



MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF NEW PORT RICHEY

NEW PORT RICHEY CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
5919 MAIN STREET, NEW PORT RICHEY, FLORIDA

December 17, 2024

4:30 PM

**ORDER OF
BUSINESS**

1 Call to Order - Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Chopper Davis at 4:30 p.m. Those in attendance were Deputy Mayor Kelly Mothershead, Councilwoman Matt Murphy, Councilman Peter Altman and Councilman Bertell Butler, IV.

Also in attendance were City Manager Debbie L. Manns, City Attorney Timothy Driscoll, City Clerk Judy Meyers, Finance Director Crystal Dunn, Public Works Director Robert Rivera, Police Chief Bob Kochen, Library Director Andi Figart, Parks and Recreation Director Andre Julien, Technology Solutions Director Leanne Mahadeo, Assistant City Manager Gregory Oravec and Human Resources Director Arnel Wetzel.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2 Discussion Regarding Legislative Priorities for the Pasco County Legislative Delegation Meeting and Appointment of Representatives - Page 2

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated the purpose of this work session was to discuss the City's legislative priorities to be presented at the Pasco County Legislative Delegation meeting which will be held on Tuesday, January 7, 2025. She then highlighted the Florida League of Cities 2025 Legislative Platform. City Manager Manns then stated that although the Florida League of Cities does an extraordinary job in preparing its platform of priorities and policy positions there are several other bills which may be introduced during the current session that would impact the city and therefore warrant watching. They are as follows:

Advanced Wastewater Treatment

HB 1153 and SB 1304 narrowly failed last session and would have required the Department of Environmental Protection in consultation with water management districts and wastewater facilities to submit to the Governor and Legislature reports containing specified information on sewage disposal facilities with a permitted capacity greater than 1 million gallons per day. The city staff recommends that we do not support

the bill because completing the report would require the advanced treatment of wastewater which would require a larger footprint upon which to establish a facility. Therefore, the existing plant would need to be relocated at an estimated cost of between \$300,000,000 to \$500,000,000. This legislation would have devastating effects on our General Fund.

Municipal Utilities

The proposed bills HB 1277 and SB 1510 would have imposed restrictions on the use of municipal water, wastewater, gas or electric utility revenues to fund general government services and imposed restrictions on the imposition of water and wastewater extraterritorial surcharges. The city staff recommends against any proposed legislation that potentially may lead to an increased cost to utility customers as well as to the city's general fund that receives transfers from the fund.

City Manager Manns stated there could also be grant opportunities for the recruitment and retention of public safety employees as well as imposing steeper fines for incidents that occur against them.

City Manager Manns then introduced the proposed project of the sanitary sewer project for Town and Country Villas. The purpose of the proposed project is to improve resiliency of public infrastructure against future storms, rising sea levels and other disasters; to improve water quality, reduce public health risks, and environmental contamination. The City's goal is to remove the septic tanks and move the residents to a sewer system. The estimated cost of the project is \$4,800,000. Proposed financial resources for this project are \$2,800,000 in legislative grant funds leveraged with \$2,000,000 in local matching funds. The source of the matching funds will be from the city's water and sewer fund. If approved for funding, the project could commence construction during the next year.

Public Works Director Robert Rivera then presented the 2024 Resiliency Improvement Project. He stated the project was identified in the City's 2013 Stormwater Master Drainage Plan, 10-Year Update due to continual street flooding and repetitive flooding of homes in this area during storm events. The project involves the installation of approximately 1,500 lineal feet of 36" stormwater pipe and outfalls. The proposed stormwater improvement flood control elements for this project includes inlet installation on Astor Drive intersections at Berkley Road, Carlton Road, Dartmouth Road and Palmetto Road. The estimated project cost is \$1,530,000. If this project is funded the city is prepared to provide \$400,000 in funds to match the request \$1,130,000 in grant funds.

Mr. Rivera then presented the Schreiber Process Modification at the City of New Port Richey's Wastewater Treatment Facility Project. He stated the Schreiber treatment unit, constructed in the early 1980s, provides a treatment capacity of 1.5 MGD and was initially intended as an advanced activated sludge processing unit to increase biological nutrient removal of Nitrogen from the waste stream. This unit has been in operation for 40 years and is beyond the typical lifespan for its intended design. The Schreiber Unit is currently limited in operational capacity due to deterioration of the mechanical equipment. Without the Schreiber process on-line, the plant is rated for a capacity of 6.0 MGD. The proposed Schreiber to Oxidation Unit conversion cost has been estimated by our consultant, Stroud Engineering, to be seven million, six hundred thousand dollars, \$7,600,000.00. Incidentally, the city imposes a 4% rate increase to its customers on an annual basis and if funded the city is prepared to commit to participate in the funding requirement with a contribution of 25% which is 1,900,000.00.

Councilman Butler asked about Habitat for Humanity and City Manager Manns stated she has had conversations with them and they are not looking to come back to the project and in fact wish to sell the lots they currently own. Council then had a brief discussion regarding septic.

City Council then held a brief discussion on who would represent the City at the delegation

meeting. It was determined that Mayor Davis would choose someone to speak out of those who will be present the day of the delegation meeting.

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Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 5:13 p.m.

Approved: _____ (date)

_____ (signed)

Initialed: _____

Judy Meyers, MMC, City Clerk