

M I N U T E S
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF HOLLY HILL, FLORIDA
JUNE 21, 1994

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Virginia Wine called the meeting to order.

Answering roll call were Mayor Wine, Councilman Arthur Byrnes, Councilman J. D. Mellette, Councilman Shirley Heyman and Councilman Jim Elliott.

Also attending were City Manager Ralph Hester, Assistant City Attorney Scott Simpson, and Deputy City Clerk Sue W. Blackwell.

2. DISCUSSION OF CONSTRUCTION PROJECT AT CITY HALL AND POLICE DEPT.

Mayor Wine said she called the meeting to discuss the construction project at City Hall and the Police Department. She opened the meeting for discussion.

Councilman Heyman asked, "What is the problem? Are we out of money, or what?" Mayor Wine answered, "The problem is money, primarily." She said Council needs to be thinking about the upstairs because Council had said it should be ready by July 15, 1994.

Mayor Wine said based on a letter from the City Manager, everything has been completed downstairs for the operations of the Police Dept. She said Council Chambers and all the other offices upstairs need to be completed before the City runs out of money. Mrs. Wine said something must also be done about the exterior of the building. Mayor Wine said the budget sessions have been set for July so Council could make any necessary changes in the proposed budget.

Councilman Heyman asked what was going to be done about the sallyport. Mayor Wine explained the sallyport was not included in the original plans. Councilman Mellette said it was discussed when Council started this project.

City Manager Hester said when the funding package was put together, the interior of the building was the only part considered. Later when it was added, there was no idea about the amount of dollars involved. (\$20,000)

Mrs. Heyman said the way she looks at this matter is Council Chambers could wait if the Police Department needs the sallyport. She said she did not see an urgency to get in Council Chambers.

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It was her opinion if the Police Dept. needed something for the safety of the officers, the Council should get their priorities straight.

Mr. Hester said they do not have a sallyport when they put a prisoner in the Jeeps so if there is a real concern, eye bolts could be put in the floors of the back of the Jeep and use leg cuffs. He said he realizes there is a potential for problems in the stairway. There is a possibility of doing a modified sallyport and putting a ramp down there. The City Manager said several things have been discussed as possibilities but when looking at the numbers, the City has down scaled their expectations based on budget constraints. He said he hopes there will be enough money to get through the project and thinks that will happen if there are no more unexpected expenditures. He said the remaining construction in the Police Dept. is not necessary to run the department. He listed some items to be completed and said that is not an area the citizens would see unless they have done something wrong and are on the way to the County jail. Mr. Hester said most of those people would not be voters. He noted he thought we were facing a tight budget and would hate to ask people to appropriate money from the General Fund to finish something. Mr. Hester said he has every reason to believe there is money to finish the project, but would feel better if the upstairs was finished and the "front" finished and then go back to the rest of the Police Department work.

Mr. Hester said the stairs have been used for many years and he does not know of any instance where anyone has been hurt. A brief discussion was held about the City's liability for injuries. The City Manager also mentioned about the \$40,000 to reroof the City Hall. Mr. Hester said the sallyport could be modified.

Councilman Byrnes said he did not believe the City needed a Taj Mahal model but did feel there was a need for a ramp because the stairs are dangerous. He said Council should try to work that in somehow. Councilman Mellette agreed with Mr. Byrnes.

Councilman Byrnes asked Mr. Hester what he was recommending. Mr. Hester said he was recommending finishing up and getting feed back from Council on the rest of the upstairs and to put the rest of the project at the end. Failing that, Council should give direction if they want the sallyport completed with the rest of the construction.

Councilman Elliott said by the time the upstairs is finished, a solid number should be available on the cost of constructing the sallyport. Mr. Hester said the City has been contracting out much of the services to speed up construction and that money was not considered in the original budget. He further stated his goal was to have some money left at the end of the project to demolish some of the old buildings on the school property.

Mr. Hester said the next year's budget will be tight and he would like to be able to tear down the two story school building with funds left over from construction and not have to put that project in the next

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budget. He told Council if they did not want to raise millage, some very skillful cuts would have to be made in the budget. Mayor Wine reminded everyone approximately \$100,000 must be paid on the balloon note.

Councilman Byrnes said he would not like to see "the wall" constructed if we are trying to save dollars. He said he is opposed to cutting off the flow of traffic around the building.

City Engineer D. Martin asked if Council would give permission to allow staff to negotiate with the low bidder on the sallyport so the project would not have to be rebid. This would be for the ramp only instead of the entire project.

Mr. Hester said he is concerned about the cosmetic look of the "new front" to City Hall. At this time it looks the old fire station with some "store front". Part of the paving will need to be removed and some type of awning will be needed. He said the citizens need to have something they will be proud of. Mayor Wine suggested having an architect draw up something that will look like the front of the building.

Councilman Heyman asked if we are playing politics because we have to show the people we are doing something with their tax dollars. Mayor Wine said that isn't what you would call it.

Mr. Hester said the citizens are going to come in and ride the elevator to Council Chambers and on their first visitation to come in, they will see that blank wall that looks like a driveway ending at two doors. He reiterated that some type of overhang should be done.

Councilman Byrnes said the meeting should be moved so everyone can walk over to the construction site and the entire Council can see what progress has been made. He said that would help move the meeting along.

Councilman Elliott asked if it was the intention to have this enhancement done by the first meeting and Mr. Hester said he could not promise that. He said the first meeting would be the second meeting in July but that the seating would not be installed by then so the chairs currently being used would be moved to the new Council Chambers.

Councilman Mellette asked if that date couldn't be changed. Mayor Wine said it could but if Council would remember back in February, she said contractors should be brought in and put the men back in the positions they belong in instead of letting the street go unattended or other work undone.

Councilman Heyman said she had not forgotten but what she wants is for the most important things to be done first not just the things that look good. She said the Police Department has worked under a

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hardship for years and it seems like Council wants to take from them to put stuff some place else and that is not right.

Councilman Elliott said Mrs. Heyman didn't listen because the Police can work under what has been completed.

Councilman Mellette said they can work under what is completed but that he agreed with Mrs. Heyman the project is almost complete so there is no need to stop what is important just for window dressing.

Councilman Byrnes asked Mr. Mellette if he wanted to go up on the millage rate. Mr. Mellette said he didn't say he wanted to but if that is what has to be done to accomplish what needs to be done . . . Mrs. Heyman said cutbacks could be made in other areas because she is sure money is being wasted. Mayor Wine said the sallyport port was not budgeted (\$25,000) and other areas Mr. Hester spoke about would come to about \$10,000. She said the City owes principal and interest on a million dollars.

More discussion followed and then Mayor Wine recessed the meeting so Council could go across the street to City Hall and tour the Construction site. That allowed each member of Council to see and understand exactly what item was being discussed.

Mayor Wine called the meeting back to order at 6:35 p.m. and asked that the record show that City Manager Hester, Public Services Director Marc Chattin, and Engineer Deward Martin took Council on a tour of the Police Station, Council Chambers and other offices upstairs.

Upon questioning, Mr. Chattin said he thought the upstairs could be finished within the next 30 days and downstairs could be completed within 45 to 60 days after that including some work outside. Grading and landscaping would be after all the other work is accomplished.

A brief discussion centered around the exterior work needing to be done to complete the project.

Councilman Heyman reaffirmed her opinion that the priorities should be in order. She said there is approximately \$170,000 to finish the job. She said she didn't understand the big rush to get in Council Chambers when Council is functioning just fine where they are. She said the work shouldn't be shifted from the Police Department to finish Council Chambers.

Mr. Hester said he did not believe there is much of a shift because the trades people are at a point where they need to come upstairs because of plumbing work needing to be accomplished downstairs before they can go back down there to work. Mr. Martin said some concrete must be broken up and then the plumbers need to do some more work before our people can finish down stairs. Mr. Hester said Council could contract out more work but it will take more dollars away from the project. He further stated he would like to return some of the \$170,000 to the treasury as there are some big ticket items still to be

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settled. Those include what Council is going to do with the old school property (a certain amount of demolition) which has not been in any budget.

He said if this work has to be included in the next budget with no increase in taxes, Council will be facing some hard cuts. They will be permanent cuts and will be personnel related.

More discussion ensued regarding the technical aspects of the sallyport and possible alternatives to constructing it according to the plans currently being considered. Councilmembers Mellette and Heyman said they felt the sallyport should be constructed as planned. Councilman Elliott said the interiors of both projects and the front entrance should be completed and continue to use the steps for now. He said the Chief brought up one incident in his years of service. Mayor Wine agreed.

Councilman Byrnes moved to delay construction of the sallyport until the rest of the construction project is complete. The motion further stated that before the sallyport is built, the plans must be brought back to Council for additional consideration. Councilman Elliott seconded the motion that CARRIED 3-2 with Councilman Mellette and Councilman Heyman voting No.

City Manager Hester showed Council a sample of a silk screened brick for which he wanted Council to set a price. He suggested \$5 per brick.

Councilman Mellette moved to set the price at \$5 for the silk screened bricks and \$2 for plain bricks with the money collected going to the Youth Center. Councilman Elliott seconded the motion that CARRIED 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to come before the Council so the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk/Manager