

**MINUTES
COMMISSION DAY
CITY OF HOLLY HILL, FLORIDA
JANUARY 27, 2004**

CALL TO ORDER

At approximately 8:30 a.m., members of the Commission and Staff met in the Public Works conference room for a light breakfast and some preliminary discussion. The Commission members present were Arthur Byrnes and Gilles Blais. Commissioner Roland Via, who was just getting off work, joined them just as the Public Works tour was beginning and Mayor William Arthur, who had been at an MPO meeting, joined them near the end of the Public Works tour. Commissioner Lou Schmitt was absent due to illness. Also attending were the following staff members: City Manager Joe Forte and City Clerk Jeaneen Clauss.

1. PUBLIC WORKS TOUR

Public Works Director Milt Hallman, Public Works Supervisor Ray Beltrami, and Building and Grounds Supervisor Susan Rannie gave the Commission a tour of the Public Works facility. They began with the garage. The City now maintains a quality fleet of updated rolling stock, due in part to the five year vehicle change-over plan they began two years ago. They saw the new vehicle lift which was purchased approximately one month ago. Staff would still like to lower the carport at the garage to make it more useful. This would require a complete re-structuring. They have recently learned this is an eligible expense of gas tax revenue. The Commission saw a new police car, which is receiving the necessary modifications of a cage, radio, trim,... All of this work is done on-site along with all maintenance and repairs – except that which is covered by warranty. The City provides training for the necessary certifications for this. The Commission viewed the multi-purpose field, which is leveled and ready for grass. They discussed the Inmate Work Force, which takes care of US1 for two days, Nova for two days, and additional areas on their one other day each week. The City has approximately thirty acres of additional property. Ms. Rannie advised that she would really like a three bay structure (approx 1,000 square feet) for the in-house work that they do and to allow them to leave the mowers on the truck at night. They do not have a shelter available for the in-house work they must do (restructuring benches, etc...). They discussed the fact that current storage space is maxed-out – they can't even buy bulk fertilizer to save money because there is no place to keep it. This will be proposed in next year's budget. Part of the reason it has not been proposed to date is because they keep hearing that the County is going to vacate their building on Walker Street and that could be just right for them. The Commission discussed the retention pond maintenance – the ponds just accepted from FDOT will require a lot of initial cost. Hopefully the Echo Grant will assist with this – otherwise it may take a little longer to bring them up to where they want them to be. The Commission saw the animal cages which are built in-house at a considerable cost savings. They also noted the well caps for monitoring all over the parking lot near the fuel pump. This area is where the environmental clean-up of the fuel

contamination plume will be focused. As they approached the Wastewater Treatment Plant, mention was made that GE is about to do away with the products we need and they have become very expensive anyway. We need to convert to Economy and will push towards that. As for personnel, we are currently one person short in this department. Staff pointed out the Alum Storage Tanks, 1 and 2 – these have new pumps and a new fiberglass coating. The Commission made a walkover of the wastewater clarifier and Filtering stations. During side discussion, mention was made that the City's electric bill is sixty thousand dollars per month. The Commission noticed that the re-use tank was almost full. Staff advised that security issues are currently being reviewed and once this assessment is complete, they will have a Closed Meeting with the Commission to discuss the findings. The Commissioners toured the Lab Testing Building and viewed the updated instrumentation. Divers had just been there last week and cleaned the tanks, removing the lime sludge. The Commission did a walk-over of the water filter building.

The Commission took a brief driving tour down State Avenue to see the progress of the stormsewer project. As they traveled back along US1, mention was made that a fast food restaurant named Sonic is going to be built next to the Publix Shopping Center. The trailer park behind this location is almost completely emptied out now – only two remaining.

2. FIRE DEPARTMENT TOUR

Fire Division Chief Randy Ast gave the Commission a tour of the Fire Department. Union Representative Donald Moore was in attendance. As the Commission was speaking with the somewhat new part-time Administrative Assistant, there was mention that they may be reaching the point where they need this to be a full-time position. They toured the offices and the bunk room, where Mr. Moore stated that he felt they are out growing this room and need to better accommodate any potential female firefighters. (Mr. Forte noted that they have had female firefighters in the past and have rules which carefully outline proper bunk room attire and this was not a problem). The furniture in the recreation room has all been upgraded and looks very nice. The kitchen is well equipped. Staff explained more detail on how the new First Response Agreement works interlocally. Countywide, all the fire radios have the 800 megahertz system and have every fire channel within each radio – so they can communicate directly with one another. Mention was made of the fire grant they have applied for. This would be used to purchase a smoke extraction system for the bay, to replace the bay doors with new doors that meet current wind resistance standards, to purchase a fire suppression system, and to purchase an alarm system. They recently received an EMS grant, which covered upgrading an engine so that we now have two ALS engines. Commissioner Via requested that they check the status of the upstairs. A walk-through showed that it is still filled with some junk that could be discarded but the equipment they keep up there is well organized. There was some discussion of what they would need to do to make this room usable – the a/c ducts are already there but the ceiling is too low on both ends. There has not been any real need for this room to date – so it has not been prioritized. As the Commission toured the bay, they noted the beautiful newly painted floor. Commissioner Via asked if they felt they need a heater out there. Mr. Moore stated that he thinks they

do because of certain drug temperature requirements. At times, they can't leave some things on the trucks because it gets too cold. Mr. Moore suggested the City sell the cascade trailer because it really is of no use – all agreed. Division Chief Ast stated they will probably be putting in a request for a new fire engine in next year's budget. Lieutenant Spencer felt they should also consider upgrading the six year old cardiac monitor in the near future.

3. RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Recreation Director Chuck Beach gave the Commission a tour of the Recreation Complex. The building was undergoing a duct cleaning process to remove some moldy build-up that had developed, probably due to so leakage problems they had previously had. The Commission walked-out to see the pool and expressed some disappointment in a few things. They noted rust stains around all the pool drains, cracked decking, and weeds shooting up at the building line. The Commission also asked about the umbrella tables and chairs they have budgeted for the last couple years. The rust stains have proven difficult to control and the deck cracking they have found is something they will have to live with. The weeds were overlooked by Staff because the pool deck is currently closed, which is why the umbrella tables and chairs are put up – for the winter. The Commission viewed the Wellness Center, which doesn't have a high use but enough to make the mostly donated equipment worth having a room for. They plan to add a TV to this room. Employees are a primary user of the Wellness Center and the racquetball courts. They currently have one hundred seventy people per month that use the Wellness Center (ten percent Florida Health Care) and one hundred twenty-five key holders for the racquetball courts. Staff advised that they are currently purchasing a bus for the Summer Camp program. This will be much more convenient and cost effective. The Commission took a walk through the gym and it was noted that the air conditioning is expected to be completed in time for the Summer Camp this year. They also walked around the tennis and racquetball area. Mention was made that some large planters would be nice in the table area. Also, a sign stating *Warm-Up Area* would be nice for that little fenced court. As they walked along next to the Boxcar, a suggestion was made that they add plants in the mulch area. As for the mural on the outside of the racquetball courts, more discussion is needed due to the varied ideas of what it should portray.

- BREAK FOR LUNCH -

The Commission and Staff had lunch in the City Hall conference room.

4. POLICE DEPARTMENT TOUR

Commander Mark Barker gave the Commission a tour of the police department. They went through the investigators area, where they now have desks for a new part-time employee and a volunteer. Car theft is very prevalent – usually due to keys being left in the vehicle. They have a ninety-five percent recovery rate. The Commission viewed the evidence room, where everything is bar coded and logged in the computer. Only two people have keys to this room. They saw the interview room and the computer training

room – where Explorer meetings are held and in service training. They now have a subscription to the Police Law Institute to keep up with training requirements. The Police Department is clearly well-funded and well-equipped. A grant is currently being written and will be proposed for an additional traffic officer and a motorcycle. They will also be asking the Commission for authorization to use LETF monies for signs - “Keep a Child Alive, Drive 25”. The Commission took a walk through the squad room and viewed the crime location map. The Wall of Honor is a nice addition, showing their retirees. The Commission did a walk-through of the jail and the dispatch center, viewing the 911 locator screen.

5. CITY HALL TOUR

A. Finance

Brenda Gubernator, Finance Director, spoke to the Commission about the new GASB-34 accounting system changeover – which is an attempt to mirror government accounting with that of private business. The Commission had questions about the use of a Water Fund and whether that is a profitable business for the City to be in. There is no question that it is profitable for a City, but our City does not misuse that as others around us may. The costs associated with it are directly connected to it and more could be that aren’t. We have a good reserve in this fund (three months), which is very necessary for the unforeseeable events that occur. There was some discussion of the bad debt accounts. VCOG is exploring alternatives for interlocal communication of bad debtors – perhaps a higher deposit could be placed upon them. Mayor Arthur mentioned that Daytona Beach is offering low flow toilets for twenty-five dollars each, to promote water conservation. They also exchange shower heads, which is something we used to do.

B. Information Technology

Scott Gutauckis, IT Director, responded to Commission inquiry about wireless internet service. The cost would be about nine hundred dollars per month for one hundred users. We currently spend about one thousand dollars per month now. There is a one time cost of fifty to seventy-five thousand dollars for equipment.

C. Building and Zoning Department

Tim Harbuck, Development Administrator, gave the Commission an update on the rental housing inspection system. We currently have six hundred six registered as such, which is higher than ten percent of the residential homes within the community. This license is now being used by landlords as a selling tool, because it shows that their places are up to code. Mr. Harbuck stated that the City saw four million dollars in construction in 2003. There was some discussion about regular occupational licenses and home occupational licenses and the different requirements. There was also some discussion of the permit fees and the architectural plans review fee – there is no fee for site plan review, which can require a lot of staff time.

D. Water Billing

Mr. Forte stated that this department has had a complete personnel changeover in the past one and a half years. John Manual, Customer Service Supervisor, responded to Commission questions regarding dumpster fees (commercial / residential). Mr. Manual stated that two payment method advancements have recently been explored. The first is that property owners / management companies can now keep a deposit on file so they can simply call-up as needed to have water turned on – this will come to the Commission for approval soon. The second is already in place – the Automatic Fund Transfer. So far they have approximately two hundred fifty signed up for this. The credit card payment option is being explored. We are currently exploring the Click to Gov program but a suggestion was made that Pay Pal might be better for the number of people we would likely service. As for a wish list, Mr. Manual stated that they could really use a fax machine.

E. City Manager's Department

1. Economic Development / Code Enforcement

Assistant to the City Manager Greg Wood oversees both of these departments. The Commission did a walk through but did not have any questions for Mr. Wood. They discussed both of these issues on their driving tours. Newly hired Community Redevelopment Area Coordinator, Marsha Radulovich, was mentioned.

2. Human Resources

Human Resource Director Diane Cole advised the Commission that they will be holding a Health Fair on March 19th. This years training will focus on Communications Skills. The Commission asked her about the turn-over rate. Their exit interviews have revealed that the primary reason for this turn-over is the pension system. The City will be exploring what the cost would be to put all the employees back on the FRS system. There was also some discussion of the number of police officers now relative to the number of police officers they had twenty-five years ago. Mr. Forte stated that we have increased this by about two officers per shift. When asked if there was anything that Ms. Cole felt would make her department run better, she stated that a technical assistant would make things run more smoothly around here for all of us.

3. City Manager

Virginia Vainella, Administrative Assistant to the City Manager, stated she felt they should replace the visitor's chairs in the reception area because it did not portray a good impression of the City. Mr. Forte and the Commission discussed what appears to be the most difficult part of the relationship between him and the Commission – equitable and timely communication. It is hard to relay all of the same information to five people at approximately the same time but he tries very hard to do so. Occasionally one of them will hear something through the grapevine before he's had a chance to speak with them

about it, but he tries to get to everyone promptly. They discussed a remedy to this being more e-mail paging to the Commission. Mr. Forte also indicated that he viewed conversations between him and members of the commission as private until such time as action was being taken on them. He had concerns that good deals could be lost when public discussion of them occurs prematurely. The Commission asked that their phone calls to him be given a high level of priority and that his assistant provide them with as much information as possible when they call. Mayor Arthur stated that he would like to be more involved with the big developers meetings – to do some PR. The Commission also asked to be made aware when long term employees leave.

6. DISCUSSION

The Commission toured some parts of the City. They went around the Halifax Shopping Center, which developers have been looking at very seriously lately. They went by the Justice Center, which they have leased part of and made significant improvements to it for a museum location. They noted the Fretwell properties, which redevelopment is focusing on. They also drove along Ridgewood to view various business improvements, which have resulted due to the Community Redevelopment Grant.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Commission Day officially adjourned at approximately 5:25 p.m.

City of Holly Hill

William D. Arthur, Mayor

Attest:

Jeaneen P. Clauss, City Clerk