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Venice City Council*

MINUTES OF A WORKSHOP
CITY COUNCIL, VENICE, FLORIDA

AUGUST 1, 2012

A Workshop of the City Council to consider the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012-2013 Budget was held this date in Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Holic called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Carlesimo.

ELECTED OFFICIALS AND OTHERS PRESENT

Roll was called with the following elected officials present: Mayor John Holic, Vice Mayor Kit McKeon and Council Members Jim Bennett, Emilio Carlesimo, Bob Daniels, Jeanette Gates, and Dave Sherman.

Also present: City Clerk Lori Stelzer, City Attorney Bob Anderson, City Manager Ed Lavallee, and Recording Secretary Susan Schult, and for certain items on the agenda: Finance Director Jeff Snyder.

I. CITY COUNCIL – CITY CLERK LORI STELZER

Ms. Stelzer reviewed details of the budget request totaling \$233,221, and clarified that \$10,000 was added to the total council budget for community support funding.

Discussion followed regarding special events funding, Venice MainStreet membership, and correcting bookkeeping procedures prior to the final budget for life and health insurance payments and plan administration.

(1:57) Responding to council member questions, Mr. Lavallee and Mr. Snyder commented on accounting requirements relating to expending taxpayer dollars.

Discussion ensued regarding accounting procedures, accountability to taxpayers, budgeting community events, council accomplishments, obtaining citizen feedback, resolving downtown parking issues, tracking the use of budgeted funds, and council promotional items.

(2:19) Mr. Snyder reviewed current accounting practices and council members offered suggestions for revisions.

Ms. Gates left the meeting at 2:27 p.m. and returned at 2:33 p.m.

II. CITY CLERK – CITY CLERK LORI STELZER

Ms. Stelzer reviewed budget numbers, departmental accomplishments, and a budget enhancement request for agenda management software, and responded to council member questions relating to special pay for a temporary administrative person filling in for an employee on sick leave.

Mayor Holic left the meeting at 2:34 p.m. and returned at 2:37 p.m.

Ms. Stelzer responded to council member questions regarding reclassifying existing positions and reassigning duties of clerk's office employees.

III. FINANCE – DIRECTOR JEFF SNYDER

Mr. Snyder displayed an organizational chart and provided an overview of finance department functions that include general ledger accounting, financial reporting, payroll, accounts payable, purchasing and procurement, budget preparation, investments, billing, cashiering, and internal control system development. He also compared eight year actual versus budgeted costs and staffing levels, and briefed council members on procurement card procedures, departmental initiatives, and cost savings. Mr. Snyder provided an update on police officer and firefighter pension trusts, noting significant underfunding and the need for pension reform, and concluded his presentation with a brief review of Florida Retirement System (FRS) pension costs, contributions, and budgeting.

Mr. Snyder answered questions concerning pension fund funding, state accounting regulations, obtaining comparable data from area municipalities, subsidiary ledgers, providing detailed financial reports to council, budgeting guidelines, salaries and pension obligations, budgeting legacy debt, having input on pension fund expenditures, pension funding obligations, City Hall cleaning services, annual certified public accountant certifications, and pension plan unfunded liabilities.

Council members discussed being provided adequate financial information in order to make informed decisions.

IV. CITY MANAGER – CITY MANAGER ED LAVALLEE

(3:13) Mr. Lavallee provided an update on goals for the city manager's office which were established utilizing city council's strategic plan and include controlling beach pollution, establishing an improved maintenance program for city infrastructure and facilities, evaluating all benefit programs, maintaining a balanced budget, and maintaining the airport as a top-notch general aviation facility. He displayed and discussed budget summary and staffing data along with future deliverables relating to proactive property assessments and future managed growth that will include public outreach meetings.

Mr. Lavallee responded to council member questions concerning obtaining feedback from public meetings, obtaining accurate information regarding city departments, funding a consolidation study and impacts of consolidating services, council members visiting the Challenger Baseball site as a group, staffing and level of service, reducing leadership positions, obtaining a variety of perspectives, and building trust.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

(4:03) Jerry Collins, Venice firefighter, expressed concern that revenues were not included in fire department budget data and commented on pension contributions.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before council, the meeting was adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

ATTEST:

Mayor – City of Venice

City Clerk