

MINUTES OF WORK SESSION OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF BELLEAIR, FLORIDA HELD AT TOWN HALL ON FEBRUARY 3, 2009 AT 5:30 PM

PRESENT: Mayor Gary Katica
Commissioners
Stephen Fowler
Tom Shelly
Karla Rettstatt
Stephanie Oddo

Town Manager Micah Maxwell
Town Attorney David Ottinger

Quorum present on roll call with Mayor Katica presiding; the meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Thayer Haydon, 424 Woodlawn Ave., stated that he was present to discuss the trash and garbage pick up service; stated that he had moved to Belleair because of the services provided by the town; that he had to take his garbage to the alley way behind his home; that the garbage trucks could not access his garbage from the alley way; that not having the scooter would be a hardship for him; that there was no way to place his trash and garbage at the front curb; asked that the commission reconsider Ordinance No. 457.

Virginia Donahue, 1351 Indian Rocks Road; stated that she had never had it so good as in the past seven years; that she was a member of the finance board; that it was a matter of economics; that the scooters were in disrepair from time to time and getting needed parts was difficult; that there was nothing wrong with taking the trash to the curb; that some hard decisions had to be made; that she hoped the mayor and commissioners would give the matter due consideration.

Nancy Reardon, 1314 Golfview Drive, commented on the proposed petitions regarding the change in trash and garbage collection; spoke about the residents with special needs and residents who want to have their trash and garbage collected at the side of their house and the costs for those residents; asked if there would be a way to determine who would have the side yard collection and who would not; stated that the change in collections services was an imposition for older citizens.

Mr. Maxwell stated that the decision to make the change in services was based on a budgetary matter and it could be difficult to determine the cost to provide special services; that there could be an increase of approximately \$20 per billing cycle and there were about 1500 residences in town.

Roger Tucker, 403 Osceola Road, commented on the history of side yard pick up for trash; commented on the unsightliness of garbage cans left on the curbs after the trash was collected; urged the commission to reconsider the side yard collection.

Mr. Maxwell stated that the town did not have the ability to require all residents to participate in the side yard collection for solid waste; that some residents had requested that their garbage be collected at the curb.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS (Continued)

Dan Doyle, Sr., 7 Stonegate Drive, asked the commission to reconsider the actions of Ordinance No. 457 regarding garbage and trash collection; stated that he had collected a approximately 400 signatures on a petition of residents who were opposed to the change in the collection service; commented that Belleair was an exclusive community and the residents expect certain services; stated that residents were concerned about the protection of their property values; commented on the duties and responsibilities of the finance board to provide the commission with effective methods of operating the town business; commented on the condition and costs of the collection scooters.

Mayor Katica explained that the finance board had reviewed the matter over a period of several years; stated that several meetings had been held to discuss the matter in the past as well as the adoption of the town's budget; that all such meetings had been properly noticed as well as in town bulletins; that the commission was interested in hearing what the residents had to say but no one came to the meetings to voice their opinions.

Tom Olson, 450 Althea Road, stated that he was present to speak about the pressure the commission had been under for the past four or five years; commented on cut backs mandated from Tallahassee requiring towns and cities to provide more services with less funding; that the responsibility of the finance board was to review alternative services in order not to cut services; that they wanted to protect the tax base and find efficient ways for the town to do business and maintain service levels; that discontinuing the side yard collection was not the only alternative but was the alternative that made the best sense at the time; commented on the stability of the collection scooters and the fact that the manufacturers were no longer producing the particular carts needed by the town; stated that the finance board and the commission had tried to provide a sensible alternative and maintain services in the economic situation everyone was experiencing.

Sally Meadows, 500 Althea Road, commented on having garbage being taken to the curb and the possibility of animals getting into the garbage creating an even larger mess to clean up; stated that she was in favor of having garbage collected at the side of the house.

Patricia Henning, 400 Ponce de Leon Blvd., stated that she was a long time resident in town and was not accustomed to dragging her garbage cans to the curb; that she did not understand the letter that was sent to residents regarding the garbage collection regarding where the garbage was to be placed for pick up; stated that she did agree that garbage and cans should not be left on the street after the scheduled pick up date; commented on having yard trash and clippings collected at the curb; asked what the savings would be for the town to eliminate the side yard collection.

Mr. Maxwell provided a response to Ms. Hennings questions and concerns.

Mr. Doyle asked about the calculations for proposed increase in the continued scooter collection system; stated that he would assist with raising funds to help pay for the purchase of a scooter to be used for solid waste collection.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS (Continued)

Mr. Maxwell explained the breakdown in the proposed costs to continue the side yard collection for solid waste.

Discussions ensued regarding sending a survey to residents asking their opinions on the side yard collection system now in place; regarding the time frame for raising the funds to pay for the scooters.

Mr. Maxwell stated that he had prepared a cost estimate if the town determined to maintain the side yard collection system; that the increase would be approximately 15% in rates.

Mayor Katica suggested that the matter be referred back to the finance board based on comments and recommendations made by the residents; that the enforcement of the ordinance be suspended for approximately three months.

Discussions ensued regarding suspending enforcement of the ordinance for three months; appreciation to Mr. Doyle for his participation was extended by commission members; regarding the need for developing a plan before advising the residents.

Tom Olson, chairman of the finance board, stated for a point of clarification there was currently a fee structure in place; inquired if tax monies were used to support the program.

Discussions ensued regarding the fee structure for solid waste collections; regarding a scheduled fee increase at next budget; regarding other options for replacing the scooters; regarding necessity of easements allowing employees to go onto private property to collect garbage and trash; regarding code enforcement for garbage cans left at the curb; regarding residents who do not want the side yard collection.

“Chip” Zimmerman, solid waste supervisor, commented on the scooters used for collection and the condition and maintenance of the scooters and the difficulty in obtaining replacement parts; stated that each scooter cost the town \$25,000 and would take approximately 3 months for delivery; that there were certain requirements for the scooters to be street legal; that 2 scooters were needed immediately; that only one scooter had been budgeted for this fiscal year.

Mr. Zimmerman further stated that he had a list of residents who were unable to take that garbage and trash to the curb for various reasons; commented on the financial impact of proposed rate increases for some residents.

In summary it was determined that 2 scooters would be ordered and have the finance board provide a review for a long range plan; that a survey would be sent to all single family residents; discussed the language to be included in the survey sent to residents and the proposed rate increase.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS (Continued)

Barbara Flittner, 1736 Magnolia Road, suggested sending notices to residents in the utility bills in order to lessen the cost for postage.

Mr. Maxwell stated that the utility bills were sent in cycles and half the town would receive the notices 30 days before the remaining residents would receive the same notice; that there were some residents that do not read the notices and bulletins included in their utility bills.

Discussions ensued regarding the direction to be taken as far as a survey and language to be sent to residents; regarding language with a "not to exceed" number.

Mr. Olson stated that he felt no language should be included with a "not to exceed" number because at this point there was no indication of the usage throughout the town; asked for latitude for the finance board in considering the long range plan.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mr. Ottinger provided an update on the legal actions regarding the Belleview Biltmore Hotel; that two orders had been received in response to petitions filed by the petitioners; that an order was granted to hear oral arguments; that he expected the oral arguments would be scheduled soon; commented on the same matter in Clearwater regarding the Cabana Club; that the Clearwater matter was scheduled for March 3rd at 9:00 am.

POLICE CHIEF'S REPORT

Chief Edwards commented on activity regarding the November homicide in town; commented the matter involving Dr. Sanchez; commented on other criminal activities in town; commented on code enforcement issues in town.

Discussions ensued regarding recent juvenile activities in town.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Maxwell announced that the employee of the month was Lt. Bill Sohl of the police department; stated that the town would be hosting the water tasting contest since we were the winner of last year's contest; stated that staff was reviewing presentation of finance software and expected to have a final decision soon; that the Indian Rocks Road repairs should be completed by the end of the week; that staff would soon begin the budget process for next fiscal year; that there was a decrease in property values that would have an effect on the budget.

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORT/BOARD AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Commissioner Oddo stated that there was a historic preservation board meeting scheduled for February 24th at 4:00 pm; commented on code enforcement issues and the possibility of a volunteer code enforcement group to assist the police chief with common code violations.

Commissioner Fowler stated that there would not be a planning and zoning board meeting scheduled for the month; commented on the positive feed back regarding the speed humps on Woodlawn and Wildwood.

Mr. Maxwell stated that staff was planning to provide the requested traffic study of the Woodlawn/Wildwood area to the commission in March.

Commissioner Rettstatt commented on that the money received from the holiday "Rumble Stumble" had been received and would be used to update the game room and play ground area of the community center; commented on the need for volunteers for the "Run for the Rec"; commented on code enforcement regarding fences and the requirement to screen certain fences in town.

Commissioner Shelly stated that there would not be a park and tree board meeting; commented on the renewal of the fire suppression agreement with Belleair Bluffs; that he felt quotes should also be obtained from Clearwater and Largo to ensure that the commission was fulfilling their fiscal responsibility.

DISCUSSION OF FIRE SUPPRESSION CONTRACT

Mr. Maxwell requested that everyone review the current contract to identify any issues they might have and any proposed changes they would like to see.

ESTABLISHMENT OF AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 17, 2009 REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Katica announced the following items scheduled for public hearing on February 17, 2009 at 7:30 pm:

1. Proposed Resolution - Authorizing filing of lien for delinquent water service charges.
2. Proposed Resolution - Authorizing filing of lien for delinquent sewer service charges.
3. Proposed Resolution - Authorizing filing of lien for delinquent solid waste collection charges.

On motion duly made and seconded the following amended agenda was established for the regular meeting scheduled for February 17, 2009 at 7:30 pm.

Discussion, Commissioner Oddo asked that the item regarding the approval of the WCA tower be removed from the agenda for consideration at a later date.

ESTABLISHMENT OF AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 17, 2009 (Continued)

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes - Special Meeting - January 6, 2009
Work Session - January 6, 2009
Regular Meeting - January 20, 2009

GENERAL AGENDA

Consideration of:

1. Authorize purchase of scooters - Solid Waste Dept.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the commission the meeting was adjourned in due form at 7:00 pm.

Town Clerk

APPROVED:

Mayor