



**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**

**January 30, 2018
7:00 PM**

**ORDER OF
BUSINESS**

1 Call to Order - Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Rob Marlowe at 7:00 pm. Those in attendance were Deputy Mayor Jeff Starkey, Councilman Bill Phillips and Councilwoman Judy DeBella Thomas. Also in attendance were City Manager Debbie Manns, Parks and Recreation Director Elaine Smith and Deputy City Clerk Joyce Haasnoot.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2 Recommendation for In-Kind Support for Special Events - Page 2

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated the purpose of the work session was to continue the discussion on the consideration of appropriations of in-kind support to local not-for-profit-profit organizations in respect to community special events. The amount of in-kind support requested this year, as in previous years, exceeds the amount of funding available. In the case of the current fiscal year, a total of \$86,022.50 was requested and the City budgeted an appropriation of \$56,000 for this fiscal year and \$53,000 for the following fiscal year. The recommendation presented is a two year recommendation.

Mayor Marlowe stated the purpose of a two year rolling cycle is to provisionally give event organizers an idea of what to expect so they can do advance planning and know what they have to work with. The second year appropriations may be adjusted during the next budget cycle.

City Manager Manns then reviewed proposed appropriations for each event.

Councilwoman DeBella Thomas asked for clarification on the amount recommended and if it's the MOU costs or the cost of in-kind services. City Manager Manns clarified that the cost is principally related to the City costs such as Police Department, Public Works and Fire Department and the MOU cost covers those expenses. At the request of Councilman Davis, City Manager Manns provided a chart to Council in their agenda packets that indicated the percentage of in-kind support compared to overall City costs and reviewed that chart.

Mayor Marlowe asked for clarification on why the recommended appropriation for Chasco was higher than other event recommendations. City Manager Manns stated they don't receive as much support as other groups and is a much larger event. Councilman Phillips stated it's a nine day festival and has higher expenses. Mayor Marlowe felt what we recommended is high in comparison to the event cost shown. City Manager Manns clarified the costs as shown are only in relation to the City expenses for the event and not the overall cost of the event.

Councilman Phillips stated in the 2017-2018 Community Redevelopment Agency budget, line item 63-53 has an expenditure of \$587,000 that is budgeted to Main Street Landings and will not be used this fiscal year. He stated he would like to see the \$587,000 in CRA funds not going to Main Street Landings utilized. If the City budgeted a roll over of \$500,000 to the next fiscal year from those funds there would still be \$87,000 remaining in the current budget. Councilman Phillips recommended that the City allocate \$25,000 of that towards the 2017-2018 in kind support in addition to what is already recommended. This will allow a balance of \$62,500 remaining for other projects.

Councilman Phillips then presented the following recommendations which are only for fiscal year 2017-2018:

- Chasco Fiesta \$35,000
- Chasco Fiesta Street Parade \$5,000
- Freedom Fest \$4,500
- Holiday Street Parade \$4,500
- Riverlights Boat Parade and Winterfest \$5,000
- Cotee River Bike Fest \$7,500
- Night in the Tropics- no recommended funding
- Cotee River Seafood and Blues Festival \$7,500
- KIA Fest Main Street Blast \$6,500

Councilman Phillips stated that based on the success of the Winterfest event this past December the City should focus on that event. Councilman Phillips feels the Cotee River Bike Fest is a growing event and will require more services and higher appropriations. With his recommended increases, the City will still have \$4,000 left towards future events this fiscal year making it is easier for budgeting the funds and not searching for it in the current budget. At the time the budget was approved he understood why the in-kind donations line item was approved for \$56,000, however with the new information he suggests a budget amendment to add additional allocations to the event requests.

Councilwoman DeBella Thomas requested clarification in regards to the Chasco Fiesta appropriations recommended by Councilman Phillips and if the \$35,000 included the street parade since City Manager Manns recommendation for \$30,000 included the parade. Councilman Phillips stated it did not and that he recommended a separate appropriation for \$5,000 for the parade for clean up, safety reasons and since all other event parades are funded separate from any other event. This will also allow for more transparency. Councilman Phillips said he doesn't feel like we get dollar for dollar and Councilwoman DeBella Thomas said we need to look at the cost from Public Works, Fire Department and Police Department and not the overall cost to put on the event. We shouldn't be looking at their bottom line rather we should look at the city bottom line.

Mayor Marlowe asked City Manager Manns to confirm if Community Redevelopment Agency funds can legally be used towards events in the City. City Manager Manns confirmed that it is legal. Councilman Phillips suggested a budget amendment to move the funds from the Community Redevelopment Agency budget rather than transferring from the General Fund budget.

Councilwoman DeBella Thomas stated the recommendations by Councilman Phillips make

sense to her, but she still needs clarification on actual costs versus MOU costs. Parks and Recreation Director Elaine Smith explained that total MOU costs are estimated at the SET meeting when planning an event. Costs are compiled for city services from each department to determine the final amount and those costs should match the MOU total. Rental costs and damage deposits do not show on the MOU. Councilwoman DeBella Thomas stated that in her experience, the estimated costs at SET meetings are often lower than the actual costs once an event is complete. Councilwoman DeBella Thomas suggested starting discussions for appropriations around February 2019 for the next two year cycle. Mayor Marlowe suggested we should start discussing the next round in August 2018.

Councilwoman DeBella Thomas stated Councilman Phillips has a good plan for this year and wanted to clarify why he didn't project beyond this current fiscal year. Councilman Phillips stated his reasoning is because we don't know the event specifics. This year can be used as a baseline to analyze events and their success. Depending on property values and the City's CRA budget, the City may have additional dollars available for funding in future budgets. His numbers are based on this year only and where the budget currently stands.

Deputy Mayor Starkey asked Councilman Phillips his reasoning for allocating more money to the Cotee River Seafood Festival and New Port Richey Main Street events than the actual funds they requested. Councilman Phillips stated he wants to be fair and equitable to all the organizations. Since he's increasing appropriations for some events then to be fair we should increase appropriations for the other events also. Deputy Mayor Starkey wanted to clarify the use of extra funding. If New Port Richey Main Street were to use the extra funding towards an event that is not on the approved list, such as Night In The Tropics, since we've allocated the extra funding to them can they use it towards that event. Councilman Phillips said if they don't use all the funding and want to roll over the funds he's ok with it.

Deputy Mayor Starkey thanked all the event coordinators and stated we need to concentrate on the quality of events and not so much bigger events since we don't have the space to let them grow larger. Deputy Mayor Starkey recognized Parks and Recreation Director Elaine Smith and her staff for the quality of the concerts and events they've been hosting. He hasn't heard any negative feedback at all in regards to the events. They're exactly what he'd like to see more of to attract more people to our City. He would love to see events evolve to include the City of Port Richey waterfront and for both cities to share events. He stressed we need to promote small, organic type events and to reach out to people who are knowledgeable about those type of programs for assistance. Deputy Mayor Starkey approved the additional funding Councilman Phillips recommended.

Mayor Marlowe commented that West Pasco County is not getting its due for recreation and cultural affairs in regards to in-kind donations and events. Pasco County Commissioner Starkey had posted online the low totals for per capita costs in Pasco County and most of the comments on her posting ask what she can do to increase the support West Pasco receives. Mayor Marlowe feels the City's events are what makes New Port Richey. Mayor Marlowe would like to see the City decrease costs of hosting smaller events. Mayor Marlowe suggested working with the local businesses to contribute to costs for smaller events. Mayor Marlowe feels that the City can make smaller events happen on a monthly, possibly weekly basis if we can come up with ideas to curb costs. His main concern is next fiscal year with the current legislature and the possible approval of an amendment to increase the Homestead Exemption and the decrease in property taxes received by municipalities and counties that would result if the amendment passes. He agrees with Councilman Phillips current recommendations but wants everyone to understand that anything in the next years budget could change with the uncertainty in Tallahassee currently.

Councilwoman DeBella Thomas suggested a flat fee rather than a per event fee for organizations that host smaller monthly events on a regular basis. Mayor Marlowe agreed that a flat fee for smaller events is a good idea.

Steve Schurdell with New Port Richey Main Street came forward and thanked the City and Council for their work. He said he's excited about the idea of small events and a flat fee per event. New Port Richey Main Street can roll over funds as seed money to put on smaller events and will not need sponsors which are getting harder to find.

Deputy Mayor Starkey discussed the success of the Banned Book Concerts and it was a smaller event that didn't require street closures or cost a lot of money. Councilwoman DeBella Thomas asked if there is an MOU cost to the City for the small events and what triggers an event as a special event with street closures. Parks and Recreation Director Elaine Smith said by ordinance over 50 people in attendance makes it an event and will require street closures and permits. Councilwoman DeBella Thomas stated the ordinance should be addressed by the City to review the thresholds for what makes it an event requiring permits and street closures. Councilman Phillips said if we are annually funding a group for their events then we can set the criteria and cost. Deputy Mayor Starkey suggested to improve events the City revise the rules for being a member of select City Committees such as Cultural Affairs and to allow someone that lives outside City limits to be a member and would like to see this as a future discussion for Council.

Nancy Brotko, New Port Richey Main Street Director, thanked the Council and the City for all their work. Councilwoman DeBella Thomas asked Ms. Brotko if she is in contact with the artist that will be painting the city crosswalk at Bank Street. Ms. Brotko stated she is in contact and the artist is planning a display at the Main Street offices.

Mayor Marlowe asked if there were any other comments. City Manager Manns stated that although it is a legal use of Community Redevelopment Agency funds to support events, she would like time to re-allocate the additional \$25,000 appropriations from the General Fund as opposed to the Community Redevelopment Agency budget.

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Communications

Councilwoman DeBella Thomas stated she was in Tallahassee recently and they're pushing legalizing gambling and some other interesting bills and she will forward more information.

Deputy Mayor Starkey stated through his involvement in youth athletics he's seen that Pasco County facilities and parks are deteriorating and have become a laughing stock. He attended a meeting recently at the County on parks and recreation funding. At the meeting the completed Parks and Recreation Master Plan for Pasco County was discussed and it concluded Pasco County is \$14,000,000 behind in maintenance and improvements for their parks. Staff at the meeting suggested utilizing a Municipal Services Tax Unit which the County Commissioners can enact and does not require a ballot. These funds would be utilized for park improvements, library improvements and to build sports facilities throughout the County. Councilman Starkey wants the public to know the Commissioners have the power and authority to put this tax out there and the cost would be less than \$100 per home.

Mayor Marlowe discussed stated the City has seen great benefits from the Sims Park improvements and the Recreation & Aquatic Center. Businesses are occupied and people are coming to town. Mayor Marlowe agreed with Deputy Mayor Starkey that the County must step up and do what needs to be done.

Councilman Phillips congratulated Councilwoman DeBella Thomas for her service to the City of New Port Richey and her history as a volunteer to various organizations as she will be leaving City Council in April due to the City Charter required terms and although he can seek re-election for an additional three year term he's decided not to. He stated that if chose to serve his City again it would only be as Mayor. He thanked the City, staff and his fellow council members

and stated he believes it is time for a new voice coming from his chair on Council. Councilman Phillips reviewed several of the key accomplishments that he and Council have completed while he served and he thanked the Mayor and Council for the last six years.

4 Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm.

Approved: _____ (date)

_____ (signed)

Initialed: _____

Joyce Haasnoot, Deputy City Clerk