



City Commission Work Session Minutes

July 27, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

City Hall, Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue | Winter Park, Florida

Present

Mayor Phil Anderson
Commissioner Marty Sullivan
Commissioner Sheila DeCiccio
Commissioner Carolyn Cooper (virtual)
Commissioner Todd Weaver

City Manager Randy Knight
City Clerk Rene Cranis

1) Call to Order

Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

2) Discussion Item(s)

a. Department Budget Presentations

Mr. Knight advised that each department will give a presentation followed by questions and answers. Department director's presentations included mission and program summary, organizational chart, levels of service, key performance indicators, FY 2021 accomplishments and FY 22 goals. Additional information was provided in response to questions and comments. Each was asked what they would like if funding was available.

Clarissa Howard, Director of Communications and Public Relations, noted the addition of a neighbor relations program and the transfer of sustainability division to the department to enhance communications and sharing of information. She said she would like to have an in-house person and equipment for videography.

Troy Attaway, Director of Public Works, advised that staff is recommending a 5% increase in stormwater utility fee for first time in nine years. He said he would like to increase paving and curb replacement. Members of the commission expressed concern about lake quality and whether additional staff is needed. Mr. Attaway stated the department will assess the lake quality and provide an update and outlined staffing levels and needs.

Commissioner Weaver said he feels the span of responsibility is broad and suggested combining the sustainability, lakes and urban forestry divisions to be managed by an environmental resource expert.

Commissioner Sullivan suggested that Public Works staff work closely with sustainability staff coordinating efforts on energy audits.

Police Chief Michael Deal noted that, at the Commission's request, the Civil Service Board reviewed use of force and bias-based policing and determined the department to be compliant with the 21st Century Presidential Recommendations. He spoke on staffing and recruitment challenges. He added that they are currently focused on becoming fully staffed and will look at over-hiring for pending retirements. Discussion followed on recruiting difficulties, over-hiring and budgeting.

Mayor Anderson declared a recess at 2:25 and reconvened the meeting at 2:37 p.m.

Parsram Rajaram, Director of IT, commented on recruitment challenges due to competition with the private sector. He responded to concerns regarding ransomware attacks which the city continues to address through ongoing training and testing of employers and layered security, but would like to hire additional staff for cybersecurity.

Jason Seeley, Director of Parks and Recreation, provided details on the impact on facility rentals and programming during COVID. He addressed concerns regarding staff needed to maintain aging and new parks to Winter Park standards. He reviewed the plans for Dinky Dock improvements. Mayor Anderson suggested that with the increased acreage of highly occupied or decorative parks, the city needs to look at long-term funding for operational expenses.

Dan D'Allesandro, Director of Electric Utility, stated that the undergrounding schedule will all the city to meet the goal for completion in 2026. He reviewed a comparison of rates and outage time to municipal and public utilities. He stated he would like to update substations and equipment if funding were available. He also spoke on the competition in recruiting and retaining workers. Commissioner DeCiccio asked for a list of aging equipment and replacement costs.

Mr. D'Allesandro stated they have worked with the CRA staff to make house drops affordable for properties within the CRA. He noted that solar will be added when opportunities arise and installed on the new awning for electric utility vehicles.

Commissioner Cooper asked about the cost for decorative lighting in neighborhoods.

Mr. D'Allesandro said the cost is spread cost among customers in perpetuity.

Commissioner Cooper said she feels the ongoing charge to customers is a roadblock for installing and asked staff to look at reduction of charges over time.

Bronce Stephenson, Director of Planning and Transportation, noted the goal to use the talents of board members to develop and recommend policies and programs. For the near future, he would like the ability to create 3-D models for projects and create bike and ped trails. He advised that staff is working with Kimley Horn to develop a scope of work which will be reviewed by the City Attorney and commission sub-committee.

Mayor Anderson declared a recess at 4:48 and reconvened the meeting at 4:57.

David Zusi, Director of Water and Wastewater Utility, noted the budget increase due to opening of previously frozen positions. He spoke on reclaimed water availability and use, process and future plans for expanding the program. He provided information on the operation and function of smart controllers and said they work with sustainability staff on water conservation.

Commissioner DeCiccio asked if there were plans to replace septic with sewer. Mr. Zusi advised that the city may convert if there is a benefit in a certain area; however, it is typically cost prohibitive in neighborhoods since the property owners pay a substantial amount toward the cost. He said if funds were available he would like to advance the replacement of ozone components and water meter replacement.

Commissioner Weaver expressed his concern about replacing existing utility workers. Mr. Zusi advised that there is a trainee position with a career progression path and that the pay has been increased for some skilled positions. He provided additional information on meters, unmetered water, purchase of additional sewer capacity. lift station at Summerlin, and testing practices.

George Wiggins, Director of Building and Permitting, reviewed permit activity and spoke on the difficulty in finding licensed inspectors to meet the need and said he would like to create an internship program. He added that the department is well-funded by permit fees and suggested that pay needs to be increased to attract qualified applicants.

Mayor Anderson noted a common theme in recruitment challenges. He suggested that there may be a need to look at some adjustment to base compensation and internship programs as part of the budget. Commissioner Weaver asked for a list of position vacancies and comparative private sector salary data.

3) Adjournment

The work session adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

Mayor Phillip M. Anderson

ATTEST:

City Clerk Rene Cranis