



City Commission Work Session Minutes

January 6, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

Virtual

Present

Mayor Phillip Anderson; Commissioners Marty Sullivan, Sheila DeCiccio, Carolyn Cooper and Todd Weaver; City Manager Randy Knight; City Attorney Kurt Ardaman; City Clerk Rene Cranis.

Also Present:

Jim Davenport, Thorn Run Partners and Division Director of Office of Management & Budget Peter Moore, and Director of Water and Wastewater Utilities David Zusi.

1) Call to Order

Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. He explained that the purpose of the meeting is to prioritize grant pursuit efforts. He suggested beginning with an overview of the infrastructure bill by Mr. Davenport, which may lead to a discussion of hiring a grant writer on the infrastructure bill, followed by a discussion of the list prepared by Mr. Moore of potential capital projects for future grant funding to which projects could be added and then developing next steps which may include future reprioritization of projects for 2022.

2) Discussion Item(s)

a. Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act and Capital Strategic Planning

Mr. Davenport spoke about the earmarked list stating most of those projects would be eligible right now for Community Project Funding Requests (CPFR). He gave an overview of the bill which created the phrase "shovel-ready" projects which were ready-to-go and create jobs. He said the infrastructure bill is intended to build infrastructure in a smarter way more resilient to weather events and with a focus on climate change and renewable energy. The bill was divided into two categories with most being allocated to standard transportation infrastructure projects that is re-authorized every five to seven years. The bill also allocated an additional \$550 billion for infrastructure, competitive grants and formula funds to states and local governments; however, those grant programs have yet to be created and will not likely be released in the next year. He reviewed transportation grants for which the city would be competitive and existing large project grant programs.

David Zusi, Director of Water and Waste Water Utilities, spoke about the financial impact of state or county road projects that involve relocating utilities which are not part of the city's planned projects or budget and asked whether these projects be reimbursed through these grants.

Commissioner Cooper stated the same situation applies to Iron Bridge which involves million-dollar projects that the city does not control but is required to help fund and asked Mr. Davenport to research funding for these projects.

Mr. Davenport stated the EPA is receiving increased funding at the state level in the revolving loan program and summarized funding for drinking water, sewer and stormwater reuse projects and programs to help individuals pay for connections. He spoke about the Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant for which the city should be getting something for energy resiliency projects. He stated that the money will be released gradually over five years and he will keep the city updated moving forward.

Commissioner Cooper suggested that individual members submit their project list to Mr. Davenport. Mr. Davenport said he would be happy to look at an expanded list of projects to determine grant eligibility.

Mr. Davenport spoke on earmarked project requests which have to be submitted to Congresswoman Murphy by early March but she can only submit ten requests for her district. He noted that funding is available for law enforcement technology and equipment, community health centers, after-school programs, and workforce training programs. He responded to questions and discussion was held on grants, funding, and projects. Mr. Davenport said he would provide guidance but does not write grants at this time. He recommended the city consider hiring a grant writer.

The Commission discussed the project list and additions such as energy efficiency and Iron Bridge. Mayor Anderson suggested a joint lobbying effort for Iron Bridge with other stakeholders including Orlando, Maitland, Casselberry, and Seminole County. (Iron Bridge was added to the list)

Mr. Zusi suggested adding replacement of water treatment equipment susceptible to weather events with enclosed equipment Discussion followed on needed improvements including generators at lift stations, ozone generators, and technology, FDOT reimbursement for utility relocation for non-city projects, and unfunded mandates.

The following projects were suggested and discussed:

- Osceola/Aloma/Brewer roadway
- Winter Park Land Trust recommendations: Howell Branch Preserve, Emerald Necklace, Mead Garden improvements, pedestrian bike paths, chain of lakes paddling corridor going from Lake Sue to Lake Waumpi.

Mayor Anderson noted that WP Land Trust submitted a letter with a list of projects and asked that staff provide that list to Mr. Davenport for his review for eligibility for the infrastructure bill or other grants.

- Lake outfall devices.
- Septic to sewer conversion. Mr. Zusi noted that the \$30M projected cost is for areas within the city limits and that limiting conversion to areas around lakes would reduce the cost, but minimally.
- Land priorities such as acquiring more greenspace.
- Enhancement of police and fire protection (due to potential annexations along Fairbanks Avenue or Lee Road). Mr. Davenport said the grant is for police and fire equipment and technology but not for new buildings.
- Energy improvements at City Hall. Mr. Davenport said it may be eligible under the energy efficiency conservation bill but recommended it not be an earmark request.
- Cybersecurity. Mr. Davenport said there is a program under the Department of Homeland Security that would perform a free assessment at the state level but he will check to see if it is available at the local level.

Mr. Moore asked for the best way to proceed from a cost standpoint. Mr. Davenport suggested a cost between \$500k and \$2M for earmarked projects.

- Electric utility perspective with a goal of cleaner energy. Mr. Davenport said it is likely but he will need more information to better determine eligibility.
- Purchase of Electric and hybrid electric vehicles.
- Recycled water storage.
- Increasing replacement of asbestos cement potable water lines.
- Retrofitting storm drains (especially to lakes).
- Increasing the capability to reline sewer pipes.
- Undergrounding of Duke transmission lines under a cooperative effort with Duke.

It was agreed that the revised project list be provided to Mr. Davenport for his review of grant eligibility and the likelihood of receiving earmarked funds, infrastructure funds, or other grant funds.

Mayor Anderson asked for consensus to move forward with a plan for a grant writer to work in parallel with this. Agreed by consensus.

Mayor Anderson asked for consensus to consider a relationship with Winter Park Land Trust for parks grants. Mr. Knight said he feels only one grant writer would be needed for all projects but would involve much more than writing the grant including tracking and reporting through completion of the project.

Discussion was held on the feasibility of entering into an arrangement with WP Land Trust for grant writing for parks, using a continuing service contract with expertise in the

different areas or retaining a part-time city employee. Mr. Knight suggested exploring the option of a grant writing firm that may have grant writers' experience in specific areas before hiring a grant writer. Consensus to have staff explore options for grant writing and place on the next meeting agenda and look at parks project scoping.

Mayor Anderson left the meeting at 11:43. Vice-Mayor Cooper chaired the meeting.

Vice-Mayor Cooper summarized action items:

- Each commissioner to send their project list to Mr. Knight and Mr. Moore that includes grant category and earmarked requests between \$500k and \$2M which are shovel ready.
- Mr. Davenport to look at grant opportunities for regional pro-rata shares on utility relocation and wastewater treatment projects associated with county or state projects, possibly as a joint effort with other agencies.
- Need more information on homeland security on security analysis before moving forward.
- Staff to work with Mayor and lobbyist to see how many projects can be submitted to Congresswoman Murphy.
- Add grant writer discussion to next meeting agenda.

Commissioner Weaver noted the availability of grant funding for energy auditor training for staff and asked that it be added to the list. Mr. Davenport said he believes that it the state level but will monitor for changes.

Mr. Knight advised that Orange County is moving forward with a one-cent transportation tax on November's ballot and has asked the city for a list of transportation projects.

3) Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:48 a.m.

Mayor Phillip M. Anderson

ATTEST:

City Clerk Rene Cranis