



City Commission Special Meeting Minutes

April 8, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

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

Present

Mayor Steve Leary
Commissioner Marty Sullivan
Commissioner Sheila DeCiccio
Commissioner Carolyn Cooper
Commissioner Todd Weaver

City Manager Randy Knight
City Attorney Dan Langley
City Clerk Rene Cranis

1. Meeting called to order

The meeting was conducted via GoToWebinar.

Mayor Leary called the special meeting of the City Commission to order at 5:13 p.m.

Mayor Leary stated the purpose of this meeting is to discuss options to provide support to residents and businesses during the COVID-19 health crisis and stated that the CRA Agency approved funding for some programs in its meeting just prior to this special meeting.

2. Approval of Agenda

3. Citizen Comments

No comments.

4. Action Items Requiring Discussion

a. COVID-19 Community Assistance Proposal

Commissioner DeCiccio stated that in the CRA Agency meeting she supported the microloan program but after reconsideration she is opposed to microloan program and will vote accordingly in this meeting, although she could support a grant program.

Mayor Leary asked when information will be available on the programs. Mr. Knight stated that staff will discuss a grant program with the Chamber and bring a proposal to the CRA Agency in another meeting.

Commissioner Sullivan said he has received offers of support of the 211 Program.

Commissioner Cooper urged caution in the use of the city's reserves and continued fiscal responsibility. She asked that the commission return to its regularly scheduled meetings and manage routine city business.

Commissioner Weaver agreed with Commissioner Cooper. He spoke in support of the utility assistance programs but feels the city is over-reaching on the microloan and grant proposal and is uncomfortable in determining who receives support.

Motion 1: Motion made by Commissioner Weaver to approve the contribution to United Way's 211 Program as recommended by city staff (\$25,000 direct contribution and up to \$25,000 matching contribution with funding split equally between the electric and water and sewer funds); seconded by Commissioner Sullivan.

Mr. Knight responded to questions stating that general funds can be used community-wide, not just within the CRA. He said funding will come from the water side of the water and sewer utility but could be used for sewer since this helps with the sewer portion of the utility bill. Mayor Leary clarified that assistance is available only to City of Winter Park residents not city utility customers outside the city's jurisdiction.

Motion 2: Motion made by Mayor Leary to authorize the electric fuel rate reduction to be given in May as opposed to over 12 months; seconded by Commissioner Cooper.

Motion 3: Motion made by Commissioner Sullivan to amend the motion to extend the reduction to two months; seconded by Commissioner Weaver.

Mr. Knight stated that \$250,000 of CRA funds was allocated to utility assistance program and to meet the \$1M needed, \$250,000 is proposed from the general fund and \$250,000 each from the electric and water and sewer funds, if approved.

Motion 4: Motion made by Commissioner Weaver to approve \$250,000 from the general fund; seconded by Commissioner Cooper.

Commissioner Weaver stated that his reason for excluding electric and water and sewer funding is to retain those funds in case of potential maintenance issues with increased use during this time.

Mayor Leary stated that those funds have a healthy fund balance and their use is restrictive, so this is an opportunity to leverage those funds. He asked for the time frame for implementation.

Mr. Knight said the grant application process could be open within a couple of weeks. He questioned whether the maximum assistance should be lowered from \$5,000 due to the decreased funding of the program, which would allow the opportunity to help more businesses but with a smaller amount.

Motion 5: Motion made by Mayor Leary to reduce the maximum support from \$5,000 to \$2,500 per business; seconded by Commissioner Cooper.

Mayor Leary questioned how this will affect the CRA Agency's approval of CRA funding of \$250,000 at a maximum amount of \$5,000. He asked Mr. Knight to meet with the city attorney to see whether the CRA Agency's approval can be changed since a majority of the CRA Agency are present in this meeting.

Consensus was to approve the city's suspension of late fees and interest payments and discontinuance of disconnects for non-payment through May 31, 2020.

Motion 6: Motion made by Mayor Leary to contribute \$25,000 from the general fund to 4River's Feed the Need program; seconded by Commissioner Cooper.

Motion 7: Motion made by Commissioner Weaver to approve the energy efficiency program as presented by staff; seconded by Commissioner DeCiccio.

In response to questions by Commissioner Cooper regarding waste pickup, Mr. Knight stated the city pays Waste Pro and bills customers so there will be no lapse in pickup. He added that it is difficult to project usage on the residential side due to changes in customers. There has been a decline in commercial usage with smaller containers and less frequent pickups.

Commissioner Cooper said that she received a suggestion from a resident for a program to provide aid to residents who test positive for COVID-19 for getting groceries or medicines. She stated a group of residents have made face masks and encouraged resident participation in this effort. Mr. Knight stated that Kim Allen delivered some masks for employees.

Commissioner Weaver stated that he has received complaints that Waste Pro is not picking up yard waste. Mr. Knight stated he will confirm with Waste Pro to ensure yard waste pickup continues.

Public Comment:

Jennifer Adams, 383 Sylvan Drive, suggested that the city self-manage and disburse funds rather than through another agency.

Michael Poole, 1671 Summerlin Avenue, spoke in support of residential utility bill payment assistance, suspension of late fees, interest payments and disconnects, and community support programs. He opposed any loan programs and urged the city and Chamber to work together to reopen businesses in Winter Park.

Michael Perelman, 1010 Greentree Drive, expressed his appreciation for the city's efforts and expressed his concern that the microloan or grant program will not address longer-term support needed through recovery.

David Odahowski, Edyth Bush Charitable Foundation, expressed his concern regarding the ineffectiveness of gaining public input during these virtual meetings. He suggested that the donation to United Way should be a direct contribution of \$50,000 without a matching donation provision and a single donation to Second Harvest Food Bank to manage programs.

Motion 8: Motion made by Commissioner Sullivan to move forward with funding the microloan program as presented in conjunction with Winter Park Chamber of Commerce; seconded by Mayor Leary.

Mayor Leary said he can support funding this program but would like to see the program details before funds are spent. He agreed with the Chamber that a loan program will be challenging but he prefers a loan program versus a grant program to ensure return of some funding.

Commissioner Weaver said he feels it is troublesome to approve funding before a program is in place.

Commissioner Cooper said she is opposed as she feels it is a duplicative effort and that the details of the program need to be developed including a requirement that applicants must have applied for loans or grants available for small businesses. Commissioner Weaver agreed.

Discussion followed on allocating funds while allowing staff and the Chamber to develop a program and bring it back before the commission for consideration. Mr. Knight committed that no funds will be spent without Commission approval of the program.

Mayor Leary stated his understanding of the motion is approval of \$250,000 allocation from the general fund reserve toward a microloan program for matching dollars and that city staff will move forward to develop a plan for approval by the commission before any funds are spent.

Commissioner Weaver said he does not see the benefit in using city staff time on this initiative as he feels it will be ineffective in helping struggling businesses.

Commissioner Cooper stated that although she feels compassion for everyone that is struggling, she feels the city cannot meet all of the needs and that it the city's responsibility to be fiscally conservative and determine first what needs are being met and what needs are not being met and also ensure city infrastructure and services are maintained during recovery.

Vote on Motions

Motion 1: Upon a roll call vote, Mayor Leary and Commissioners Sullivan, DeCiccio, Cooper and Weaver voted yes. Motion carried unanimously with a 5-0 vote.

Motion 3: Upon a roll call vote, Commissioners Sullivan and Weaver voted yes and Mayor Leary and Commissioners DeCiccio and Cooper voted no. Motion failed with a 2-3 vote. (Commissioner DeCiccio rescinded her original "yes" vote and changed to "no.")

Motion 2: Upon a roll call vote, Mayor Leary and Commissioners Sullivan, DeCiccio, Cooper and Weaver voted yes. Motion carried unanimously with a 5-0 vote.

Motion 4: Upon a roll call vote, Mayor Leary and Commissioners Sullivan, DeCiccio, Cooper and Weaver voted yes. Motion carried unanimously with a 5-0 vote.

Motion 5: No action taken.

Motion 6: Upon a roll call vote, Mayor Leary and Commissioners Sullivan, DeCiccio, Cooper and Weaver voted yes. Motion carried unanimously with a 5-0 vote.

Motion 7: Upon a roll call vote, Mayor Leary and Commissioners Sullivan, DeCiccio and Weaver voted yes and Commissioner Cooper voted no. Motion carried with a 4-1 vote.

Motion 8: Upon a roll call vote, Mayor Leary and Commissioner Sullivan voted yes and Commissioners DeCiccio, Cooper and Weaver voted no. Motion failed with a 2-3 vote.

5. Commission Reports:

Commissioner Weaver

- Requested that the backyard chicken program be brought forward for further discussion including the ordinance that was considered several years ago. He commented on other agency's ordinances and results. After discussion, Mayor Leary said that he would bring up the matter under his report in the next meeting.
- Said he has received comments on the number of flyers left in driveways. He questioned whether the city could issue a temporary ban on those. Consensus was to bring up under commission reports on Monday.
- Commented on the contractors working at the library who are not wearing masks or practicing social distancing onsite nor when visiting Publix or other local restaurants.

Mayor Leary said that he feels this encroaches into private businesses and the city may be overstepping its authority.

Mr. Knight stated that he spoke with construction manager who assured they would remind workers of social distancing rules. He said they should be practicing social distancing but it is the responsibility of the construction manager to monitor its workers.

Commissioner Sullivan said as the city's contractor, it very reasonable for the city to "ask" them to conform to distancing. Commissioners DeCiccio and Cooper agreed.

Commissioner Cooper

- Thanked Tina, The Master Tailor, for making masks.

Commissioner Sullivan

- Thanked the Chamber of Commerce for conducting the survey and asked that staff list the Winter Park restaurants offering takeout. Director of Communications Clarissa Howard stated the Chamber of Commerce has a listing of businesses on their website but the information will be published on the city's COVID-19 page.
- Encouraged businesses work remotely if they are able to do so.
- Asked for a letter of support for the Polasek Museum's grant request. Mrs. Howard stated that staff is working on the letter.
- Stated he has received requests to suspend leaf blowing.

Commissioner DeCiccio

- Thanked those who are making masks.
- Asked for status of purchasing properties along Fairbanks from the former bowling alley property to the dry cleaner at the corner of Denning and Fairbanks. He suggested re-engaging in conversations to purchase property for turn lanes or add to MLK Park.

Commissioner Cooper stated that funds have been allocated in the budget and encouraged discussions with property owners as opposed to eminent domain proceedings. Commissioner Weaver agreed.

Mr. Knight stated he would provide an update in the next commission meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

Mayor Steve Leary

ATTEST:

City Clerk Rene Cranis, CMC