

November 18th, 2014
5:30 PM

The City Council of the City of Inverness met on the above date in Regular Session at 212 W. Main Street 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 Haag, Asst. City Manager Williams, Finance Director Chiodo, Woodard & Curran Director Regina and City Clerk Davis.

The Invocation was given by Councilman McBride and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by the City Council.

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Council President Hinkle advised that several additional items needed to be added to the Acceptance of Agenda, being the FDOT-Perpetual Agreement – Cooter Pond Resolution and Parking Ordinance Public Hearing to accept memo as an action item, and Cecil Everett's letter read into the minutes.

Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to accept the Agenda with the additional items as presented. Seconded by Councilman Ryan. The motioned carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

4)a) Parking Ordinance 2014-207 – Final Reading (Continued to Council meeting on 12/02/14) City Manager DiGiovanni spoke to city code regarding the parking ordinance and changes made through the years regarding rules and regulations and fines and penalties being in two separate articles. Time is needed to align the two sections together and deal with both sections so that the penalties reflect the proper section. It is recommended that City Council take action to cancel the advertised public hearing and direct the City Manager to return with a code that is modified and aligned accordingly. **Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to cancel the Public Hearing and direct the City Manager to return newly aligned ordinance sections for presentation after the new year. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. Motion carried.**

4)b) Land Procurement Ordinance Repeal – Final Reading was addressed by City Manager DiGiovanni who advised that this was duly advertised for Council to receive public comment regarding the repeal of Ordinance 2014-705. **Councilman McBride motioned to have the Clerk read Ordinance 2014-708 by title only. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. The motion carried.**

ORDINANCE NO. 2014 - 708

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF INVERNESS, FLORIDA, PROVIDING FOR PROCEDURES FOR THE ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY BY THE CITY FOR MUNICIPAL PURPOSES; PROVIDING FOR THE POWERS OF THE CITY MANAGER; PROVIDING FOR APPROVALS BY THE CITY COUNCIL; PROVIDING FOR APPRAISALS; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF ORDINANCE NO. 2014-705; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE; AND, PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The Public Hearing was opened and no one spoke for or against the Ordinance. The Public Hearing was closed.

Councilman McBride motioned to adopt Ordinance 2014-708 on the second and final reading by roll call vote. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. Roll call vote was as follows: Councilman Ryan, yes; Councilwoman Bega, yes; Councilman McBride, yes; Councilwoman Hepfer, yes; President Hinkle, yes. The motion carried.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING

Council President Hinkle read into the minutes a letter submitted by Inverness Business owner Cecil Everett.

City council members and fellow business owners:

As I am sure you are all aware the Inverness City Council will be addressing the perceived parking dilemma that exists in the downtown area next Tuesday.

Let me say that Frank and his staff have done MANY wonderful things for the city of Inverness. Especially recently with the visitors bureau addition and the activities it and Sharon bring downtown. I have operated Coach's pub and eatery for 23 years and to the best of my knowledge I am the longest tenured business owner downtown and probably have a pretty good feel for the parking situation. I feel that more regulations in regards to parking are an over reach and are likely to make matters worse for downtown business owners.

There are many factors that effect downtown parking and some apparent concerns as well and I would like to address a few of them.

1) Parking spot musical chairs- It is true that people do move their vehicles around to avoid the \$30 parking ticket that overtime parking results in. However many of those people are business owners like myself who need to be able to park near our business and have the ability to come and go as needed to get supplies and conduct business. City employees once parked in the city lot on Pine Street. It is a remote lot and a bit of a walk to the city hall building but typically is unused. City employees have since been issued parking passes that grant them an exemption from current parking regulations allowing them to park closer to city hall for the entire day. Business owners like myself who work hard to keep downtown thriving are not granted any such exemption and are often ticketed excessively.

2) Parking on sidewalks and driveways- I for one think this perceived problem is directly related to the driveway that Tim Channel owns behind his business, Stumpknockers. Yes, myself and Stumpknockers employees and management do from time to time park in the driveway area that is street side of the sidewalk. Typically this is for loading and unloading. Other than that I rarely see any issue with people parking downtown in driveways or on sidewalks.

3) Periods of need- Parking does need to be enforced in a stricter manner Monday- Friday from 11AM until around 3 PM as needed. However my tires are often marked by parking enforcement as early as 8 am when the downtown parking area is nearly empty. In my mind it is real simple, enforce the current ordinance when the lots are full. If the parking enforcement officer sees plenty of spaces open he or she should just keep driving and not waste time marking tires. \$30 parking tickets that are really not warranted scare people away from downtown. Why risk going downtown to see an attorney, get a haircut or grab a bite to eat when the end result may be a \$30 parking ticket? I get the feeling that under new parking ordinances

even steeper fines will be levied. In a recent Chronicle story Frank was quoted as saying that in 1900 the fine was \$100. I am sure that was adjusted for inflation but what is the point? Steeper fines will cost business! For the common man \$30 is a lot of money!

4) Government impact- Both the city and county government have a huge impact on downtown parking! Both have grown their facilities and never really addressed the need for parking to grow along with their growth. Many people come downtown to conduct government business and the parking for such is woefully inadequate. The county especially has a major impact and they need to address this by building additional parking adjacent to the courthouse. How can we with a clear conscience tell someone they must come downtown to conduct court business and then ticket them because the court does not have adequate parking?

5) Implementation of the new ordinance- If I am reading the proposed ordinance correctly the city manager or his appointee will control implementation and enforcement of the new parking ordinance. This would bypass the proper flow of the city government giving this or any subsequent city manager control over city parking.

6) Enforcement of the new ordinance- Based on what I have read or been told the new ordinance will give the city manager or his appointee the ability to create multiple parking zones within the city each zone having a different time frame for parking. This alone would be an enforcement logistical nightmare. It seems that the goal is to create areas where parking in excess of 2 hours in total on any given day is illegal and thus eliminating the parking lot musical chairs. In other words in certain zones if I park for more than two hours during any given day that is a violation no matter how much I come and go. If these zones were not set up properly it could be the death of many downtown businesses who solely rely on daytime traffic to survive. Businesses like realtors, lawyers, hair parlors, photographers, bankers, book keepers and many more who do not have night time customers like myself and Stumpknockers.

As I have said many times this city is blessed to have Frank and his staff. They have done wonderful things for us all but on this issue, based on my 23 years of conducting business downtown there is no need for any parking reform, especially reform that further penalizes business owners and customers. What we really need is a common sense approach to the current ordinance. Enforce it when needed ignore it when it is not. It would also help if the county would allocate some funds to build more parking for the courthouse area. God knows they waste money on many things that are not nearly as important! There is downtown land for sale that would be adequate for this very use.

We have come a long way! When my friend Tom Densmore and I first started Coach's in 1991 people said we were crazy for wanting to be downtown. It was an eye sore of an area that like many downtowns around America had been left behind for shopping centers and malls. But we believed different! I have seen a lot of changes and nearly all of them for the good! That is something all of us can be proud of!

Thank you for your time,
Cecil Everett
Coach's Pub and Eatery

SCHEDULED APPEARANCES

Commissioner Ron Kitchen of Homosassa and new County Commissioner, stated every resident of Inverness and Crystal River are full paying county residents. He expressed how much they look forward to working with the cities and moving forward.

Commissioner Scott Carnahan newly elected County Commissioner District 4, and he also is looking forward to working with the City and getting back on track regarding interlocal agreements.

MAYOR'S LOCAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Mayor Plaisted presented Joseph Foster, Public Relations Manager from Hospice of Citrus, a Proclamation for "National Hospice and Palliative Care Month".

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilwoman Bega motioned to accept the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried.

- a) Bill Listing*
 - Recommendation – Approval
- b) Council Minutes – 11/05/14*
 - Recommendation – Approval
- c) Proclamation – “Movember”*
 - Recommendation – Approval

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

FDOT-Perpetual Agreement – Cooter Pond Resolution item which was accepted onto this agenda, was addressed by City Manager DiGiovanni. FDOT is moving to address the resurfacing project through downtown Inverness. DOT will also address deficiencies that may exist in the roadway. A number of electronic components are being installed, bicycle pathway striping and identification, and stormwater issues. One of the stormwater issues is located at the intersection of Apopka and 41/44. A project has been designed to better manage that water. The City is being asked to provide a perpetual easement which will involve a portion of Cooter Pond Park to move the water into the pond itself. The city also spoke with DOT regarding the poor conditions and overgrowth of the DRA at the corner of 44 E. where it merges with 41/44. It was noted that would be no cost to the city. Mayor Plaisted spoke to the chain-link fence, and possibility of having it changed to black for esthetic looking fence.

A motion was made to read the Resolution by title only, and it was noted that there was no title formatted with the Resolution outlined by the State, and it was recommended to adopt the resolution and an action following adoption of the resolution.

Councilman Ryan motioned to adopt the Resolution 2014-27 and authorize the Council President to execute all documents for the City to issue a Perpetual Easement for this draining project. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried unanimously.

10)a) Budget Reconciliations – Resolution was addressed by City Manager DiGiovanni who advised how this pertains to the 2014 adopted budget and reconciliations to address items to maintain general ledger accountability. The three items involved are: **1) ICRA-TIF (Tax Increment Finance) Revenue Projected Shortfall, of \$2,074; 2) Utility Reclaimed Water Usage; 3) Utility Reclaimed Water Construction Credits to the Inverness Golf and Country Club.** An enabling Resolution has been prepared for Council adoption.

Councilman McBride motioned to have City Clerk Davis read the Resolution 2014-26 by title only. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried.

RESOLUTION 2014-26

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF INVERNESS, FLORIDA AMENDING THE ADOPTED BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR

COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2013 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014, AMENDING THE GENERAL FUND, INVERNESS COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY FUND AND THE UTILITY FUND.

Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to adopt Resolution 2014-26 by roll call vote. Seconded by Councilman McBride. Roll call vote was as follows: Councilman Ryan, yes; Councilwoman Bega, yes; Councilman McBride, yes; Councilwoman Hepfer, yes; President Hinkle, yes. The motion carried.

10) c) Employee Compensation

City Manager DiGiovanni explained the fiscal turbulence the City has experience over the past 8 years, and with the City operating with a low number of employees, it is important that we reward those doing the job with the respect they have earned. The recommendation is that Council considers \$1,000 increase across the board to one's base pay. There is a caveat that we cannot get around, which is Council action is only able to take place by those not covered by the collective bargaining agreement. The Union has not provided to us the legal statement of representation that they presented the contract terms and conditions, to include the pay adjustment to the rank and file. The question now is do we wait or proceed. This was recommended to the Union October 1st. We hope to hear from the Union so that at the next meeting of City Council to present a ratified agreement so Council can ratify the agreement.

Councilman Ryan stated this shows appreciation of staff by the City Council to the employees.

Councilman McBride stated this is a good first step and it has been a long time and the City works by people getting the job done. He hoped the Union would get in gear because we want to give everyone a great Christmas.

Councilwoman Hepfer agreed and also wants the Union people to get their money.

Councilwoman Bega stated the raises are very well deserved and needed.

Mayor Plaisted stated we want to leave the city in a better place and we need to leave our city employees in a better place.

Council President Hinkle noted we have an excellent staff dedicating a lot of hours and they believe in the city and vision.

Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to issue an employee pay adjustment in the amount of \$1,000 across the board and approve the enclosed budget transfer and allocation sheets to move contingency funds to personnel expenses. Seconded by Councilman Ryan. The motion carried.

City Manager DiGiovanni additionally reported on the following:

- Spoke to an artist rendering of the grounds of the Historic Courthouse War Memorial Monuments. This was an agreement in the 9-point agreement with County government, and once the 9-point agreement is approved the City will be there. He encourages that the area they wish to relocate to be moved to another location at the corner by the traffic light at Hwy 44 and Apopka. He noted the stairs of the courthouse where they wish to relocate the memorials is the stage area for the Veterans Day Parade

Ceremony. Also noted Clark Stillwell is very instrumental in helping to move this along and this will be a nice addition to courthouse.

- Valerie Theatre building project is moving along nicely. The foundation for stage has been poured, the floor is poured, and underground wiring and plumbing is in place. Exterior walls are in place and new brick is partially in place. After the Thanksgiving Holiday, the sidewalk area will be constructed and there will be some inconvenience. We will meet with the businesses and plan traffic mobility. This project is on track for completion in April, but the grand opening may be the early part of June for the reopening of the Theatre.

COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS

Mayor Plaisted spoke of an exciting November. The Veterans Parade was great and a wonderful way to celebrate our veterans.

Councilwoman Bega was sorry to miss all that went on and it is good to be home.

Councilwoman Hepfer agreed the Veterans Parade was amazing and the Mayor's speech was very nice. She noted from her October issue of American City and County magazine which spoke to restoring theatres, and how we were ahead of the trend.

Councilman Ryan also agreed the Veterans Day Parade was great and Mayor's speech was moving. He attended the CMH celebration and the Farm Fest and received many positive comments. Wished all a safe Thanksgiving.

Councilman McBride stated that everyone loves a parade, and got much praise for the City doing this. Farm Festival and Farmers Market couldn't have been better. Wished all a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Council President Hinkle noted there is something going on all the time. Light up Inverness will be on November 26 for the first time. He spoke of Veterans Day and how moving it is.

CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA

None

Meeting adjourned @ 6:39pm.

City Clerk

Council President