



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING
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

AGENDA

ANY PERSON DESIRING TO APPEAL ANY DECISION MADE BY THE CITY COUNCIL, WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT ANY MEETING OR HEARING, WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND MAY NEED TO ENSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS IS MADE, WHICH INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED. THE LAW DOES NOT REQUIRE THE CITY CLERK TO TRANSCRIBE VERBATIM MINUTES; THEREFORE, THE APPLICANT MUST MAKE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS WITH A PRIVATE REPORTER (OR PRIVATE REPORTING FIRM) AND BEAR THE RESULTING EXPENSE. (ES.286.0105)

**ORDER OF
BUSINESS**

1. Call to Order - Roll Call

DISCUSSION ITEMS

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

Agendas may be viewed on the City's website: www.citynpr.org This meeting is open to the public. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 286.26, Florida Statutes, all persons with disabilities needing special accommodations to participate in this meeting should contact the City Clerk, 727-853-1021, not later than four days prior to said proceeding.



NEW PORT RICHEY

5919 MAIN STREET • NEW PORT RICHEY, FL 34652 • 727.853.1016

TO: City of New Port Richey City Council
FROM: Debbie L. Manns, ICMA-CM, City Manager
DATE: 12/17/2024
RE: Discussion Regarding Legislative Priorities for the Pasco County Legislative Delegation Meeting and Appointment of Representatives - Page 2

SUMMARY:

The Pasco County Legislative Delegation meeting will be held on January 7, 2025 at PHSC's West Pasco Campus' Performing Arts Center located at 10230 Ridge Road in New Port Richey. The request is for the City Council to discuss the legislative priorities that they would like to have presented at the Delegation. The second part of the request is for the council to appoint two representatives from the city to represent the city's legislative priorities and any projects for which support is to be requested.

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:

Priorities:

Enterprise Fund Transfers

The city should support the preservation of our authority to manage the revenue source and realize a reasonable rate of return on the asset if the bill is reintroduced.

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.

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.

Municipal Water and Sewer Utility Rates

Several bills were introduced last session in respect to imposing surcharges for serving customers outside of municipal boundaries. If legislation is approved which prohibits this practice the result will be increased costs for the utility customers.

In addition to these priorities the staff recommends advocating in favor of any legislation that enhances the recruitment and retention of public safety employees, provides assistance to cities related to hurricane response, recovery and future resiliency efforts as well as creating heightened penalties under criminal offenses against public safety employees in the line of duty.

Projects:

Town and Country Villas Water and Sewer Project

The City of New Port Richey is proposing to replace and enlarge an old, undersized potable water line and install sewer lines to replace private septic tanks in the Town and Country Villas neighborhood. Town and Country Villas is a 185 lot subdivision and unfortunately because the housing stock is located below the base elevation, the dwellings are subject to repetitive flooding during storms and natural disasters. 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 Town and Country Villas neighborhood is located in the AE 11 flood zone and as such is subject to flooding and ponding during routine storm events and also sea level rise. The neighborhood is not supported by an underground stormwater management system but through the use of natural swales in the public right-of-way to detain stormwater runoff. The replacement of the potable water and sanitary sewer infrastructure within the public right-of-way will allow capacity enhancements to the existing swales, thereby increasing their resiliency from flooding.

The current condition of the neighborhood presents several risk factors to the residents, businesses and the city. First, storms generate flooding events that cause septic tanks to become inundated with water thereby allowing raw sewage to escape and create a public health hazard. Second, the neighborhood predominantly is occupied by low-income households that lack the financial means by which to regularly pump and maintain their septic tanks, thereby increasing the risk of contaminated groundwater.

Third, septic tank systems are the largest of all contributors of wastewater to the ground and are the most frequently reported source of groundwater contamination in the United States. Bacteria, viruses, and parasites are the types of pathogens in wastewater that are hazardous to humans. Fungi that can cause skin, eye, and respiratory infections can also grow in sewage and sewage sludge. These bacteria and viruses can be transported very rapidly causing a public health risk and environmental contamination. Hepatitis A, polio, and viral gastroenteritis are a few of the diseases that can be contracted from viruses in wastewater.

Finally, through the elimination of septic tanks and replacement of the older, undersized water main the health risks in this low-income neighborhood and the larger community will improve. As sea level rises and natural disasters occur, the threat to public health from contaminated groundwater will no longer be a concern to the community.

In particular respect to the neighborhood, it should be noted that it is blighted. In respect to the housing stock, it should be noted that it largely consists of mobile homes that are old and substandard. There is also a small presence of site-built housing, a few of which are constructed above the flood elevation. The city has recently zoned the property so that all future housing will be site-built and properly elevated.

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.

2024 Resiliency Improvement Project

This 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. Properly designed outfalls are critical to reducing or eliminating adverse impacts both on site and downstream, as a result of concentrated discharges from pipe systems and culverts.

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. An inlet serves as an entry point for water to enter drainage systems, stormwater management structures or other water conveyance systems. Inlets have grates or filters to prevent debris, trash and sediment from entering the drainage system. Proper design placement and maintenance of inlets are crucial for ensuring their effectiveness and longevity in managing water flow and protecting the environment.

The proposed stormwater improvement water quality element or best management practice (BMPS) includes the

installation of a continuous deflective separation (CDS) unit west of the outfall on Palmetto Road. A CDS is a process used to remove pollutants from the storm water. It harnesses the power of the incoming flow to shear stormwater pollutants off the screen and deflect them to the center of the separation chamber, where they fall to the storage sump or are trapped at the water surface for later removal.

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.

Schreiber Process Modification at the City of New Port Richey’s Wastewater Treatment Facility

The facility is located at 4730 Main Street, New Port Richey, FL 34652. The WWTF has a treatment capacity of 7.5 million gallons per day (MGD) based on an Annual Average Daily Flow (AADF) measurement. The plant provides effluent meeting the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) classification of Part III – Slow-Rate Public Access Reuse Systems under FAC 62-610, in which all treated effluent currently is disposed through the City’s Master Urban Reuse System and the Pasco County Master Reuse System. The plant’s biological treatment consists of four (4) oxidation ditch nitrification/denitrification basins and one (1) Schreiber treatment system with a nitrification/denitrification perimeter basin and an internal clarifier.

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 treatment plant operations currently employ the use of oxidation ditch treatment units. The existing oxidation ditch units are operating as a single basin 2-stage nitrification/denitrification process and is comparable in the biological removal of nitrogen from the waste stream to the Schreiber Treatment Unit. It is therefore recommended that the City modify the Schreiber tank as a separate basin 2-stage denitrification process to better match the other treatment basins. This modification would allow for the repurposing of the existing treatment basin, and include the installation of a vertical swing gate, walkway bridge, clarifier modification equipment, electrical conduit and replace piping. 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. Amends provisions of law relating to municipal water and electric utility extraterritorial surcharges, extraterritorial service and transfers of enterprise funds. The bill authorizes a municipal utility to transfer a portion of its earnings to the municipality for general government purposes. The revenues transferred to fund general government purposes may not exceed a rate equal to the amount derived by applying the average of the midpoints of the rates of return on equity approved by the PSC for investor-owned utilities in the state. The amount of the transfer must be further reduced based on the percentage of extraterritorial customers served by the utility. The bill eliminates the automatic 25% surcharge that may be added to the rates and fees charged to extraterritorial customers.

Incidentally, the city imposes a 4% rate increase to its customers on an annual basis.

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.

REQUESTED ACTION:

The recommendation is for the City Council to conduct a discussion related to legislative priorities and to assign two representatives to present at the Pasco County Legislative Delegation.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
☐ Florida League of Cities 2025 Legislative Platform	Backup Material



PRIORITIES:

Affordable Housing

The Florida League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation that allows for a collaborative approach that balances the pressing needs for affordable and workforce housing while respecting the ability of local governments to effectively manage growth to ensure developments align with the character, capabilities and resources of each community.

Electric Vehicles

The Florida League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation that ensures all vehicles, regardless of fuel type, contribute fairly to the funding of Florida's transportation infrastructure, which will allow cities to maintain safe and reliable roads for all residents.

Enterprise Fund Transfers and Extraterritorial Surcharges

The Florida League of Cities SUPPORTS preserving municipal authority over utility revenues and the ability to realize a reasonable rate of return on utility assets. Legislation should honor current practices, existing contracts, utility operation and maintenance costs, service territory obligations and revenues obligated for debt service and planned projects.

Property Taxes

The Florida League of Cities SUPPORTS the levy of property taxes by municipalities to provide critical services such as infrastructure, police, fire and emergency services. Further changes or exemptions to the property tax system and tangible personal property taxes would create inequities and unfairly shift the tax burden onto families, homeowners, renters, businesses and our most vulnerable population.

Sovereign Immunity

The Florida League of Cities SUPPORTS preserving reasonable sovereign immunity liability caps for municipal governments to protect taxpayer funds and ensure delivery of public services.

POLICY POSITIONS:

Annexation

The Florida League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation that facilitates the municipal annexation of unincorporated areas in a manner that respects municipal boundaries, protects private property rights and encourages cooperation between municipal and county governments.

Impact Fees

The Florida League of Cities SUPPORTS protecting municipal authority to set impact fees that safeguard existing taxpayers from incurring additional infrastructure costs.



Local Business Taxes

The Florida League of Cities SUPPORTS preserving municipal ability to collect local business taxes in order to foster economic growth, ensure public safety, deliver emergency services and drive community development.

One Water

The Florida League of Cities SUPPORTS the state legislature’s endorsement of One Water policies that seek to enhance integration between different water systems while maintaining local flexibility.

Public Safety Recruitment and Retention

The Florida League of Cities SUPPORTS legislation and funding to enhance recruitment and retention of municipal public safety personnel, which will help communities maintain effective emergency response and public safety services.