

October 21, 2014  
5:30 PM

The City Council of the City of Inverness met on the above date in Regular Session at 1 Courthouse Square, Inverness, FL (Historic Courthouse) with the following members present:

President Hinkle  
Vice President Hepfer  
Councilwoman Bega  
Councilman McBride  
Councilman Ryan  
Mayor Plaisted

Also present were City Manager DiGiovanni, City Attorney Tonya William, Asst. City Manager Williams, Public Works Director Cottrell, Woodard & Curran Director Mike Regina, and City Clerk Davis.

The Invocation was performed by Councilman Ryan and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by the City Council.

#### **ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA**

**Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to accept the Agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. The motioned carried.**

#### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None

#### **OPEN PUBLIC MEETING**

None

#### **PRE-SCHEDULED APPEARANCES**

Michael Regina, Woodard and Curran addressed Council to speak of the recent award the City and Woodard and Curran received from the Florida Water & Pollution Control Operators Association. The Inverness Waste Water Treatment Facility was selected by the Florida Water and Pollution Control Operators Association Safety Award, in the "Wastewater C" Category. He recognized John Sowka, Waste Water Operations Manager, who offered a first class nomination package, and on August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014, accepted this award.

#### **MAYOR'S LOCAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

Mayor Plaisted presented a Proclamation for "National American Indian Heritage

Month” to members of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Jodi Holder, Carolyn Ohlmeyer, Susan Carvajal, Bev Gentry, Karen Franklin, and Kathe Eckland.

Mayor Plaisted also presented Mary Lee Cubbison, from Anti-Drug Coalition of Citrus County a Proclamation for “Red Ribbon Week”.

### **CITY ATTORNEY REPORT**

None

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

**Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to accept the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilman McBride. The motion carried.**

- a) Bill Listing\*
  - Recommendation – Approval
- b) Council Minutes – 10/07/14\*
  - Recommendation – Approval
- c) Proclamation – “Farm-City Week”
  - Recommendation – Approval

President Hinkle noted that Farm-City Week is coming up November 21- 27th , and there will be an event at Liberty Park on November 15<sup>th</sup> , promoting how agriculture affects us and showing what the local farmers accomplish, and to be included with the Farmers Market.

### **CITY MANAGER’S REPORT**

**10)a Citrus Memorial – Easement (Wayfind Signs)** was addressed by City Manager DiGiovanni. He explained that the Wayfind Sign program is part of the Downtown Redevelopment, and the successful expansion into areas of the Central Business District. The proper location of signage is critical, which requires that we seek an easement with CMH to locate and install a Wayfind Sign directly across Main St. HWY 41/44, from the Inverness Government Center, on the Citrus Memorial Hospital (CMH) Annex property. Be advised that the matter has been fully executed by CMH, and will require City Council approval to move forward. Once finalized, sign installment will commence.

**Councilman Ryan motioned to approve the enclosed Access, Maintenance, and Construction Easement, and authorize the Council President to execute the Easement Agreement. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried unanimously.**

**10)b Citrus United Basket** was addressed by City Manager DiGiovanni who advised that we were contacted by Citrus United Basket (CUB) with regard to the property (103 & 105 Mill Ave) which is no longer needed. The property was leased with us by Citrus County since 2003. CUB has recently purchased property off US 41 N. and constructed a new facility for their primary operation, therefore there is no longer a need for them to

lease the property at 103 & 105 Mill Ave. It is recommended that we terminate the lease, and provide notice to option out to the County.

**Councilwoman Bega motioned to authorize the City Manager to take the appropriate steps to properly provide notice to the County Government to terminate the lease for the property commonly known as 103 and 105 Mill Ave. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried unanimously.**

**10)c) Medical Marijuana** was addressed by City Manager DiGiovanni. He noted with the upcoming Amendment on the ballot in November, it would be good to provide information and a forum for Elected Officials to express the type and level of authorization and regulation they would like us to achieve in developing ordinance language to regulate the product, provided it passes. A general understanding of the type regulations that would be preferred, with respect to cultivating processing, storing, dispensing and the sale of medical marijuana in Inverness, is needed. The goal is to bring forward an ordinance for adoption in January 2015. They need to keep in the forefront, that this is not the legalization of marijuana, but a medically determined use of a product found to be beneficial as a pain killer for medication, to aid with the negative side effects to chemotherapy, etc.

Councilwoman Hepfer stated that this is about medication that helps with the effects of illness. We don't know what Tallahassee will do, and questioned what we are expected to do as a city.

Mayor Plaisted stated that this should be discussed legislatively. He has no problem with medical marijuana, to help people deal with pain, but was not in favor of it being attached to the Constitution to the State of Florida.

Councilwoman Bega stated that she agreed with it not being attached to the constitution and for being used for medical purposes. She stated that she didn't think Legislature is ready for this, and doesn't feel it is ready to be legalized. It is very entangled in being medically usable, and is on the edge of not being right. The City's main concern would be to determine where we allow stores to be and what would the ordinance for zoning and permitting be. This is bigger than that.

Councilman Ryan agreed with what has been stated. If it does pass, the Federal Government will have to fall in line with the State because more and more states are approving this and it does have a medical benefit. He agrees that we need to look into where we would allow it. In reviewing other cities that have ordinances on this, they treat it the same as alcohol, where it can't be within a certain distance from schools, churches, etc. If it does get approved we should treat it similar.

Councilman McBride stated we are a bit premature and should wait till we get the election results. In the mean time we should be thinking about this and he has a lot of major concerns about it going to be implemented.

President Hinkle stated this to be a very complex issue and goes back to prohibition days. Medical marijuana does have its uses, but there are too many questions out there and doesn't feel it should be attached to the Constitution. He had concerns as to where would we dispense it, and how would we handle employees using the drug? We should wait till after the election to discuss work on the ordinance.

No action was taken.

**10)d) Utility Service Area (verbal)** was addressed by City Manager DiGiovanni who updated Council on the status of our current service to all of Golden Terrace, and the known fact that Inverness desires to purchase Foxwood Utility Water System, as well as Golden Terrace and Rosemont/Rolling Greens systems inclusive. At the recent meeting of County Commission Meeting he learned that county staff presented false information to the Commissioners, which will disrupt the City's customer base by unilaterally terminating City Utility service to the Golden Terrace subdivision and penetrating the City Service Area. They plan on running water lines from a plant on Hwy 486, some 18 miles away. He advised of the correspondence immediately sent to Acting County Administrator Jeff Rogers, advising him of this serious issue.

Councilwoman Bega wished to clarify that the County is looking to expand their service area into our service area. City Manager DiGiovanni confirmed and added that they are running lines from a plant on 486, 15-18 miles away, which was built for the west side of the County.

Mayor Plaisted spoke of the 9 Point Agreement, the water line situation, and about doing the right thing.

Councilwoman Bega stated that it would be good for the residents to know of this, as there is a huge rate difference between the City and County, and it will affect their rates.

Councilman McBride stated that he could not understand why the County would have such a cavalier attitude toward the city, and how it's not in their best interest, whether you're talking about tipping fees or utilities. We need to get through this election and hopefully begin working with people who are interested in working with us for the betterment of all.

President Hinkle noted that he had conversation with Commissioner Meek recently at the public forum, speaking about the 9 Point Agreement, and how the county needed to work with us.

City Manager DiGiovanni additionally reported on the following:

- Spoke to the HCA (Regional Hospital) how it's been in a state of flux for years, and closure will bring stability and enable us to have a positive, meaningful conversation going forward. Everyone awaits closure of the Lease Purchase, and hoping for it to be within the next few months.
- He spoke to the Cooter Festival and how it is another way to generate an economic engine, and is doing a great job to internalize money in Citrus County. We are bringing people into Inverness and this will be a great event, which started eleven years ago on the Daily Show with John Stewart.
- Landfill Fees – Noted what we went through to get better rates @ \$45/ton, and through a bid process. Subsequent to us going through this process, County Government has changed their landfill rates and has given Crystal River a \$36/ton rate. Had they given us that rate, we would still be paying tipping fees to the Citrus County. You have to ask, why Crystal River was quoted \$36/ton and the City of Inverness \$45/ton. He spoke to recycling and the great contract we have with the largest and highly respected company, Waste Management. The marketing for recycling is

terrible locally and nationally, however Waste Management is global and is very successful with this.

### **COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS**

Councilman McBride advised of his attendance at the MPO meeting in Brooksville today, and advising that they passed the 2040 Draft of the Cost Affordable Long Range Transportation Plan. The Transportation Improvement Plan and the Transit Development Plan, will be available for public comment, and then come back to the MPO for any changes or passage. The next MPO meeting will be Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>.

Councilwoman Bega spoke of looking forward to Cooterfest and all the events, and getting her costume ready for Cooterween.

Mayor Plaisted is looking forward to upcoming Cooterfest. Noted that Paige's Hamburger Restaurant is moving to where Peppermint Patties Restaurant was on Hwy 41. He understands that a Bakery will be moving into downtown where Angelo's Pizzeria is. Good things are happening.

Councilman Ryan spoke to attending the Thunder Car Show last week. He noticed the comments/editorials in the paper on the MSB & 1 cent sales tax, and how it seems that Inverness City Council has been on forefront of leading the charge against these things.

Councilwoman Hepfer asked that everyone pray for good results in November election, and was looking forward to Cooter Fest.

Councilman Hinkle - Try to build bridges with the County. Would really like to get all these interlocal agreements done properly. We represent the whole county and not just Inverness. Noted all the Inverness events going on and this is where people come. Looking forward to HCA coming to Inverness and will be a big plus to us in the coming years due to taxes. Our goal is to leave this place a great place, and will long after we are gone.

### **CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA**

Ann Perry, Inverness resident addressed council regarding three areas of concern. She noted the overgrown lots in her neighborhood, and the speeding a vehicles along her street. She additionally noted a parking concern on Courthouse Square due to the construction work on the Valerie Theatre.

Meeting adjourned at 6:46pm

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City Clerk

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Council President