

## City Commission Workshop

March 13, 2018

5:30 pm

Members present included Mayor Mortimer, Commissioner Chastain, Commissioner Waters and Commissioner Woods. Also present were City Attorney John Cooper and City Manager Bob Milner. Commissioner Nugent was absent because he was recovering from surgery.

Mayor Mortimer called the workshop to order at 5:30 pm and turned the workshop over to Mr. Milner. Mr. Milner said John McCarthy from the Florida Department of Transportation is going to explain the options for the design and engineering for the relocation of the electric, gas, sewer and water utilities. The utilities will need to be relocated for the SR 100 overpass and the bridge replacement on US Highway 301. Mr. Milner introduced Mr. McCarthy. Mr. McCarthy is the Florida Department of Transportation District Utilities Administrator. He sent Mr. Milner a Notice of Required Action for each project. Mr. McCarthy said the city had previously requested a financial hardship determination from the Department's Office of the Comptroller. Unfortunately, the Office of the Comptroller made the determination that the city could afford the design costs with a 0% interest loan over a 10-year period. Mr. McCarthy asked the commissioners how they wanted to proceed. Mr. Milner asked Mr. McCarthy to discuss any subsequent appeals the city might have. Mr. McCarthy said the city could get an estimate from the engineers and go back to the Comptroller's Office and ask them reevaluate the financial hardship. They could find for a hardship determination for part of the cost, all of the cost or none of the cost. Attorney Cooper asked if there was still an appeal opportunity. Mr. McCarthy said the opportunity would come when the project was close to the construction phase. Commissioner Chastain asked how other small cities handled these situations. He also stated that the City of Starke was not given a choice about whether or not to have the overpass. Mr. McCarthy said he did not have any other small cities with overpasses who requested financial hardships. Commissioner Waters asked how the overpass in Hawthorne, Florida was paid for. Mr. McCarthy said they entered into a promissory note. Mr. McCarthy said the financial hardship was not an option when the overpass in Hawthorne was constructed. He said they asked to be evaluated for a financial hardship when it became an option and the balance of their promissory note was forgiven. Mr. McCarthy said if we enter into a promissory note and our financial situation changes we could ask the Comptroller's Office to reevaluate the financial hardship. Commissioner Waters said he does not think the residents of Starke should be forced to pay for any of the project because it is the Department of Transportation's overpass. Mayor Mortimer said the bypass is going to negatively impact the city's finances. She asked if the city's finances could be reevaluated once that happens. Mr. McCarthy said they could. He said that the city has 2 options. One is to accept the offer from the Comptroller's Office for the loan. The other is for the city to pay for the design out of their funds and ask for reimbursement. Mayor Mortimer asked if the city could oppose the overpass. Mr. McCarthy said that was not an option. He explained that the Department of Transportation owns the right-of-way and the city's utilities are in that right-of-way and we are required to relocate the utilities or vacate the

right-of-way. Commissioner Woods expressed concern over the overpass. Commissioner Chastain asked if the project would not begin until the promissory note was signed. Mr. McCarthy said the Department of Transportation will move forward with the project regardless of the note. Commissioner Chastain asked when the payments on the promissory note would begin. Mr. McCarthy said he believes it would be a year after it is signed. Mr. Milner said the Comptroller's Office looked at our 2015-2016 Audit which did not have the new fire truck payment. We need to submit the 2016-2017 Audit when it is available. Attorney Cooper asked Mr. McCarthy to address the final appearance of the project. The commissioners have expressed concern over the original bypass illustrations changed. Attorney Cooper also asked about the \$400,000 estimated cost to the city. Mr. McCarthy said the design is 90% completed. Attorney Cooper asked if the commissioners could look at the plans. Mr. McCarthy said he should have the 90% completed plans in the near future. Mr. McCarthy said if the city's financial appearance has changed significantly the 2016-2017 Audit should be resubmitted to the Comptroller's Office as soon as it is available. Mr. Cooper asked if we should resubmit once we have the construction cost estimates. Mr. McCarthy said we should. Commissioner Chastain asked what should be done next if the commissioners vote to sign the promissory note. Mr. McCarthy said we could ask the comptroller to advance funds for the design. Mr. McCarthy said once we are at the construction stage we should have the 2016-2017 Audit to submit to the comptroller's office. Mr. Milner said they have been working hard to locate the utilities to be relocated and gas and electric would need to be relocated before the project could begin. Mr. McCarthy thanked the commissioners.

Mr. Milner asked to remove the Call Street Maintenance Agreement from the agenda because the engineer for that project could not attend the meeting.

Mr. Milner asked for permission to address the estimated cost for repairs to the wastewater treatment facility. He said Mittauer and Associates has prepared estimated repair costs for the items that need to be addressed in the near future. Attorney Cooper said because this is a workshop it would be legal to discuss this even though it is not on the agenda. The commissioners agreed to address the items. Tim Norman with Mittauer and Associates addressed the commission. The Alligator Creek outfall repair underway. The sand and grit need to be removed from the aeration tanks. Mr. Norman said there is a grant from the Department of Environmental Protection so the removal will be at no cost to the city. The city will be responsible for hauling and disposing of the sand and grit. Mr. Norman estimates that there will be around 1,500 cubic yards of sand and grit that will need to be transported to the Trail Ridge Landfill. The estimated cost is \$132,000. Mr. Norman said that while the tanks are down for removal of the sand and grit city employees will be able to repair or replace damaged diffusers. The components to repair or replace diffusers will cost between \$10,000 to \$20,000. Mayor Mortimer asked if the tanks will be taken down one at a time. Mr. Norman said that they would. Commissioner Chastain asked what the timeline for the repairs will be. Mr. Norman said the grant will take a couple of weeks to receive. He said we need to do the repairs before the summer rains begin. Each clarifier will need to be taken off-line and drained to remove the sand and grit that has accumulated in the RAW/WAS piping. He said city employees will attempt to perform this work using the city's vacuum truck. If they are successful there will be no cost to

the city. While the clarifiers are down the clarifier mechanisms will be inspected. Mr. Norman spoke to PBM Constructors who worked on the clarifiers several years ago. They are estimating a repair cost of \$10,000 to \$25,000 depending on the condition of the clarifiers. Mr. Norman said the digester is full of sludge. He has contacted Synagro about removing the estimated 350,000 gallons of sludge. They will charge \$0.085 per gallon at a cost of approximately \$30,000. Commissioner Chastain asked if the digester sludge removal could be done before some of the other items. Mr. Norman said it could. Mr. Norman said the remaining items are electrical items. They have not been able to get an electrician out to look at them but Mr. Norman estimates they will cost around \$30,000 to \$50,000. Mr. Norman said the total for all repairs will be between \$225,000 to \$300,000. Commissioner Chastain asked if it would be possible to get a timeline for the projects. Mr. Norman said it will depend on the schedules of the contractors that will perform the work. Commissioner Waters asked Kyle Jerrels, Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor, about the amount of time it took the last time the tank was pumped out. Mr. Jerrels said it will take more time now because the components are fixed mounted to the floor of the tank. Commissioner Woods asked for a schedule so the commissioners know what work is being done when. Mr. Norman said he would try to provide one. Mayor Mortimer asked about the Alligator Creek outfall repair timeline. Mr. Norman said it should be finished by the end of the week. Mayor Mortimer asked about moving forward with the projects. Mr. Norman said he needs permission from the commissioners to move forward. Commissioner Chastain asked if they could add voting on moving forward to the agenda for the commission meeting at 6:00 pm tonight. Commissioner Woods suggested putting it under the emergency items. Mr. Milner asked about the longevity of the wastewater treatment plant once the repairs are made. Mr. Norman said the plant should last several years. Commissioner Chastain asked if Mittauer and Associates is still working on getting us a new plant. Mr. Norman said they are. Attorney Cooper said hiring an electrician to do \$50,000 in repairs will require a Request for Proposals and will take weeks. Mr. Norman said it will be difficult to find contractors willing to work in this environment. Attorney Cooper suggested that considering the emergency nature of the work the commissioners should consider waving the bid requirement for this project. Mayor Mortimer asked if that could be done tonight at the commission meeting. Attorney Cooper said it could be voted on then. Commissioner Woods asked if Mittauer and Associates would be overseeing the project as the city's engineer of record. Mr. Norman said they would oversee it however the commissioners want them to.

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