



# City of Venice

401 West Venice Avenue  
Venice, FL 34285  
www.venicegov.com

## Meeting Minutes City Council

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Monday, January 11, 2016

9:00 AM

Council Chambers

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### Fire Merger Workshop

#### CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Holic called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

#### ROLL CALL

**Present:** 7 - Mayor John Holic, Council Member Kit McKeon, Council Member Jeanette Gates, Council Member Bob Daniels, Council Member Deborah Anderson, Council Member Richard Cautero and Council Member Fred Fraize

#### Also Present

City Attorney Dave Persson, City Clerk Lori Stelzer, City Manager Ed Lavallee, Assistant City Clerk Heather Taylor, and for certain items on the agenda: Fire Chief Shawn Carvey and Interim Finance Director Linda Senne

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Lieutenant Frank Giddens.

#### I. FIRE MERGER

##### [16-1722](#)

City Manager Ed Lavallee: Introduction

Mr. Lavallee provided an introduction to include previous discussion on the merger, use of a feasibility study to determine considerations, the spreadsheet provided to council, the need for a city charter language change to empower council to share the responsibility with another entity, and the two presentations to be heard during the meeting.

Discussion followed regarding the end goal, the Chamber of Commerce's offer to obtain an expert analysis and the intention of the workshop being to ensure that new council members have knowledge of previous discussions on the item.

##### [16-1723](#)

Interim Finance Director Linda Senne: Financial Summary

Ms. Senne reviewed the revised fiscal year 2016's budget, and future projections and assumptions used to determine figures.

Discussion followed regarding the current contract in regards to salary increases, pension amounts, unfunded liability, actuarial contributions, fiscal year 2015 funding, the debt being linked to the market, results of paying the minimum amounts, additional Salem Trust contributions, participants in the Florida Retirement System (FRS), assumptions being based on a good market, and city pension costs if the consolidation takes place.

Ms. Senne reviewed public work projections for buildings and vehicles, projected county payments into the city FRS plan, current millage rate and estimated revenues.

Discussion followed regarding Emergency Medical Services (EMS) funding and emergency line and dispatching services.

Ms. Senne informed council of the city's responsibility to fund the fire pension.

Discussion followed regarding city contributions required to consolidate in regards to vehicles, fire apparatus depreciation, the county's expectations regarding the replacement of vehicles and building operating conditions, use of impact fees instead of the city providing the county with a check for vehicle depreciation, information needed prior to the voters making a decision, use of impact fees to assist in subsidizing, city obligations to provide operational equipment, negotiating with the county, county fees for EMS and the fire department being an asset.

Mr. Lavalley provided a comparison estimate on an annual basis of savings with and without consolidation.

Discussion continued on appreciating assets and the impact consolidation would have on the citizens ability to express concerns in the future.

#### [16-1724](#)

#### Fire Chief Shawn Carvey: Operational Summary

Chief Carvey spoke on the operational summary of the fire department to include identifying the response to accommodate citizens, having the ability to identify the needs of citizens, increase in call volumes, fire calls within the last year, condition of fire equipment, grant money used for improvements, local community needs in regards to outfitting equipment, ability to train firefighters in a timely manner and to items that would change if the fire department were to consolidate to include special event assistance and loss of ability to control. He commented on the current status of inspections, fire inspection fees being 60% higher in the county, having an inspector in the building department, community outreach program training, fire prevention tours, home safety surveys, and smoke alarm replacements, the risk assessment program, and the

importance of knowing what residents want.

Mr. Carvey discussed his vision for the future of the fire department and the ten year projection, eliminating the fire academy, lowering the Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating, projected lower pension costs, and encouraged council to allow one year to determine the impact the changes have had on the department.

Discussion followed regarding increased inspection fees, providing the best quality service at the lowest cost, the inspection cost covering the cost of the inspector, Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant eligibility, and FRS negotiations.

In response to council questions, Mr. Carvey spoke to having compatible air packs, inspection costs in comparison to inspector costs, and inspectors finding unlicensed businesses and generating revenue for the city.

Recess was taken from 10:45 a.m. until 10:55 a.m.

Discussion continued regarding negotiation discussions, the fire department's willingness to make innovative moves, accommodations made to be compatible for agency crossover, the need for a setting that invites more communication for workshops, not having boundaries on first responders, capital outlay, and the potential for the figures to change.

Mayor Holic commented on his communication with the former fire chief of Sarasota County, Mike Tobias and an email received from a county commissioner regarding county responsibility for services the city does not provide.

Council discussion continued regarding providing the city manager with conditions to consolidate, use of or imposing impact fees, subsidizing fundraisers, and the county imposing impact fees for new construction.

Mr. Persson stated he would provide further information regarding impact fees.

Discussion continued regarding extraordinary mitigation fees, funding of new fire stations being built in the county, covering the cost to the county for engines that must follow EMS, obtaining the costs for services, keeping the small town atmosphere, and making cuts elsewhere in order to not have to raise fees for residents.

## II. COUNCIL DISCUSSION

There was none.

### III. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Kathleen Castellano, 404 Everglades Drive, provided an overview of her time in Venice and stated her opposition to the merger with the county.

Philip Castellano, 404 Everglades Drive, stated that he was a first responder prior to moving to Venice and spoke to his opposition in consolidating the fire department and his choice to hook up to city water to have local fire service.

Jerry Collins, International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), spoke to staffing levels, correcting misinformation, meeting actuarial assumptions, FRS and 175 plan costs, inspection funding, and seeing the benefits of current negotiations.

Doug Lozen, actuary from Foster and Foster Inc., advised that the cost should trend downwards since the plan closure and responded to council questions regarding the ARC reflecting the change in membership.

Marty Dover, Venice resident, commented on the need to allow the fire department to see the results of the concessions made, impact the consolidation would have on the fire department employees, morale within the department, and areas within the budget that can be cut to maintain the fire department in the city, and opined council is responsible for providing the services and not giving it to the county.

Dean Calamaras, 13 Gulf Manor Drive, spoke to the city being chosen as one of the nicest cities to live in with one reason being the safety of the city, being a full service city, and morale within the fire department, and asked that council not diminish the city.

Discussion took place regarding the need to look at facts, the need to invest in the department if consolidation does not take place, and the best interest of the residents.

**IV. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 12:16 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Mayor - City of Venice

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City Clerk