

City Commission Workshop
August 14, 2018
5:30 pm

Vice Mayor Nugent called the workshop to order at 5:30 pm.

Members present included Vice Mayor Nugent, Commissioner Chastain and Commissioner Woods. Also present were Police Chief Jeff Johnson, Finance Director John-Paul Ledford, City Manager Bob Milner and City Attorney Dan Sikes. Mayor Mortimer was absent due to an emergency. Commissioner Waters was absent due to being called into work.

Vice Mayor Nugent turned the workshop over to Mr. Milner. Commissioner Chastain verified that anyone hired within a year and anyone promoted within a year would not be receiving a raise.

Commissioner Chastain said an increase in the millage rate to 4.8648 will generate approximately \$200,000 so instead of moving \$800,000 from the enterprise fund to the general fund only \$595,000 will need to be transferred. Commissioner Chastain asked Mr. Milner to provide the increased cost to a home owner based on the millage increase.

Commissioner Chastain said the sewer rate will increase by 8.5 percent for the year. He said water rates are well below sewer rates. Commissioner Chastain said Tonya Wainwright polled similarly sized cities concerning their water rates. Our variable rate does not begin until the customer has used more than 10,000 gallons of water. Commissioner Chastain suggested cutting the base to 5,000 gallons. He asked Mr. Milner to find out how much that would increase water revenues. Commissioner Woods asked for the increased revenues if the base was cut to 2,500. Mr. Ledford said we only charge \$24.00 for 10,000 gallons of water. Vice Mayor Nugent asked how commercial customers would be affected. Mr. Milner said most businesses use about the same amount of water as residential customers.

Commissioner Chastain asked about Fire Chief Gary Wise going to the administrative shift. Mr. Milner said Chief Wise will still be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week but Chief Wise is exempt from overtime. Vice Mayor Nugent asked if the change has been budgeted for. Mr. Milner said it has. Commissioner Chastain asked Mr. Milner to do some research on cities with 4 firefighters on duty to see if their Fire Chief is on the administrative shift. Mr. Milner said he would look into it.

Mr. Ledford asked about the additional \$4,000 requested by Communities in Schools. He has budgeted the normal \$5,000 donation but not the additional \$4,000. Vice Mayor Nugent said he does not have an issue with it because they help the entire city. Commissioner Chastain asked about the legalities of the city making donations with tax payer dollars. Attorney Sikes said a citizen could claim a violation to their First Amendment Right because the city supports an organization. He suggested the commissioners vote on it as a non-political public purpose. Mr. Ledford said he budgeted for \$500 performance bonuses. Vice Mayor Nugent said since

raises are being given he is not in favor of performance bonuses. Commissioner Woods asked what the commissioners would be receiving. Mr. Milner said a 3 percent increase.

Vice Mayor Nugent asked that the commissioners be provided with the current rates for water and sewer and what changes are proposed. Mr. Milner will provide them. Commissioner Chastain asked Mr. Milner to find out what the late fee is for other similarly sized cities. Mr. Ledford said the late fee can be a flat fee or a percentage of the bill. Mr. Milner said around 500 customers pay late every month.

Commissioner Chastain said he is not going to go over everything they reviewed today but he expects the items to be fixed. He asked for a new run of the budget by Friday. Mr. Ledford said he would provide a revised budget for the commissioners by Friday.

Mr. Milner said the International Economic Development Council will be in town September 24th to 28th. They want to interview the city and county commissioners. Mr. Milner said there will be 2 think tank sessions and he encouraged the commissioners to attend 1. There will be an expert on municipalities with bypasses in attendance.

Commissioner Woods said he has been asking for years that money be put aside for emergencies and it hasn't happened. Vice Mayor Nugent asked Mr. Milner how much money has been paid out this year for emergency repairs. Mr. Milner said the city has spent around \$50,000 to repair manholes as US Highway 301 has been repaved. Vice Mayor Nugent asked how many more manholes might need to be repaired. Mr. Milner could not say. Attorney Sikes asked if the city has a contingency fund. Vice Mayor Nugent said we do but it doesn't have enough money in it.

Commissioner Chastain asked to go to the general fund for questions. Chief Johnson said if someone is hired between October 1st and 15th they will go 2 years without a raise. Commissioner Chastain said that is the way it has been. Chief Johnson said they use to get a 50 cent per hour raise once their probation was up. Vice Mayor Nugent asked Chief Johnson how his budget was doing. Chief Johnson said he is a bit under budget. Chief Johnson said the department has decreased overtime, gas and maintenance costs. Chief Johnson asked to be notified if the light at US Highway 301 and Pratt Street is flashing so he can have it reset before school traffic starts. Chief Johnson said the Florida Department of Transportation is planning on having traffic on the bypass in April of 2019.

Vice Mayor Nugent invited Alicia McMillian to address the commissioners. She is the new President of the Concerned Citizens of Bradford County. Mrs. McMillian came before the commissioners at the July 24, 2018 Commission Meeting to request the \$5,000 donation the city normally gives to the Concerned Citizens of Bradford County. Mrs. McMillian said in 2011 when the city shut down their recreation department the Concerned Citizens of Bradford County provided an after-school program and a summer day program. Mrs. McMillian asked for an additional \$4,000 donation to help cover an \$8,000 shortfall in their budget. Mrs. McMillian said their basketball program has increased 150 percent. The Concerned Citizens of Bradford

County want to reach out to more kids in an effort to prevent another tragedy like the young man who lost his life on July 24, 2018. Vice Mayor Nugent thanked Mrs. McMillian for coming before the commission.

Commissioner Chastain asked if the budget will include funding for a magistrate. Mr. Milner said it would. Mr. Milner said they are advertising through the Bar Association for a magistrate.

Mr. Milner said we have a Budget Workshop on August 21, 2018 at 5:30 pm. Commissioner Chastain asked when the Budget Hearing will be. Mr. Ledford said September 11, 2018.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:33 pm.