

City Commission Workshop  
December 4, 2018  
5:30 pm

Mayor Nugent called the workshop to order at 5:34 pm.

Members present included Mayor Daniel W. Nugent, Commissioner Tommy Chastain and Commissioner Shannon Smith. Also present were City Manager Bob Milner, City Attorney Dan Sikes and City Clerk Ricky Thompson. Commissioner Janice D. Mortimer was absent due to illness and Commissioner Wilbur Waters was absent due to work.

Mayor Nugent turned the workshop over to Mr. Milner. Mr. Milner asked Attorney John Cooper to address the commission regarding Canopy Communications. Attorney Cooper said he has been Canopy Communications legal counsel for a number of years. He said Canopy Communications has a solution for the City of Starke's internet issues. Attorney Cooper said his wife had a heart procedure about six months ago and her physician called and told her to go to the emergency room immediately. She was transported by ambulance from Shands Starke to Shands Gainesville. The staff at Shands Gainesville asked about the ultrasound that had been done at Shands Starke. The Shands Starke attempted to upload the ultrasound but did not have the internet capacity to do it. Attorney Cooper had to drive to Shands Starke to get a copy of the ultrasound to bring it back to Shands Gainesville. Attorney Cooper said internet is a utility and a necessity. Attorney Cooper introduced David Suarez, President and CEO of Canopy Communications and David Orshan Chief Operating Officer of Canopy Communications. Mr. Suarez thanked the commissioners for their time. He said he is familiar with the difficulties rural areas face obtaining high speed internet. Mr. Suarez and Mr. Orshan enlisted engineers to design a solution, then they tested it and got it patented. He said there is no capital cost to the city for the product. Mr. Suarez said their team has over one hundred years of combined experience. They can provide a fifty-mile radius with one-hundred meg service. Mr. Suarez said this technology will be beneficial to families, farmers and schools. Mr. Suarez said Canopy Communications would be partners with the city to support their product. They would install the equipment, provide training, monitor the equipment and have personnel on hand to support it. Mr. Thompson asked if there would ever be a time when the city would have a capacity issue. Mr. Suarez said no. He said all of Bradford County could be supported with four of their base stations. Mr. Suarez said their systems includes redundancy so if one tower goes down the others would provide for that so the city will not lose its internet services. Attorney Sikes said they created a limited liability company in February of 2016 then dissolved it in March of 2017 and created Canopy Communications. Attorney Sikes would like to know what other clients they have. Mr. Suarez said they changed from an LLC to a C Corporation at the request of their financial partners. He said they have multiple systems. Some are cities similar to Starke, others are larger. They have a large power company in the Midwest as a customer. Attorney Sikes asked what the cost to the city would be. Attorney Cooper said the equipment would be licensed to the city at no cost. Canopy Communications would generate revenue by charging \$20 per subscriber. Attorney Cooper said the City of Starke would get the difference between what they charge the customer and the \$20 fee. Commissioner Chastain asked how

tall the towers would be. Mr. Suarez said between 480 feet and 800 feet. Mayor Nugent asked if the towers would be in the city. Mr. Suarez said they will be outside of the city. He said they could also provide digital phone service, digital HD TV service, Cloud DVR service and smart home service. Mr. Suarez said there would be no capital cost to the city. Mr. Suarez said they use spectrum or the waves in the air. Commissioner Smith asked if the spectrum they use is outside of the spectrum used by cell phones. Mr. Orshan said they can use any spectrum so it will be clear of other traffic. Attorney Sikes asked for copies of redacted contracts with other customers so he can review the terms. Mr. Suarez said he will provide one. Mr. Thompson said they have the advantage because they don't have to acquire right-of-way and set poles. Mr. Suarez said they have dealt with easements and poles most of their lives. He said this system has been setup to eliminate those issues. Commissioner Smith asked about monitoring and buffering. Mr. Suarez said they have some of the best monitoring equipment available. He will provide the commissioners with some statistics and screen shots. Commissioner Chastain asked about costs to the city. Attorney Cooper said 2 technicians and 2 aides will need to be hired. Mr. Thompson asked about return on investment. Mr. Suarez said it will start from the first month. Commissioner Chastain said the city and county will have a joint meeting in February and he wants this to be on the agenda. Attorney Cooper said the proposal is to license the product to the City of Starke to cover the city and the county. He said what the city does with it is up to them. Mayor Nugent asked what they could provide to Shands Starke. Mr. Orshan said the hospital will have high-speed dedicated point-to-point connectivity from the tower with sufficient bandwidth. Mayor Nugent asked about services for emergency management. Mr. Suarez said they could provide the same thing to them. Commissioner Smith asked where they see Canopy Communications in 5 years. Mr. Orshan said he sees it being international. Commissioner Smith asked to see some reports. Mayor Nugent asked County Manager Brad Carter if he had any questions. Mr. Carter said the county is very interested in Canopy Communications and asked for a copy of the presentation. Mr. Milner asked about internet access for people traveling through Starke. Mr. Suarez said they would setup an active hotspot with access points that could be charged to a credit card through a clearinghouse server. Mr. Milner asked about the current internet service in Starke. Mr. Orshan said it is very outdated and the farther away the customer is from the source the lower internet the access is. He said with their system every customer would have the same access. Mr. Suarez thanked the commissioners for their time.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:24 pm.