

MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP MEETING OF THE APALACHICOLA CITY COMMISSION HELD TUESDAY, AUGUST 30, 2022, 5:00 PM AT THE APALACHICOLA COMMUNITY CENTER.

PRESENT: Mayor Brenda Ash
Commissioner Anita Grove
Commissioner Despina George
Commissioner Donna Duncan
Commissioner Adriane Elliott

Travis Wade, City Manager
Deborah Guillotte, City Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brenda Ash called the workshop meeting to order.

Librarian Lucy Carter spoke on the library donations and library salaries. Chief Bobby Varnes spoke about salaries and the proposed salary survey.

Public comments consisted of the following: 1) salaries and pay raises per the salary survey; 2) employee cell phones; 3) employee evaluations; 4) making parks and recreation separate line on the budget; 5) street names not being identified; 6) city's lobbyist; and 7) support of giving the employees raises and pay increases if earned.

Mayor Ash addressed the public.

Finance Director Mark Gerspacher reviewed and explained the difference between the minimum, hybrid, and tenure salaries for the salary survey. Revenues and expenses (deleted and added items) were outlined and discussed. Discussed vehicles with optional payment plans; building and code enforcement fee schedule (ICC rate); removed the rental fee from Franklin Square; utility fees will increase 3%; and the solid waste contract fees will be updated.

Commissioner Adrian Elliott suggested making a rate change for city property rental on the fee schedule by the actual event being held (birthdays, weddings, etc.) and charge by event instead of daily rates. Commissioner Elliott stated we have APRA funds of \$242,000 for the seawall at Battery Park, and that the Battery Park fund has approximately \$172,000. She suggested we do the electrical repairs at Scipio Creek/Millpond with the ARPA money. In the meantime, move forward using Battery Park monies and get the engineering done for the seawall repair, and re-apply for the FWC boating improvement grant for the seawall to finish the rest of the repairs. Commissioner Elliott stated she is in favor of the tenure salary increase.

Commissioner Anita Grove inquired about the guide fisherman yearly launching fee and asked to make sure this is in fee schedule. Fire department radios need to be added to the budget. Discussed salaries and evaluations, stating evaluations need to be implemented ASAP. City needs to implement a re-

inspection fee on the building department fee schedule. Commissioner Grove suggested increasing the sidewalk usage fee by businesses \$100 each for retail and restaurants.

Commissioner Despina George suggested adopting a conservative budget that includes only COLA increases, removing the funds from the salary study, reinstating uncompleted capital improvement projects, and review when our accounting records are up to date and amend if needed.

Mayor Ash verified that the ARPA, Leslie Street repairs need to be removed from the budget. Mayor Ash asked that Mr. Gerspacher and Commissioner George meet and see what they can come up with for better accounting figures. Mayor Ash requested that the building department fill fees be brought in line with Franklin County Building Department and ICC code, and if there is no fee for this in the ICC, that staff use their professional judgment, also to be discussed at a future meeting. It was suggested that the return check fee be increased to \$30 to \$35.

Commissioner George and Finance Director Gerspacher will work on the current budget to see if changes can be made and calculate a 5.5% COLA figure for salaries. Mr. Gerspacher will check on regulations for having the hearing date moved to a later date. We will change the September 7th hearing date, to a budget workshop and get the new dates to the Commission for the public hearing.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Elliott made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Grove seconded and the motion carried 4-0.

Brenda Ash, Mayor

Deborah Guillotte, City Clerk