

WORKSHOP MEETING

August 26, 2008

A Workshop Meeting of the City Commission of the City of Delray Beach, Florida, was called to order by Mayor Rita Ellis in the First Floor Conference Room at City Hall at 6:00 p.m., on Tuesday, August 26, 2008.

Roll call showed:

Present - Commissioner Gary P. Eliopoulos
 Commissioner Fred B. Fetzer
 Commissioner Woodie McDuffie
 Commissioner Mackenson Bernard
 Mayor Rita Ellis

Also present were - David T. Harden, City Manager
 Susan Ruby, City Attorney
 Chevelle D. Nubin, City Clerk

Mayor Ellis called the meeting to order and announced that it had been called for the purpose of considering the following items:

WORKSHOP AGENDA

1. Delray Beach Public Library Board FY 2008-2009 Budget Request

Alan Kornblau, Library Director, presented this item. He introduced Library Board Members Daniel Murtaugh, Brian Cheslack, Robert Currie and Sandy Simon. Karen Evanson, Assistant Library Director, was also present. Mr. Kornblau did a PowerPoint presentation outlining the FY 2008-2009 Budget request. He discussed the mission statement, vision and goals of the Public Library. Mr. Kornblau advised that overall the budget had a 3.91% increase in expenditures which is basically personnel because of extended evening hours and increased healthcare insurance costs. He stated the Public Library has proposed to have a hot spot with Wi-Fi access to Delray Beach free of charge. The free service would be located at H.W. 1st Avenue and Atlantic Avenue which is on the Tennis Center property. Mr. Kornblau discussed funding from the City and Community Redevelopment Agency (CPA), expenditures and where costs could be cut. He discussed some of the services the Public library provides to its patrons.

Mayor Ellis thanked Mr. Kornblau for his presentation and affirmed it is an excellent library.

Mr. Fetzer commented that in April 2008, he was appointed as liaison to the Public Library. He stated that the Board at the Public Library is very dedicated but they are faced with budget and revenue cutback challenges.

Mr. Eliopoulos questioned if the fundraising activity is consistent across the board. He also discussed the attendance at the library and asked if Sunday is a slow day.

Mr. Kornblau discussed some of the fundraising activities. He advised that Sunday is a very busy day at the library but personnel would have to be paid overtime to cover it.

Mr. Bernard asked if the Delray Library requested a higher amount from the CRA for FY 2008-2009. He questioned if there is a cost for Wi-Fi to the library. He discussed the new organization that Old School Square is starting for young professionals. Mr. Bernard questioned why the library's hours are increasing an additional three (3) hours on Thursday.

Mr. Kornblau advised that a request for more funds was made to the CPA in July. He also advised there is no cost because the Wi-Fi system is independent. He discussed the new organization that Old School Square is starting Young Professionals of Delray (YPOD). Mr. Kornblau explained the current Library hours and stated that the Board requested extended hours during the week.

Mayor Ellis asked how many adult computers the Library have.

Mr. Kornblau advised there are forty (40) adult computers and seven (7) computers for children, which they are looking to expand.

Mr. Fetzer asked if there is anything from the CPA indicating their proposed funding.

David T Harden, City Manager, responded no.

The Commission thanked the Delray Beach Public Library for its presentation.

2. Proposed Severance Package

David T. Harden, City Manager, presented this item. He stated two things would be addressed; incentives for early retirement and lay-offs. He stated he surveyed local governments on their severance packages and recommended the following: one week's pay for each year of completed service with a minimum of four (4) weeks and a maximum of twelve (12); he also suggested vacation time will be paid in full and accrued sick leave will be paid in accordance with City policy for employees who resign with notice or retire after twenty (20) years or more service, whichever is appropriate. Medical insurance would also be continued for the length of time for which severance is paid. He stated employees that are in the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) would be eligible for the severance package especially positions which could be left vacant for the coming year.

Bruce Koeser, Director of Human Resources, discussed the severance packages of other local governments.

Mayor Ellis asked how many people would be interested in the early retirement incentive.

Mr. Harden stated approximately half a dozen would be interested.

Mr. Eliopoulos questioned when the incentive would go into effect. He also asked if Mr. Harden would check to see what the savings were last year.

Mr. Harden advised this would be in effect as of September 30, 2008. He distributed a handout to Commission which detailed the annual savings last year of \$342,000.00.

Mr. Eliopoulos stated that he does not have a problem with the proposed package.

Mr. Harden advised if the idea is acceptable he would bring this back as a Consent Item on the September 3, 2008 Regular Agenda.

Mr. Fetzer advised he would like to see the focus on positions that will be left vacant next year.

Mr. Bernard asked if there were incentives last year.

Mr. Harden advised there was an early retirement incentive but not severance packages because there were no lay-offs.

Mr. Fetzer stated he would like the same format showing the savings next year.

It was the Consensus of the Commission to add this to the September 3, 2008 Agenda.

3. Discussion regarding the Animal Control Function

David T. Harden, City Manager, presented this item. Lula Butler, Director of Community Improvement and Al Berg, Assistant Director of Community Improvement were also present for questions. Mr. Harden gave a synopsis of the animal control functions for the City and County. Mr. Harden also discussed his concerns with using the County.

Mr. Bernard asked if the other months were consistent with the two months shown.

Mrs. Butler advised that the other months are consistent.

Mr. Eliopoulos stated he was surprised by the activity.

Mayor Ellis discussed the days and times of operation. She asked if there are forty-seven (47) dogs to be impounded but only twenty (20) are sent to County, what happens to the other twenty-seven (27).

Mrs. Butler advised that the owner normally picks them up.

Mr. Fetzer asked the cost to provide this service.

Mr. Harden stated the cost is \$93,000.00-\$100,000.00 with 1 ½ employees.

Mr. Bernard asked what liability the City would have in shifting the burden to the County.

Susan Ruby, City Attorney, explained the City had two (2) big lawsuits recently but no big issues otherwise. Mr. Harden stated that the City has sovereign immunity.

Mr. Harden stated he is optimistic that the City will have more funds to work with if the CRA approves funds for the City in the amount of \$500,000.00, which would present a myriad of options for the Commission.

Mr. Fetzer advised that the City will have to face reductions as time continues. Animal control is an important and unique function of the City. He would prefer not seeing a cutback in animal control until all avenues have been exhausted. Mr. Fetzer would like to find other ways to make reductions.

Mr. Eliopoulos concurs with Mr. Fetzer. He stated he supported keeping animal control since it is the responsibility of the City to make sure its residents are safe.

Mayor Ellis asked if the CRA approves the \$500,000.00 could the City use the funds to reduce the millage rate or keep animal control and school crossing guards.

Mr. McDuffie talked about the safety of the citizens. He advised that he supported keeping the children safe when they cross the streets from school. He also admitted that he did not know the volume of things that Animal Control does.

Mayor Ellis advised that the City had a mid-year budget resolution. She advised that the City is not getting the projected revenue numbers which resulted in more cuts in the budget mid-year.

Mr. Harden discussed the drop in gas taxes that resulted in a drop in revenue.

Mr. McDuffie stated that property tax is half of the City's revenue; the remainder is generated in utilities, permits and gas taxes.

Mayor Ellis suggested using \$150,000.00 to reduce the millage and \$150,000.00 to be placed into reserves.

Mr. Eliopoulos discussed construction bringing in more money.

Mr. McDuffie advised that he did not have a problem with the funds going towards reducing the millage rate since the reserves are adequate.

Mr. Bernard asked if we received the \$500,000.00 would the Commission be in consensus to keep animal control.

Mayor Ellis stated that she supported keeping Animal Control but she would also like to work on reducing the millage rate.

Mr. Harden advised that a budget resolution would be put together with the discussed parameters and it would be put on the September 3, 2008 Agenda under Public Hearings.

It was the Consensus of the Commission to keep Animal Control and reduce the millage.

4. Water and Sewer Budget for FY 2009

David T. Harden, City Manager, introduced this item. Mr. Harden distributed a handout on the impact of the water/sewer increases on a water bill. He suggested that sewer rates be increased by 15% and water rates be increased by 5%. He discussed the City of West Palm Beach's water system and rates.

Mr. Fetzer advised that he supported not subsidizing City sewer costs with City water rates.

Richard Hasco, Director of Environmental Services, discussed capacity regulations and operations.

Mr. McDuffie advised that the City spends a lot of money on appearances i.e. maintenance of medians, etc. not drinking or flushing water. He complimented Mr. Hasco on doing a great job. Mr. McDuffie expressed his support of the plan and was pleased with how the money was spent. He also advised that water and sewer are big areas of public safety.

Mr. Bernard advised that he is concerned with the future and if this would mean that another 15% increase will be sought next year.

Mr. Harden stated that the consultant's report advised that a 15% increase will not be necessary next year.

Mr. Eliopoulos asked if the water loss that Municipal Solutions reported in their findings had been narrowed down.

Mr. Hasco recommended doing an audit on the billing system and production program in-house.

It was the Consensus of the Commission to go with staff's recommendations to increase sewer rates by 15% and water rates by 5%.

5. Other FY 2009 Budget Issues

David T. Harden, City Manager, presented this item. Mr. Harden stated that staff is working on the Municipal Solutions Report and Budget Task Force recommendations. He gave an overview of some items that are currently being worked on. Mr. Harden then distributed a handout on Red Light Cameras.

Mr. McDuffie asked for the cost of the Red Light Cameras per intersection.

Mr. Harden stated he will provide the Commission with information on the Budget Task Force recommendations.

Mayor Ellis adjourned the Workshop Meeting at 7:44 p.m.


City Clerk

ATTEST:


MAYOR

The undersigned is the City Clerk of the City of Delray Beach, Florida, and the information provided herein is the Minutes of the Workshop Meeting of the City Commission held on Tuesday, August 26, 2008 which Minutes were formally approved and adopted by the City Commission on September 3, 2008.


City Clerk

NOTE TO READER: If the Minutes you have received are not completed as indicated above, this means they are not the official Minutes of the City Commission. They will become the official Minutes only after review and approval, which may involve amendments, additions or deletions to the Minutes as set forth above.