



Joint City-County Commission Meeting Minutes June 27, 2022

Mayor Gib Coerper

Vice Chair Jennifer Blalock
Commissioner Shirley Green Brown
Commissioner Dayna Miller
Commissioner Edward Potts

Chair Marihelen Wheeler

Vice Chair Anna Prizzia
Commissioner Charles S. Chestnut, IV
Commissioner Ken Cornell

City Manager Mike DaRoza

City Attorney Marian Rush

The City Commission conducted a
Joint City-County Commission Meeting
At 6:00 PM
to address the item(s) below.

Meeting Date: June 27, 2022

Meeting Location: James A Lewis Commission Chambers

CITIZENS ATTENDING: Tom Hubbard, Carl Smart, Garvin Combs, Gloria Jones Andrews. STAFF ATTENDING: Diane Amendola, Robert Bonetti, Adam Hall, Carlos Hunt, Tara Malone, Jesse Sandusky, Donna Smith, LeAnne Williams, Kathy Winburn.

Joint City-County Commission Meeting

Notice given pursuant to Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes. In order to appeal any decision made at this meeting, you will need a verbatim record of the proceedings. It will be your responsibility to ensure such a record is made.

CALL TO ORDER

Led by Chair Marihelen Wheeler.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Member Charles Chestnut moved to approve the amended agenda; seconded by Vice Chair Anna Prizzia.

Passed by unanimous consent, with Member Ken Cornell absent.

Chair Gib Coerper asked for consent to open the meeting.

Passed by unanimous consent, with Member Dayna Miller absent.

WELCOME

Led by Chair Wheeler.

I. AGENDA

A. Infrastructure Surtax

Member Cornell joined the meeting.

Alachua County Chief of Staff Gina Peebles introduced the item and made recommendation.

Chair Coerper asked if the first five years of the new structure could be devoted to roads and then move on to other projects, as roads seems to be the biggest concern of citizens.

Member Cornell stated the goal was to get the total budget for roads from \$4 million per year currently to \$15 million per year. He stated the new structure would place up to 70% of the ½ cent tax toward roads. He also stated they are looking at additional ad valorem taxes for roads. He asked if the City Commission had considered projects under the new structure and if they would endorse this publicly.

City Manager Mike DaRoza stated no formal discussions had taken place. He stated he was interested in formulas and the percentages of the new structure, and the City could decide from there what kind of projects and joint projects we might like to do. He stated he was still collecting data at this point.

Chair Coerper stated it may not be prudent to put time into developing projects before the people vote and give direction.

Vice Chair Prizzia stated one of the reasons why people supported the Wild Spaces Public Places tax was because they could see what their dollars were doing. She stated the County Commission had received feedback about matching dollars from the cities being part of the structure.

City Manager DaRoza stated the City had a priority listing of streets and roads to which the Commission commits funding every year, but he would like to learn more from the presentation.

Alachua County Public Works Director Ramon Gavarette provided the presentation.

Member Cornell stated the County Commission would begin talks about moving ad valorem tax growth to roads. He stated the revenue raised through ad valorem taxes along with the infrastructure tax would

play a role in raising the budget to \$15 million per year.

Member Shirley Green Brown asked how the County plans to prioritize roads.

Public Works Director Gavarette stated they take into account the pavement condition, traffic volumes, the condition of the roadway to keep on the upper part of the curve, equity to balance the need compared to the financial status, and then maintaining what had been upgraded to a certain level. He stated it would not be like in the past: higher volume would come first. He stated once a road was completed, it would then be maintained while the other roads were still on the list, until all of the roads are completed and reach a point where roads are only being maintained.

Chair Coerper asked would a consideration be made to take taxes generated from a road, like CR 235A, to help pay for the road work.

Public Works Director Gavarette stated the subdivisions being developed should help repave these roads. He stated they did not have a list for consideration yet.

Vice Chair Jennifer Blalock asked how CR 235A, a road which has had potholes for 22 years and had not been repaved since, could not be at the top of the list for repaving using the proposed matrix.

Public Works Director Gavarette stated he could not tell anyone what roads would be at the top of the list. He stated every city had roads they want to be on the top of the list. He stated the program would identify what projects could be done that would provide the most impact for the wider Alachua County community, based on the funding available.

Vice Chair Blalock asked where would CR 235A be placed on the proposed graph.

Public Works Director Gavarette stated between 30 and 40, just like 98th St.

Chair Coerper stated the goods from the warehouses should be taken into consideration, as they serve the residents of the State of Florida.

Vice Chair Prizzia stated she agreed, and she hoped Chair Coerper was letting his State Legislators know of the problems. She stated the warehouses were built on roads not meant for large trucks. She stated the taxes generated by the warehouses falls short to maintain the roads, and it was falling on the citizens of the County to make up the difference for something in which the State was not investing. She stated this system was meant to compare roads objectively and transparently.

Member Chestnut stated that in 2012, the County Commission tried to pass a surtax for roads, but the vote failed. He stated if it had passed then, the roads might be in better shape now.

Member Chestnut gave a brief history on roads.

Chair Coerper stated it was important to present a strong plan and then follow through the following year, so as to build confidence in the citizens.

Member Edward Potts stated roads had been in the headlines since he arrived 10 years ago, and he was concerned that promises had been made in the past to fix the roads, but they remain in poor condition.

Vice Chair Prizzia stated they had presented a good plan, and they lived up to the promises of Wild Spaces Public Places. She asked what else they could do to give the public confidence that the money would be spent on roads and public housing the way they had promised.

Member Potts stated public confidence had eroded over time just as the roads had. He stated it is not that what has been proposed wasn't needed or necessary. He stated he wasn't arguing with the math, but he was wondering why it was allowed to get to this point.

Vice Chair Blalock stated she agreed with Member Potts, confidence was an issue.

Chair Wheeler stated the combine Commissions need to see what they could do together.

Chair Wheeler asked Public Works Director Gavarette if 235A was repaved or repaired, with the truck loads running on it, how long would it last.

Public Works Director Gavarette stated 235A was going to need engineering for truck loads and would most likely have to be a new road.

Chair Wheeler stated this would potentially take a substantial portion of the budget.

Member Chestnut stated he was not responsible for the actions of commissions of the past.

Member Brown stated she understood it was a balancing act, and she appreciated the presentation.

Member Blalock asked about a school in Alachua County which does not have flashing lights.

Public Works Director Gavarette stated flashing lights are installed when a principal requests them or when there was a problem with speeding.

B. Station 21 and ACFR Services Update

Alachua County Fire Rescue Chief Harold Theus provided the presentation.

Chair Wheeler opened the floor for comment from the Members.

Vice Chair Blalock asked about the required staff.

Chief Theus provided the information. He stated the new station on CR 235A was being designed with future growth in mind.

City Manager DaRoza asked if the recurring funding of \$1.65 million was for 6 personnel or for 9 personnel, which would include the personnel for the ladder truck.

Chief Theus stated it was for the 9 personnel, as well as cost recovery for vehicle replacement and other equipment in the station.

Member Cornell thanked the City Commission for their partnership with Alachua County Fire Rescue.

II. COMMISSION GENERAL AND INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Member Cornell stated the County Commission had received many comments from the citizens east of

Turkey Creek and west of 43rd St., regarding the Joint Planning Agreement. He stated they had given staff direction to come back with recommendations that would involve the citizens of the City of Alachua. He stated he wanted to make the City Commission aware. He stated that Single Member District would be on the ballot in November.

III. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Chair Wheeler opened the floor for public comment.

Chris Melanson stated he approved of the plan presented. He suggested as roads get repaired, reroute trucks so they don't destroy the newly repaired roads. He stated a truck route through the City would be the best way to combat future damage.

James Curington stated he appreciated the work done by Wild Spaces Public Places and felt the plan laid out in the infrastructure tax was confusing. He stated the issue of confidence was going to be a problem for the County Commission.

Tom Hubbard stated that most people want to see these issues go forward, but they did not have confidence that it would go forward the same way it was presented to them. He stated if people feel that they did not have information, or if it wasn't presented in an honest way, they would vote against this.

Chair Coerper asked the City Commission if they were in support of the Infrastructure Tax, by roll call.

Member Potts gave support.

Member Brown gave support.

Vice Chair Blalock gave support.

Chair Coerper gave support.

Vice Chair Prizzia stated the citizens need to understand the ½ cent tax would go to conservation, nature and parks, and ½ cent tax would go to roads and affordable housing, and the Cities could use their portion for whatever the State allows: roads, fire stations or other things necessary to serving the public.

Member Cornell stated Wild Spaces Public Places was set to expire in 2024, and if this tax fails, the Wild Space Public Places tax would be renewed.

Chair Wheeler told Mr. Hubbard that each City had been asked to form a wish list, and if he had something he would like to see happen, he should talk to his City Manager.

(Please Limit to 3 Minutes.Any citizen who did not speak during the Citizen Comments period at the beginning of the meeting may do so at this time.)

IV. ADJOURN

Member Potts moved to adjourn; seconded by Vice Chair Blalock.

Passed by unanimous consent.

City Commission Meeting