

February 17, 2015
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 (Not Present)

Also present were City Manager DiGiovanni, Asst. City Manager Williams, Community Development Director Malm, Event Director Skeele-Hogan, Woodard & Curran Director Mike 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

Councilwoman Bega motioned to accept the Agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilman McBride. The motioned carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING

None

SCHEDULED APPEARANCES

6) a) EDC – Don Taylor

At request of City Council Don Taylor, of the EDC, appeared and presented an overview of the organization going private (no longer accepting public funds) in January of this year. He stated that by not accepting public money the EDC would not come under the Sunshine Law. It is very difficult to do economic development in the County, under the Sunshine Law, and making all meetings open to the public. We wanted to move forward with private-sector board members, as it was important to have them on our board and have them deal with other private-sector companies that were working with us. Our name will be changed to the Economic Development Authority for Citrus County, and wish to emphasize that we are here to serve the entire County and the cities, whether they are members or not. We are applying for 501C(3) status, which makes us a charitable organization, and will open up some grant opportunities that we do not have as a C6. New bylaws have been written, and we will vote on those at our first board meeting in March. The mission of the EDC will stay the same, to be the economic development representative for Citrus County, and will continue to serve that role just as we have in

the past, and will work with County stakeholders to further commercial and industrial activity in the County.

We plan to have an Advisory Committee of community leaders. These would be City representatives, as previously on the board, but will now be on the Advisory Committee. There will be people from SCORE, Builder's Association, CF, Withlacoochee Technical College, CF Ag-Alliance, and those organizations that were represented on the board previously.

He advised that the Inverness Airport Industrial site was their priority to get developed. The County is currently in process of re-zoning that to industrial, and they need road access through the airport. They wish to work with the City of Inverness to get access across the City property, and they have a grant that's going to expire in 2016 to build that road. He stated that he has spoken with Commissioner Carnahan regarding this, who will be the sponsor for that with the Board of County Commissions, and work with the city to make that happen. He asked for Council support on that, as it has been going on for at least two years or more.

Councilman McBride questioned if a local business vs a new business would have priorities with the EDC and it was advised that it did not. He questioned if they could pinpoint a business that the EDC was directly responsible for bringing into Citrus County. Mr. Taylor advised one to be Titan Industries, in Homossassa, out of Kentucky in 2014. Councilman McBride asked if there is an ongoing solicitation process for new businesses? Mr. Taylor stated that there was a strategic plan with Duke Energy Funding and came up with 10 targeted industries, ie; light manufacturing, healthcare, recreational boat manufacturing, etc. We have also joined the North Fla Economic Development partnership (15 Counties, north of Citrus) and listing all our commercial/industrial properties on the website. Mr. Taylor advised that infrastructure was a factor for expansion with local businesses and acquisition to new businesses in Citrus County.

6) b) Sheriff's Department – Crime Stat Report

Captain Justin Ferrara, updated elected officials on the 2014 End of Year Crime Statistics. **Homicides** - For the second year, there were no homicides in Inverness; **Robberies** – remained the same at four; **Sex Offenses** dropped from 6 to 4; **Residential Burglary** increased from 16 to 26; **Commercial Burglary** increase from 7 to 8; **Vehicle Burglary** decreased from 28 to 23, while **Auto Theft** went up from 1 to 6. Deputies made 541 total arrests in 2014, close to previous year with 538 total. Call for service increased from 18,275 to 20,535. Those calls covered the majority from suspicious activity and security checks to traffic accidents and physical disturbances. He cautioned the dangers of posting their whereabouts on social media when they are on vacation, and also to be sure to lock vehicles and homes.

6) c) Mr. Ray Morris – Car Show Removal

Mr. Morris addressed City Council advising that he had a petition to “move the Friday Night Antique Car Show from Courthouse Square to the City Parking Lot where it originally started”, signed by the downtown business owners. He stated that we have someone from the Inverness Plaza where K Mart is located who would like to relocate the car show to the Plaza, and was there to present a petition for that as well. Mr. Morris

provided copies of petition to the City Clerk to provide to council members. He noted that he will be returning to each meeting until this was resolved here or in the courtroom.

6) d) Mr. George Drewery, Car Show Relocation Suggestions

Mr. Drewery, owner of Goodfellows Barber Shop addressed City Council stating that he was present to offer a solution to bring business to the Regional Shopping Center, which many businesses have left since Publix relocated, and resolve the issue in the downtown. He provided a petition with signatures from businesses of the shopping center who would like to have it located at the Regional Shopping Center.

MAYOR’S LOCAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

None

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 – 02/03/15*
 - Recommendation - Approval
- c) Proclamation – “Irish-American Heritage Month”*
 - Recommendation - Approval

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

10) a) Welcome Home Vietnam – Vendor Fee – Resolution was addressed by City Manager DiGiovanni advising that with the sponsoring and partnering with the Vietnam Vets, with “Operation Welcome Home Vietnam”, the City is organizing a full celebration by offering Vietnam Veterans an opportunity to celebrate, reflect, and be honored on May 2nd & 3rd, 2015. Saturday, May 2nd begins with a parade at 10:00am which starts at Citrus High School and follows US Hwy 41/44 to MLK Ave. The parade will be followed by a celebration of speakers, music, vendor and activities at Liberty Park and Vietnam Memorial Wall at Wallace Brooks Park. In support of this event, event fees must be adopted by Resolution, and has been developed to ratify a range of vendor fees for non-profit entities.

Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to have City Clerk Davis read Resolution 2015-04 by title only. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega . The motion carried.

RESOLUTION 2015-04

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF INVERNESS, FLORIDA ESTABLISHING A VENDOR APPLICATION FEE FOR WELCOME HOME VIETNAM EVENT IN LIBERTY PARK AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Councilman Ryan noted his awareness of the lack of support veteran's have received, and this support is well over due.

Councilman McBride questioned the fees and City Manager DiGiovanni explained that Veteran's Organization Vendors that are not offering items or services for sale will be exempt from the fees.

Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to adopt Resolution 2015-04, by roll call vote. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. Roll call vote was as follows: Councilman Ryan, yes; Councilwoman Bega, yes; Councilman McBride, yes; Councilwoman Hepfer, yes; President Hinkle, yes. The motion carried.

City Manager DiGiovanni additionally reported on the following:

- Valerie Theatre project is proceeding with much activity. Curbing has been poured, defining the edge of plaza, and noted that there will be mobility access points for wheelchair accessibility, etc. Information has been received and we will discuss Valerie Theatre Appraisals at the next meeting of City Council, and discuss options to City Government.
- The Proposed regulatory Ordinance for E-Cigarettes will be addressed at the next meeting of City Council. We are designing this based on Council discussion, looking at Inverness Government building regulations.
- He spoke to a newspaper article in the weekend paper dealing with the African American Community, and wanted to mention some points not mentioned, dealing with the history. He spoke to the City of Inverness' first vision presented 1997-98 for the City which included the African American community. Councilwoman Hepfer was present with him when they conducted charrettes in the old city hall where we invited leadership of churches and people in that area of the community. We took it further and visited each church and conducted conversations about their community and the city moving forward. We received strong support from the African American community and they provided essential points of knowledge and history we needed to build these plans, prior to presenting to the county government. He spoke to the renaming of Park Ave. to MLK Blvd. in downtown Inverness. We wished we could have provided these points of historical reference to the article.

Councilwoman Hepfer noted that the meeting they had with the community members was to see what they needed and how we could work the two together and benefit everyone. She noted how Daniel Sawyer was African American and worked in Public Works for many years.

City Manager stated that the historical aspects of how Park Ave. became MLK, gets lost and how the plans of the City went around all the old churches, was all birthed from those discussions with the African American Community in downtown.

COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS

Councilman Ryan spoke of the Investiture of Judge Mary Hacker. He also attended the Purple Heart Ceremony, and was a judge in a Chili Contest at VFW, and is still recovering. Spoke to how many people including Council have historical knowledge which they impart and appreciates all they do as well as the Sheriff's Dept. He referenced the County and the CRA, and future discussions.

Councilwoman Bega stated how moving the Purple Heart ceremony was, and was honored to see a gentleman injured in 1968 receiving the Purple Heart. Spoke of the 5K run and Farmers Market.

Councilman McBride reported on last week's MPO meeting and that he is now chairman of the MPO. They will be doing a traffic study which is a requirement we have as an MPO. Spoke to how the next three months are going to be jam packed and wonderful three months for our city. Vietnam parade and Valerie Theatre are a few.

Councilwoman Hepfer referenced the Purple Heart ceremony, noting parts of the ceremony being emotional. Spoke of the fun at the VFW Chili Cook-Off.

Council President Hinkle noted his appreciation to Sharon Skeelee Hogan and Liz Austin for all they do. He spoke of the events downtown and all of the upcoming events such as St. Patrick's Day Parade; Welcome Home Vietnam Event; etc. Appreciates our freedom and is proud to represent our Council. Noted he is President of the Citrus County Charitable Foundation. Council President Hinkle questioned the City Manager on how are things with the County, with regard to the CRA.

City Manager DiGiovanni stated that the City of Inverness has a track record that we're proud of and we are used as a model by other communities and the state in orientations on how to best use CDBG funding. There have been three CDBG restoration projects. City Hall was conceived and created, Bicycle Boulevard was built and created, Liberty Park, Liberty Trail, Wallace Brooks Park, Cooter Pond Park, Cooter Pond Boardwalk were all part that original vision concept. All of these enhancements and improvements were actually accomplished and funded under the mechanism of tax increment financing and a community redevelopment agency. The approach of the city to try and expand the original district to encapsulate other areas of blight, found through a certified study. He spoke of the comprehensive study which was adopted by the ICRA committee and this Council, to improve Citrus County to create investment, jobs, and social interaction. He wants to make sure that the adjoining board at the level of County government understands that we seek their input and support, but want to be very clear we are going to take the steps to achieve a positive outcome for the city.

Councilwoman Bega stated that this is absolutely nothing new. For years there was discussion of expanding this area to incorporate a larger portion of the city.

City Manager DiGiovanni noted this process started long before anyone had any inkling what was going to happen in the expanded district. This is about people, hope, and the opportunity where improvements can be made.

Councilman McBride stated that community redevelopment helps to increase the tax base.

CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA

Karen Esty, Inverness resident wanted to provide a brief update from the Hernando County MPO Citizens Advisory Committee. They elected John Wade, as the new chairperson of the committee. At the meeting she introduced getting Independence put in for sidewalk, segway off of Forest Drive, which will carry on out to bike trail off 41. She measured from the sidewalk on Forest Drive to Independence which is less than one tenth of a mile. They are looking for connectivity issues and this stands a good chance on the priority list.

Meeting adjourned at 6:43pm.

City Clerk

Council President