Manager Francis, Chief Houston, Finance Manager Tracey Richardson, and Admin Asst Heidi Peacock.

2. Budget Workshop FY 2021-22

a. Review of General Fund Revenues

City Manager presented the Budget for FY20/21. Mr. Francis said the Budget Committee held public workshops, and at the last meeting, they recommended the Budget come to Council with a prioritized "Needs List" for consideration. Some of the Highlights of the preliminary Budget are:

- Millage remains at 4.4018.
- Revenues remain close to previous years.
- This year's reserves were used to fund ongoing operations. No allocations for Bing Grants will be budgeted.
- Code Enforcement as of October 1 will fall under the Police Department.
- Solid Waste will increase to \$260.40 a year per household.
- Establishes a 3% cost of living increase for non-uniformed employees and increases the retirement to 14.5%.
- Police Department Pay Plan 4% increase across the board and hold the retirement at 17.5% with a cap of 19.5%.
- Health Care increase by 10.5% - budgeted 12%. No dental or vision increase.
- Expecting ARPA Funding – Paperwork has been submitted and in-process (2-year distribution). Some of the funds may be used to replenish losses in revenue during COVID utilizing the formula provided by the State.
- Paving projects District 3, and District 2 & 5, Swann Beach and Nela Bridge.
- Traffic Calming Design and Engineering
- Sidewalks – 25,000 Citywide. Discussion ensued on following the current Code that calls for homeowner repair/replacement.
- Mr. Francis provided an FLC report on ad valorem assessments by City for review to keep the millage rate the same or at a rollback rate.

Mayor Fouraker asked for an update on the Master Transportation Plan (\$150,000 grant) and the traffic signal/roundabout on Hoffner. Mr. Francis said the plan included the traffic signals of approximately \$65,000 design & Engineering, roundabout \$600,000, and the traffic signal roughly \$300,000 for Hoffner/St-Denis/Peninsular. At the open house, the staff received a lot of comments from residents for further review. Discussion ensued on safety measures, roundabouts, and Orange County partnership.

Mayor Fouraker said he would like to hear from Council and their District prioritization list.

The Council reported as follows,

- Comm Carugno stated that his District requested paving on Cross Lake/Peninsular and additional and street lights on Venetian and Hoffner. He spoke on the safety benefit of crosswalks and the installation of license plate readers. He shared his concerns on the school traffic and the backup on Hoffner.
- Comm Shuck stated that finishing the paving project on Idaho and repairs at Swann Beach. His District is primarily a residential area, and for the most part, there have not been many complaints/issues raised.
- Comm Holihan stated that lighting in Tremble Park would benefit the residents and address safety concerns.
- Comm Partin spoke on the MSTU tax and the street sweeping around gated communities and cleaned the Lake. He told of the rain and stormwater drains in his neighborhood. Mr. Francis said the request was addressed at a NAV Board meeting and the NAV Board said they can establish an agreement with the HOA's similar to that of the City. Mr. Francis said he had forwarded the information to the HOA's. Mr. Francis said he could bring it forward at the next NAV Board meeting for an update.

Comm Partin addressed the traffic calming alongside Conway (Belle Isle Apartments). There are residents from both sides who continue to use that area as a u-turn section. He is wondering if we can use something to deter those vehicles from making u-turns going north on a southbound lane, creating a safety issue.

Comm Partin further shared his concern with motorcycles shooting down Conway towards Jude. Chief Houston said there is a task force looking at that issue; challenging problem to enforce.

City Manager Francis spoke on the following budget costs and priorities list based on Council discussions,

- City Manager Francis said staff and the Budget Committee provided a list of ten priorities. He spoke on unfreezing police officer positions. Chief Houston has submitted for a COPS grant to fund these positions. The COPS grant will fund this 100% for the 1st year; then, the remaining 4-years will be approximately a 75/25; 50/50; 25/75 split. At the 5-year, the City will need to cover 100%, which will open discussion for sustaining revenues. The Lobbyists are currently working on the Grant on the City's behalf.
- Paving projects (Cay/Stockbridge/Delia) showing excessive wear.
- Allow for the additional 2-Public Works Technician positions to run a 7-day operation to respond to City needs. In addition, purchase of an excavator, dump truck, and street sweeper.
- Part-time Admin position will cover special projects for all departments at City Hall – 20 hours a week.
- Police Vessels' are used every day of the week and are part of law enforcement on the Lake. Purchase a new vessel and 2-power poles.
- Renovation of the Bank of America building. City is waiting to schedule a meeting with CCA on their interest. Comm Partin and Mr. Francis will meet with the CCA Chairman once a date has been finalized.
- Coming out of COVID, it may be a good idea to purchase holiday decorations.

Mr. Francis said if CCA is interested in the Bank of America, he asked what we will do with relocating the Police Department. Mr. Francis said an option would be to renovate City Hall, add a second floor and combine Admin and PD. Council said it is an alternative; however, they foresee a parking issue. It might be a benefit to have a location by Wallace Field if there was any other property available to allow for a boat slip.

Mayor Fouraker spoke of the possibility of using the location of the Fire Department on Matchett Road. After some discussion with Comm Uribe, she said she would like to see the City identify what property the City will swap with the Fire Station, relocate and produce a new one. Mayor Fouraker promoted having the Council form a sub-committee with Comm Holihan and Comm Partin and report to Council with a recommendation.

City Manager Francis spoke on the opportunities for purchasing a property from the Church in 2022 (Maintenance and Oasis building) and other areas in the City. He asked if Council would like to propose an Agreement or entering through a friendly condemnation or eminent domain. Discussion ensued on working with the County, PD substations, and strategic discussions/workshops moving forward.

Council consensus was to schedule a workshop on September 29, 2021, at 6:00 pm.

City Manager Francis spoke on the issue for an Assistant City Manager and resident concerns on the additional staff. Mr. Francis said the reason for the new position is to create a succession plan.

City Manager Francis recommended having staff calculate what money the City lost due to COVID and replace it with some ARPA funds not to use City Reserves for operations. Discussion ensued on ARPA Funds, funding new officers, and public works positions moving forward.

Mr. Francis said most of the Street sweeping is covered by the NAV Board and the Agreement through MSTU. The request for a new street sweeper is to replace the old City street sweeper that covers a couple of streets due to navigational issues.

After discussion, Chief Houston said it makes fiscal sense to sell the boat while it is in good shape, reallocate the funds, and offset the balance towards a new vessel. Council discussed having the PD lease one of the available boat docks on the Lake and hold off building a new dock due to the rising fees on construction.

Mayor Fouraker spoke on a necessary revenue sources analysis to accomplish the much-needed projects. Comm Gold said an additional \$400 per household might be able to cover the costs. He asks that all Council members carefully carry that message to their districts and feel the pros and cons. He further added that another alternative might be to annex Conway Woods and Shenandoah. Discussion ensued on revenue sources and sustaining revenue.

At the next City Council meeting Council will review the Stormwater Fund and ARPA allocations for specific projects.

3. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Fouraker called for a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.