

A budget workshop meeting of the City Commission was held on May 13, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. in the Commission Chamber at the Municipal Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Eugene Fultz.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Terrye Y. Howell; Eugene Fultz, Mayor

By Phone: Betty Wojcik

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Jonathan Thornhill; Christopher Lutton, Deputy Mayor

CITY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Kenneth Fields, City Manager; Clara VanBlargan, City Clerk; Jennifer Nanek, Deputy City Clerk; Albert C. Galloway, Jr., City Attorney

[Full staff memos are incorporated into the minutes. Meetings are recorded, but not transcribed verbatim.]

Agenda Item 2. FY 2014-2015 Budget Policy Direction to Staff from the City Commission.

Kenneth Fields, City Manager, explained the purpose of the meeting that it is to get policy direction regarding the budget for next year. No official numbers are available yet but expect a slight increase in revenues next year as State revenues have increased. Some preliminary numbers will be available at the June workshop. He suggested the need to build up reserves and maybe redesign the website. They do not expect to expand services or increase staff for next year. Mr. Fields said they want to focus on expanding utilities along West HWY 60.

Mayor Fultz said that a common request is a pool and said maybe there needs to be a feasibility study to explore a beach area on the lake as this would be cheaper than a pool. Mr. Fields explained that we are looking into a Master Plan to improve that lake/recreation area and this can include exploring the idea of a beach on Lake Wailes.

Commissioner Howell said that she would like to fix up the Albert Kirkland Gym interior. The floors need replaced as nails are coming up. She would also like to see the gym's weight room fixed up and opened again. Mr. Fields said we should see what the plans are from the LW Charter Schools who are investigating the possibility of using the recreation complex. The City and the Charter Schools may combine efforts towards improvements. Dr. Jesse Jackson, Superintendent of Charter Schools, will be present at the next meeting to discuss this project. Commissioner Howell expressed concern that the use of the gym for the Charter Schools will limit its availability to residents. We need to be sure the gym is available to all not just students. Mr. Fields concurred and said that the details of the usage of those facilities need to be worked out.

Commissioner Howell requested upgrades for the James P. Austin Center that for the high price paid to rent that facility, the building needs modernization. Many problems need fixing such as acoustics. Commissioner Wojcik agreed that the facility needed improvements and suggested audio/visual equipment as there are a lot of meetings held there.

Commissioner Howell said that we need improvements to the quality of the viewing of the Commission meetings on TV as the sound quality is poor. She said as she had mentioned before at a commission meeting that we need a system that will allow all city board meetings to be on TV in the chamber and anyone in the community could watch the meetings live or any time on a computer or mobile device. The system will record the meeting in detail and make them available online. The cost could be divided amongst all the departments that hold those meetings in the Chamber. Mr. Fields said he would like to improve the equipment in the chambers and stream meetings live so those interested can watch on their computers.

Mayor Fultz asked about what equipment the departments might need. Mr. Fields explained that he has requested a wish list from the Departments for review. He said that the fleet needs updating.

Commissioner Wojcik said she would like new signs at gateways, and recommended a splash pad somewhere for the kids maybe at B Street or Crystal Lake Park. Mayor Fultz said he likes the idea of a splash pad but maybe downtown.

Mr. Fields said they might suggest an increase to our contribution to the Chamber for possible additional help to address both EDC and Chamber functions.

Mayor Fultz said he agrees with the previously mentioned effort to expand utilities west to help grow Lake Wales. Commissioner Howell said we need a hotel and rental cars available at the Airport. Mr. Fields said that may be possible if utilities are expanded.

Commissioner Wojcik said we should consult with the new EDC Director on some of these new plans along West 60. Mayor Fultz agreed saying we are looking forward to working with him.

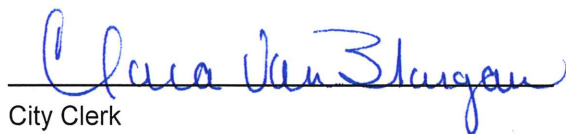
Mr. Fields announced that additional budget workshops are scheduled in June and July. This is just the beginning of the process.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:42 p.m.



Mayor/Deputy Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk