

MINUTES OF THE FY 2023 - 2024 BUDGET WORKSHOP FOR THE BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS FOR THE CITY OF PORT ST. JOE FLORIDA, HELD AT 2775 GARRISON AVENUE, August 24, 2023, AT 9 A.M.

The following were present: Mayor Buzzett, Commissioners Hoffman and Kerigan. City Manager Jim Anderson, City Clerk Charlotte Pierce, Financial Director Mike Lacour, Police Chief Jake Richards, Public Works Director John Grantland, Surface Water Treatment Plant Superintendent Larry McClamma, and Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Kevin Pettis, were also present. Commissioner Langston joined the Meeting at 9:03 A.M., and Commissioner Lowry was absent.

The purpose of the Workshop was to review the FY 2023 – 2024 Budget.

Public Records Request

Mr. Anderson made the Commission aware of a Public Records Request that has been received in reference to 216 Avenue A which is the property that was originally selected for the future site of the city hall, police and fire department buildings.

Credit Card Fees

Mr. Anderson shared that the City has paid in excess of \$60,000 in credit card fees over the past year when accepting payment by credit card. This is to be on the next Agenda for discussion and the possibility of charging a user fee to offset the costs the City is incurring.

Hydrometers

Contractors are not returning the meters, the City is charging \$500 per meter and the actual cost is \$1,600 per meter. This will be on the next Agenda for discussion.

Call Out Fee

Currently, the City does not charge for these calls. Over the Fourth of July weekend over 35 calls were received for service. The Commission will discuss the possibility of a flat fee per call out as workers are being paid to be on call, they are covering from Overstreet to Cape San Blas and to White City. Additional workers are being called out when the number of calls is so high. The problem seems to be more in the Cape area as large homes are being rented, numerous people are staying in the homes, and care is not being given to what is put in the sewer system thus causing clogging and back up.

Closing of Second Street

Mayor Buzzett asked that Commissioners walk the area, talk to the adjacent property owners, and be prepared to discuss this at the Regular Meeting on September 5, 2023.

2023 – 2024 Budget

The Budget for the Water Plant was reviewed. Discussion was held on funding for Water Distribution Downtown, and there is approximately a \$182,000 shortfall between what the state is offering and actual cost. Mr. Lacour will review the Budget to determine where funds might be drawn from to offset these costs. The DEP Lead Grant and Shark Tank Mixer Unit projects were also discussed.

Citizens to be Heard

No one wished to address the Commission.

Discussion Items by Commissioners

Commissioner Hoffman noted that since there has been no increase in Health Insurance Premiums for two years that this would be the time to consider any future increases being split between the City paying 75% of the increase and the Employee paying 25% of the increase.

Commissioner Hoffman stated there are 20 open positions with the City and he wanted to know how advertising was being done. Mr. Anderson stated he only knows of 7 positions and 5 of them are new positions that have not been filled. It was noted that we advertise on our social media pages, through the Star Newspaper, Gulf Coast Workforce Board Programs, and a sign posted in Frank Pate Park. Applicants are applying and, unfortunately, most of the applicants are unable to pass the background or drug screen requirements. Comments of several applicants from out of town that have been offered a job stated that the cost of living is so high here, they cannot afford to move here to work.

Commissioner Hoffman is serving on a committee that is looking at ways to improve the ball field areas. He stated that the County is willing to help with this project and he would like to see the City move forward with improvements.

Commissioner Kerigan did not have any additional items to discuss with the Board.

Commissioner Langston asked about the previous request for trees to be planted on Avenue D. After a previous review of the request, it was noted that there are utilities in the area where it was requested that trees be planted, and that area would not work.

Mayor Buzzett did not have anything to share with the Commission.

Motion to Adjourn

The next Budget Workshop will be held in the City Commission Meeting Room at Ward Ridge on Tuesday, September 5, 2023, at 11 A.M. The First Public Hearing on the Budget will be held on Friday, September 8, 2023, at 5:01 P.M. and the Adoption of the Budget is scheduled for Friday, September 22, 2023, also at 5:01 P.M.

Mayor Buzzett adjourned the meeting at 10:30 A.M.

Approved this 5th day of September 2023.

Rex Buzzett
Rex Buzzett, Mayor

9/5/23
Date

Charlotte M. Pierce
Charlotte M. Pierce, City Clerk

9/5/23
Date