



City of Venice

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

Meeting Minutes City Council

Wednesday, August 28, 2024

10:30 AM

Council Chambers

Continuation of the August 27, 2024 Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pachota called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Mayor Nick Pachota, Ms. Joan Farrell, Vice Mayor Jim Boldt, Ms. Helen Moore, Mrs. Rachel Frank, Mr. Ron Smith and Mr. Rick Howard

ALSO PRESENT

City Manager Ed Lavallee, City Attorney Kelly Fernandez, Deputy City Clerk Mercedes Barcia, Finance Director Linda Senne and Recording Secretary Amanda Hawkins-Brown.

INVOCATION

Deputy Clerk Barcia provided the invocation and Mrs. Frank lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

I. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION will be limited to one hour.

There was no one signed up to speak.

II. NEW BUSINESS

COUNCIL ACTION/DISCUSSION

A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Farrell, to reorder the agenda and address Item No. 24-0307 first. The motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Yes: 7 - Mayor Pachota, Ms. Farrell, Vice Mayor Boldt, Ms. Moore, Mrs. Frank, Mr. Smith and Mr. Howard

[24-0307](#)

Discuss Need for Additional Budget Workshop Time (Mr. Smith)

Mr. Smith introduced the request for an additional Budget Workshop meeting due to absence of two council members, and having additional

questions and requests.

Discussion took place regarding the specific items for additional review, interest income, Planning Department fees, Building Department fees, doing rate studies, millage rate decrease, Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council membership payment, providing support for Venice Theatre, hiring and retention ideas for emergency personnel, time allowance provided, absent members ability to review budget, concern for lack of budget reductions, community donations, impact of natural disasters, past budget freezes, utilizing staff knowledge and experience, ability to make amendments in future, addressing concerns in today's meeting, working with staff to review budget, labor expense, past decrease of millage rate, hardship on staff resources to do another meeting, ability to bring concerns through other channels, Family Promise expense, working within the Sunshine Law, time limits on agenda items, difficulty in assembling another meeting, and preference to review items in today's meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Farrell, to hold another budget workshop. The motion failed by the following electronic vote:

Yes: 1 - Mr. Smith

No: 6 - Mayor Pachota, Ms. Farrell, Vice Mayor Boldt, Ms. Moore, Mrs. Frank and Mr. Howard

D. PRESENTATION WITH ACTION

[24-0305](#)

Finance Director Linda Senne: Approve Changes to FY2025 Budget Since Budget Workshops (10 min)

Finance Director Senne presented pre-tax values in June, property tax revenue, funding and expense for a School Resource Officer, adding backhoe to Utilities department, additions to revenue side, and answered Council questions on addition from property value estimates, private school's payment for School Resource Officer, depreciation planning on equipment, whether there are any uncommitted funds, recent budget amendments, funds for reserves, proposed property tax, police vehicles expense, whether reserves would be used for expenses from natural disasters, FEMA reimbursements, utilizing department's surpluses to fund unexpected expenses, and the estimate and use of interest income.

Discussion took place regarding the summary sheet provided, strategic plans, inter-local parks agreement, Seaboard Redevelopment, relocation of Solid Waste Facility, labor contracts, Fire Department headquarters, purpose of reserve, pension funding, long term planning for improvements, importance of needs versus wants, fiduciary responsibilities, consideration of future expenses, fluctuation in revenues, increased tax revenue over the last ten years, and how surrounding municipalities manage interest income.

Finance Director Senne continued to speak regarding adding personnel expenses, decreases in Police expenses, Fire and EMS expenses, impact fees for new vehicles, and answered Council questions regarding addressing Council's direction for additional personnel from workshop, and estimation of reduced overtime expenses.

There was no one signed up to speak.

Discussion took place regarding a request for funding for Venice Theatre, past funding for performance art center, City's donation policy, past donation made, other channels for support, needed funding for City's projects, maintaining levels of service, and assisting by sharing information on grants.

A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Farrell, to amend the FY2025 budget with a millage decrease of .1441 mils and incorporate the changes since the budget workshop as presented today.

Recess was taken at 12:11 p.m. until 12:21 p.m.

Discussion took place regarding what the impact of the millage rate adjustment would be, and Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council dues.

City Attorney Fernandez clarified procedure for meeting order, provided options on how to proceed, and requested clarification on whether motion also included approval of changes presented.

Discussion took place regarding reason for amount of reduction requested, reduction of millage rates in surrounding municipalities, concerns for raising cost, the need to maintain service levels, Amendment 5 impact, fluctuation in revenue, concerns for upcoming capital expenditures, past shortages, and additional research needed to see long term impact of reduction.

The motion failed by the following electronic vote:

Yes: 1 - Mr. Smith

No: 6 - Mayor Pachota, Ms. Farrell, Vice Mayor Boldt, Ms. Moore, Mrs. Frank and Mr. Howard

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Boldt, seconded by Ms. Moore, to approve the changes to the FY2025 budget since the budget workshops. The motion carried by the following electronic vote:

Yes: 7 - Mayor Pachota, Ms. Farrell, Vice Mayor Boldt, Ms. Moore, Mrs. Frank, Mr. Smith and Mr. Howard

E. COUNCIL ACTION/DISCUSSION

24-0306

Finance Director Linda Senne: FY2025 City Manager and City Clerk Salaries

Finance Director Senne spoke on union and non- bargaining pay arrangements, requested Council action for Charter Officers pay increases, and answered Council question on whether increases includes non-salary benefits.

Discussion took place regarding comparison of similar municipalities, current salaries, average salaries of City Managers and Clerks in other municipalities, the need to remain competitive with private sector, quality of current officers, Consumer Price Index (CPI) being 2.9 percent, retaining the current experienced staff, past difficulty in filling positions, and level of service provided by current charter officers.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Boldt, seconded by Ms. Moore, to increase charter officer salaries 6% for the upcoming year. The motion carried by the following electronic vote:

Yes: 7 - Mayor Pachota, Ms. Farrell, Vice Mayor Boldt, Ms. Moore, Mrs. Frank, Mr. Smith and Mr. Howard

24-0308

2025 State Legislative Priorities

City Manager Lavallee spoke on consultation with lobbyist, focus on the top priorities, utilities department needs, potable water quality, future of water plant location, upgrades to membrane equipment, wastewater equipment upgrades to reduce energy use, transportation program, local road funding by State, beach renourishment, affordable housing, alternative energy, Home Rule, and priorities being consistent with Florida League of Cities (FLC) priorities.

Discussion took place regarding adding change in financial disclosure requirements and, relief for condo owners associations with new full funded reserves requirements, being in favor of priorities presented by City Manager, and concerns for adding controversial items.

A motion was made by Mr. Howard, seconded by Vice Mayor Boldt, to approve the 2025 State Legislative Priorities. The motion carried by the following electronic vote:

Yes: 7 - Mayor Pachota, Ms. Farrell, Vice Mayor Boldt, Ms. Moore, Mrs. Frank, Mr. Smith and Mr. Howard

III. CHARTER OFFICER REPORTS

City Clerk

[24-0309](#)

Legislative Referral Tracking Report

Deputy Clerk Barcia presented the update on of the status of current Legislative Referrals.

City Manager

City Manager Lavallee thanked Council for continued support, and spoke on attending the Florida League Cities (FLC) Annual Conference, work on committees, and lobbyist suggestion on approach of priorities.

IV. COUNCIL REPORTS***Council Member Moore***

Ms. Moore spoke on the Legislative Referral being under utilized.

Council Member Farrell

Ms. Farrell had no report.

Council Member Howard

Mr. Howard had no report.

Council Member Smith

Mr. Smith spoke on the Southwest Regional Planning Council meeting to include being appointed as treasurer.

Council Member Frank

Mrs. Frank had no report.

Vice Mayor Boldt

Vice Mayor Boldt spoke on the Central Coalition visit, serving on the FLC nomination committee, and upcoming Manasota League of Cities meeting.

Mayor Pachota

Mayor Pachota Spoke on the Florida League of Cities Annual Conference, being reappointed to the Florida League of Mayors Board of Directors, Resident's 103rd birthday, upcoming 9/11 ceremony, centennial logo contest, and holiday parade applications.

City Attorney

Attorney Fernandez had no report.

V. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was no one signed up to speak.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 1:32 p.m.

ATTEST:

Mayor - City of Venice

City Clerk