

Palmetto City Council  
March 15, 2004 4:00 PM

Elected Officials Present:

Larry Bustle, Mayor  
Tamara Cornwell, Vice Mayor  
Shirley Bryant, Council Member  
Mary Lancaster, Council Member  
Brian Williams, Council Member

Staff and others present:

Attorney Michele Hall  
J. E. Free, Jr., City Clerk  
Chief Garry Lowe  
Chris Lukowiak, Public Works Director  
Jessica McCann, Planner  
Diane Ponder, Administrative Assistant

Mayor Bustle called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

Sister Cathy Buster, Diocese of Venice, gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

Chief Garry Lowe recognized Sgt. Robert Taylor, Corporals Johnson and Kelly and Officers Chris Metzger and Wade Winter for their efforts in two, recent drug deal arrests

1. APPROVAL OF WORKSHOP AGENDA

MOTION: Ms. Bryant moved, Mrs. Lancaster seconded and motion carried 4-0 to approve the March 15, 2004, 4:00 pm agenda.

2. SENIOR LIVING FACILITY PROJECT

Sister Cathy Buster, Diocese of Venice, stated she was seeking Council's consideration in accepting the Diocese of Venice's request for a voluntary annexation of property where a proposed apartment complex will be built. She discussed the \$5 million grant the Diocese of Venice has received from HUD to build a 68 one bedroom apartment complex for low income seniors, age 62 and older. Holy Cross Manor, Inc. will be an independent living facility offering home care in the apartment as well as Hospice.

Sister Buster introduced Architect Marcos, who briefly reviewed the site plan. The complex will be located on property owned by Holy Cross Catholic Church that is on the south side of 26th Street directly across from the church. He stated the building is planned to be three stories and will follow the architecture of Holy Cross Catholic Church. Sister Buster informed Council Manatee County referred the Diocese to the city because they are unable to meet the HUD's June 1, 2004, time line for submitting the final commitment for the project, which could result in the grant being lost. Mr. Marcos stated they don't anticipate the project having any impact on the traffic in the area; historically, the residents don't own cars, a mode of transportation will be provided the residents. The project will begin the city's DRC review process next week, at which time it will be determined if the city's utility infrastructure is in place for the project.

3. RARE PROJECT REPORT

Manatee County Health Department Director Dr. Gladys Brannick introduced Kristen Pate, HIV/Aids outreach coordinator for Manatee County. Ms. Pate began her presentation by thanking Mayor Bustle and Lt. Craig Himes for participating in the workgroup.

In 2000 Congress designated Manatee County as one of the twenty counties in the United States emerging with HIV and Aids, which prompted the Department of Health and Human Services to contact the Manatee County Health Department to participate in the Rapid Assessment Response and Evaluation (RARE) project. Over a 3.5 month period, the project looked at communities of color in Bradenton and Palmetto to see what is putting people at risk for HIV/Aids.

In Palmetto the study covered the Oakridge Apartments to 27th St. E. down through Lincoln Middle School and Groover's Market, down to 10th St. and back up to 8th Avenue. During a 24-hour time frame 16 members observed activities including alcohol consumption, door-to-door prostitution, and drug abuse and gambling. The Groover's Market and Speedy locations showed the heaviest congregation areas where some types of behavior occur.

Ms. Pate indicated that even though the project was in communities of color, all races are experiencing HIV/Aids outbreaks; taking race out of the equation, 1 in 223 people in Manatee County are infected. She discussed the lack of education programs targeting young people, who are the fastest group being infected; there is a lack of involvement from the community leaders and faith based organizations. Ms. Pate stated the Health Department is developing plans to improve education programs and community involvement; they will present their study in Washington DC, where they hope additional funding will be made available to increase staff by two positions.

Ms. Bryant inquired why the illegal activities aren't being dealt with if they are so observable. Chief Lowe stated the Palmetto Police Department is doing what they can; hence the recent confiscated drugs and arrests. Ms. Bryant stated the matter needs to be addressed at all levels. Ms. Pate stated police officers were visible in the area. Mrs. Lancaster discussed the fact that unknown law enforcement needs to be utilized in the area. Chief Lowe informed Council the department is working with the Manatee Sheriff's Department to be able to make drug buys in the area and to finalize an agreement allowing Palmetto to patrol areas located in the county.

#### 4. RIVIERA DUNES BELE MARE PROJECT PRESENTATION

Tim Vining, W. G. Mills, introduced the team who developed the Bele Mare project. He reviewed the site plan depicting the retail area, three 15 story buildings vs. four 12 story buildings, the extension of the Riverwalk into the community, a water taxi landing point, a pitch & putt green, botanical and dog park surrounded by a jogging trail and water feature, tennis courts, lap pool with spa, fitness center and volleyball on the beach area and some marina garages. Several neighborhood meetings have been held at Riviera Dunes concerning the project, with Mr. Vining and the sales staff stating the outcome of the meetings was very positive. Mr. Vining stated the review process will begin in April and plan to bring the final site plan to Council in early June. The average price of the condominiums will be just less than \$700,000. Mr. Vining advised the project was granted full concurrency during the DRI process and as there is no increase in the number of units beyond the DRI based on the recently passed NOPC, concurrency will remain in place; however, plans have been established to reorient the traffic circulation. Council voiced no opposition to the proposed plan.

#### 5. EMPLOYEE PERSONNEL POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE PRESENTATION

Employee Personnel Policy Review Committee member Tanya Lukowiak reviewed the background of the committee. Ms. Lukowiak discussed the need for a fair and equitable evaluation system. Ms. Lukowiak reviewed the HRN Management evaluation system's criteria and benefits with Council. The cost of the system is \$3,889 with an annual renewal fee of \$1,657; any city initiated upgrades will be an added expense.

Attorney Hall commented on the fact that the more structured a system is the more protected the city will be. She stated she felt sure Attorney Groff would be willing to review the system. Ms.

Lukowiak advised Attorney Groff had sat in on several committee meetings and offered instruction that the city must carefully define the word "probation".

Ms. Lukowiak reviewed the Personnel Policy Review Committee Review and Recommendations, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part of these minutes. The committee requested Council to approve funding for an actuarial study to determine the city's cost to change the General Employees' Pension Plan's multiplier from 2.5% to 3%. Mr. Williams requested that the city consider a one-half percent increase for the city's past retirees.

Ms. Lukowiak advised the Police Officers' Pension Board of Trustees has approved an actuarial study be performed to change the normal eligibility from 55 to 52 years of age and reduce the vesting from ten years to six years of service.

Ms. Lukowiak discussed the principles of the proposed pay plan. The committee took the minimum and maximum pay levels prepared by Cody & Associates and established up to 14 steps within the range at 3% incremental increases; the department heads and police lieutenants are excluded due to the difference between the minimum and maximum being less than the other positions. The committee also suggested the following:

- Longevity pay will be equivalent to 3% of salary payable in a lump sum payment.
- Promotions will be granted at the first step in the new title, but at least 5% above what the employee is earning.
- Firm guidelines were established regarding a new employee's entry level salary.
- A satisfactory or higher rating will be recognized with a step increase.
- A COLA will be given to all employees annually, with the increase affecting the minimum and maximum and all ranges between.
- Needs improvement or unacceptable ratings results in no step increase.
- A \$500 lump sum payment will be awarded to department head recognized outstanding performers - up to 14 employees on an annual basis.

Ms. Lukowiak summarized the committee's recommendations as follows:

1. Authorize an actuarial study to determine the feasibility of changing the retirement multiplier for the General Employees Pension from 2.5 % to 3%.
2. Adopt the pay plan.
3. Authorize purchase and implementation of the HRN Evaluation Software system.
4. Remedy for employees' wages, effective April 1, 2004, as described on page 17 and amended on the distributed addenda; total budget adjustment will be \$83,499.30 for the remainder of the year.

Mr. Williams stated that while he was impressed with the prepared material, he wanted time to review the information. Ms. Lukowiak stated the city has the option to amend the minimum and maximum ranges when deemed necessary. She suggested it was time to utilize the information provided in the pay study and make the city's system function, which is what the committee's proposal would do.

Council discussed the benefit of delaying action on the topic. Ms. Bryant stated she would like to compare the actuarial study's conclusion to the Florida Retirement System. Ms. Cornwell stated her belief the city needs to develop a safeguard whereby each employee signs agreement they are on the correct step to ensure employees can't go beyond a two year period of retro pay for improper placement in the pay plan.

Ms. Bryant asked Mr. Free if it was his recommendation to move forward with the pay plan. Mr. Free informed Council there are funds in the budget that may be allocated for these costs. He voiced his belief the city's greatest asset is the employees and the employees are at the low end of the scale; this is something that will help employee benefits in the city. Financially, in the long-term it will work out fine.

Ms. Bryant discussed the outstanding 14 employees' lump sum payment being based on budgetary constraints. Mr. Free concurred.

It was consensus of Council to place the item on the 7:00 pm agenda for action, deleting the actuarial study for the present time.

Council commended the committee on their efforts in preparing the material.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.

Minutes approved: April 5, 2004



J. E. Free, Jr.  
City Clerk