



City of Eustis, Florida

City Hall
10 North Grove Street
Post Office Drawer 68
Eustis, FL 32727-0068

Meeting Minutes - Final City Commission Workshop

Thursday, July 6, 2017

5:00 PM

City Hall

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Morin - 5:04 p.m.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF QUORUM AND PROPER NOTICE

Present: 5 - Anthony Sabatini; Marie Aliberti; Linda Bob; Carla Gnann-Thompson; and Robert Morin

I. Workshop Item

[16389](#)

Review of Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018

Rob Visser, Deputy Finance Director, reviewed the proposed budget for FY2017-18 including a general overview of the City's funds, budget methodology, significant factors, proposed budget, proposed millage rate and the next steps in the process. He reviewed a history of the previous budget discussions and future dates for setting of the millage rate and dates for the formal public hearings. He also reviewed the beginning fund balance, total revenues, total expenditures and projected ending fund balance. He explained the various revenues, expenditures, overview of the General Fund, recurring operating revenues and expenditures, Capital Improvement Plan, and the millage rate on which the proposed budget is based. He noted the millage rate had not been increased in four years. He reviewed the possible rollback rates and the proposed rate of 7.5810. He then explained the effect of the proposed millage on residential ad valorem taxes under the current millage rate versus the rollback rate. He compared Eustis' General Fund budget and populations to other area cities showing that the City is providing for a larger population with a smaller General Fund budget. He stated that the next steps would be to direct staff regarding any millage rate considerations, set the millage rate and hearing dates at the July 20th meeting with the planned formal hearing dates of September 7th and 21st.

II. Commission Discussion

Vice Mayor Aliberti complimented staff on the budget preparation and use of funding.

Commissioner Bob stated the City is doing a good job for price it charges. She commented on difficulties with the budget when she first came on the Commission. She cited needs for the library such as a maker space. She indicated she had no complaints with the budget as presented.

Vice Mayor Aliberti confirmed Ms. Bob would like to see more funding for the library and children's recreation.

Commissioner Bob emphasized the need to concentrate on assisting today's youth and not just relying on the school board to care about their future.

Commissioner Gnann-Thompson commented on the number of children served by

City programs in the early 1990's versus today. She cited grants that were utilized for children including job employability programs. She emphasized the need for the City to apply for more grants and see how it can serve more children.

Commissioner Bob noted she works at Leesburg High School several days a week and it is obvious the City of Leesburg is not serving their residents.

Ron Neibert, City Manager, confirmed there was a consensus of the Commission for staff to look at more programs for children.

Mayor Morin stated the City needs to make a commitment to children in the next fiscal year. He suggested having the splash pad open free during summer vacation and possibly providing transportation to the downtown area.

Commissioner Sabatini asked for more specific suggestions for programming.

Mr. Neibert indicated that staff doesn't have new specific programs to include in the FY17-18 budget. He explained that when the budget is passed it is not written in stone. He stated he would take direction to look for more community based programs and external funding sources to bring forward for Commission consideration.

Commissioner Sabatini expressed support for the City targeting existing community organizations that already provide proven programs rather than generating all new programs that are untested.

Following further discussion, Mr. Neibert summarized that the Commission wants more community based programs either through the City or through existing agencies. He stated he would take that as direction to look for more opportunities.

Commissioner Sabatini commented on how the budget is prepared and stated his belief that the Commission needs to have more input on departmental expenditures. He emphasized his desire to have more detail.

Mr. Neibert asked what additional information was wanted in the budget.

Commissioner Sabatini responded that he would like to see where the new tax dollars are being spent.

Mr. Neibert stated that new taxes dollars are not earmarked for specific expenditures but go into the General Fund. He stated that staff presents the Capital Improvement Plan to the Commission for its review and approval. He explained that other increases are based on increased costs for supplies, services, etc. He acknowledged there is not a statement that says we are receiving this much more and this is where it is being spent.

Commissioner Sabatini stated his desire to receive a detailed budget per department and for the Commissioners to be invited to attend the individual department budget meetings.

The Commission discussed the following: 1) some Commissioners' lack of experience with the budget process; 2) how in previous years the department heads would provide comprehensive budget presentations for the Commission; 3) how in some years each department head was required to reduce their budget by a certain percentage; 4) the previous personnel reductions and lack of raises; 5) asking the department heads to provide additional detail; 6) whether or not to have additional

information provided; 7) the need to trust the department heads to be the expert in their department; 8) how the Charter charges the City Manager with the preparation and presentation of the budget and the Commission with providing direction and setting policy; and 8) the comparison of the City's per capita expenditures with other area cities.

Colleen Scott, Finance Director, explained that the City received the GFOA award based on its presentation. She noted that the budget includes comparisons with previous years. She stated that the budget is very bare bones in the General Fund. She added that all major expenditures are brought to the Commission for approval.

Mr. Neibert noted that the budget only includes a 2% salary increase while other cities are offering 3 to 5% in the next year which makes it difficult to hire qualified employees.

The Commission further discussed the budget process, millage rate, and ability to obtain additional information from the department heads with Mr. Neibert noting that residents will only see an increase in their taxes if the Property Appraiser increases their property value. He further explained those items that resulted in the City seeing an increase in the total property valuation including new construction.

Mayor Morin commented on his desire to have the salary increases go primarily to those individuals who need it the most. He stated he would like to see a plan for doing that.

Mr. Neibert explained some of the increases are based on bargaining unit contracts. He stated those contracts include "me too" clauses. If the City gives a certain class of employees a higher pay increase, then they are mandated to provide the same increases to the bargaining units.

The Commission confirmed that the results of the pay equity study had been implemented.

Bill Howe, Human Resources Director, responded that 65 employees received increases based on the study. He explained that part of the concern with giving a higher rate increase to the lower paid employees, you may move them higher than people that are at the lower end of higher ranges creating compression. He noted there are two lower paid positions currently open and the City received 70 applicants for one and 50 for the other. However, the City has had difficulty getting applications for some of the higher paid positions due to the pay ranges for those positions.

Mayor Morin then commented on code enforcement issues and the need for more code enforcement to clean up the City. He indicated that was one reason the City's property values don't go up.

The Commission discussed whether to have additional workshops to review detailed department budgets with Mr. Neibert indicating his willingness to also meet individually with Commissioners.

CONSENSUS: It was a consensus of the Commission to not hold any additional budget workshops but for any interested Commissioners to contact the City Manager for individual meetings.

III. Public Input

Alan Johnson stated he reviewed last year's budget on line but he did not see the

proposed budget online. He cited the amount spent on overtime specifically for police and fire and suggested increasing the number of police and fire personnel rather than paying overtime.

Mr. Neibert explained that the total cost for a police officer or firefighter is much higher than just the salary. He added that the City also has minimum staffing standards for police and fire; therefore, when they are absent for sick leave or vacation; another individual must be paid overtime to cover that absence.

Ms. Scott further explained that there were a number of open positions as well as two police officers were on military leave which increased the overtime costs.

IV. Commission Direction

There was no further direction from the Commission beyond what was provided during the Commission discussion.

V. Adjournment - 6:04 p.m.

*These minutes reflect the actions taken and portions of the discussion during the meeting. To review the entire discussion concerning any agenda item, go to www.eustis.org and click on the video for the meeting in question. A DVD of the entire meeting or CD of the entire audio recording or verbatim transcript of the meeting can be obtained from the office of the City Clerk for a fee.