

MINUTES
WORK SESSION MEETING
OF THE PERRY CITY COUNCIL
April 14, 2014

1. Call to Order: Mayor James E. Faircloth, Presiding Officer, called to order the work session meeting held April 14, 2014 at 4:30 p.m.

2. Roll:

Elected Officials Present: Mayor James E. Faircloth, Jr. Mayor Pro-Tempore Randall Walker, Council Members Riley Hunt, Phyllis Bynum-Grace, Willie King and William Jackson.

Elected Official Absent: Council Member Joe Posey

Staff: City Manager Lee Gilmour and Recording Clerk, Cyndi Houser

City Departmental Staffing: Chief Joel Gray – Fire and Emergency Services Department, Chief Steve Lynn – Police Department, Brenda King – Director of Administration, Mary Beth Bass – Economic Development Director, and Michael Beecham – Director of Community Development, Karen Bycenski, Personnel Analyst.

Guests: Mr. Troy Rowell and David Forrester, Lee Smallwood and Rob Weaver of Utility Service Group*.

*Mr. Forrester, Mr. Smallwood and Mr. Weaver arrived at 4:58 p.m.

Media: Mr. Don Moncrief - Houston Home Journal and Mike Stucka – Macon Telegraph

3. Items of Review/Discussion: Mayor James E. Faircloth, Jr.

3a. Follow up discussion of water tank maintenance

Mr. Gilmour reviewed several options for water tanks maintenance for Council's consideration. Options included preparing a set of specifications and then going out to bid; advise ESG Operations, Inc. to include the tanks as part of its asset maintenance responsibility; or, negotiate with Utility Service Group based on recommendations in a letter received from Mr. David Forrester, Vice President, South Region. Council reviewed the pros and cons of each option with a consensus to negotiate with USG and include a 15% discount, if possible, on maintenance fees as suggested by Mr. Hunt.

3b. Update on firefighters provision

Mr. Gilmour summarized two memos for funding the additional eighteen (18) firefighters. Alternatives included ceasing use of certain contractors, using inmate labor, transferring excess monies from the City's enterprise funds, increase the millage rate in the General Fund or

establish a special utility district funded by fee charges. Elimination of certain services would not benefit the City enough to cover the estimated costs required to add the additional firefighters. Viable alternatives could be to increase the millage rate in the General fund, but it would be subject to other uses. The basis for paying is the value of a parcel, but many beneficiaries would not pay (i.e. schools, hospital); collection is once a year; payment is tax deductible, but hiring could not start until January unless Council authorizes borrowing. A millage rate for a special district could only be used for fire protection services; the district must be established by ordinance and would be subject to ad valorem tax issues that are restricted by the State which could include exemption of certain properties.

Another alternative would be to establish by ordinance a special utility district funded by fee charges. Charges would be based on structure use; vacant properties would not be charged; there is greater flexibility in controlling revenue base, Council can adjust groups as it deems necessary, the fees are not tax deductible and the average home would pay \$57.60/year.

Discussion included the impact of fee charges to commercial, how soon it could be instituted, and statutory implications. Consensus of Council was to move forward immediately with the creation of a special district which would include one or more public hearings. Mayor Faircloth requested that in addition to the public hearings, the information be provided to the public in other ways.

[Mayor Faircloth advised Mr. Forrester, Mr. Smallwood and Mr. Weaver, that Council had reviewed the options presented to them regarding maintenance of the water tanks prior to their arrival, and they could expect a call from Mr. Gilmour regarding negotiating a new contract.]

3c. Discussion of Perry Health Plan

Mr. Gilmour and Ms. Karen Bycenski reviewed the impact of the Affordable Care Act on the City's health insurance plan in place of Ms. Janie Floyd, President of Administrative Solutions, Inc., the City's third party health insurance administrator, who was unable to attend. Mr. Gilmour and Ms. Bycenski noted the vast majority of the requirements for the Affordable Care Act have been pushed back; however, the City has already implemented or will implement the requirements in the very near future. Children up to the age of 26 are now covered by their parent's insurance and beginning in September, preventive care will be paid at 100%. The City's health plan is self-insured and the biggest impact is the number of claims submitted by the participants. Eligible employees not covered by the City's health care plan, or any other plan, have been notified that they may be subject to penalties.

Mr. Gilmour also advised that this year has been a good year for the health care plan overall and based on the pushbacks for the Affordable Care Act, no adjustment is anticipated for the next fiscal year. If there are any major impacts, Council will be advised.

3d. Consider name adjustment for City department.

Mayor Faircloth requested that the item be pulled from the agenda. Mr. Walker stated that with the strategic planning, this may be re-visited.

3e. Final selection of name for Rozar Park walking trail.

Mr. Gilmour reviewed the tally of the suggested names for the walking trail at Rozar Park. There was a three-way tie for Two Ponds, Whispering Pines and Lake Walk. A poll of those present favored Lake Walk.

3f. Consider responses for sale of Deanview parcel.

Mr. Gilmour provided information on two (2) offers received for the property at 1002 Deanview. Although both offers were below the hoped for price, it was noted the house was in need of major repairs; Council accepted offer 2 for \$18,000.

3g. Consider establishing guidelines relative to cleaning/demolition lien filings.

Administration recommended that any demolition and /or cleaning costs that exceed 4.5% of a parcel's value be paid through general City revenues and not by issuing a levy. This was based on review of data for the last five (5) years showing the costs associated with mowing and demolition of certain properties that did not sell when there was a lien. If the costs of mowing, cleaning and/or demolition are 4.5% or under, the lien will not be filed.

4. Department Head Items:

Chief Lynn reported an e-mail sent to the website regarding a complaint about the police department's alleged treatment by the department was under investigation. Chief Lynn has been unable to verify any of the information or contact the person. The car wash robber has been arrested and several counts have been filed.

Ms. Bass reminded everyone of the Town Hall meeting scheduled for Thursday night at 6 pm at the Perry Arts Center; five focus groups will be meeting in Council Chambers this week; and Vinson Institute faculty and team members will be walking around town to obtain information for the master plan. A retreat is being planned for the steering committee in May. She also reminded Council about a reception for Ms. Stacy Campbell Tuesday evening and the Industry Appreciation event at the Go Fish center. Ms. Campbell will be giving final counts for the Dogwood Festival, but it was estimated there were approximately 27,000 people in attendance.

Chief Gray advised the after action form from the Fire Department had been sent out and it was a non-eventful event.

Ms. King and Mr. Gilmour had no reports.

5. Council Member Items:

Mayor Pro Tempore Walker and Council Members Jackson, Bynum-Grace and King had no reports.

Council Member Hunt requested public works check the pavement at Keith Drive and Hwy. 341 as it seems to be breaking apart again.

Mayor Faircloth had compliments for City staff as they assisted the Chamber of Commerce for the Dogwood Festival this past weekend which helped to make it a very successful event.

6. Adjourn: There being no further business Mayor Faircloth adjourned the City Council work session held April 14, 2104 at 5:27 p.m.