

Public Hearing
of
THE CITY OF PARKER CITY COUNCIL
November 8, 2022
9:00 am
PARKER CITY HALL

Called to order at 9:00 by Mayor Kelly

ROLL CALL – Clerk Hinrichs

Ms. Barrow- present

Mr. Chaple – present

Ms. Galbreath – present

Ms. Gibson – present

Mayor Kelly – present

REGULAR AGENDA:

1. **Discussion of 5- and 10- year strategic plan** – Ms. Galbreath stated there was a plan in 2016 but city has not looked at it since the storm in 2018. Spending plan submitted by department heads show a need for 650,000 in 2023, 1.1 million in 2024, 1.3 million in 2025, 600,000 in 2026 and 900,000 in 2027. This does not reflect salary increases or additional needed employees. Ms. Gibson asked about supply concerns. Costs for supplies are increasing dramatically as well as the cost of diesel. Ms. Galbreath doesn't feel the 5-year plan will plan for the future. The council agreed with presenter Mark Lawson, from the last meeting, that there is a need for more income but was not impressed with the presentation given for assessment. Ms. Galbreath spoke with other cities who work with Mr. Lawson, and they had very positive reviews of his work. Mr. Sloan reiterated that Mr. Lawson works with Lynn Haven, Springfield and Panama City and he will validate the bonds needed. Ms. Galbreath said that Panama City Beach was challenged on their assessments, and they held up. The city can do its own assessment, but it is a lot of work, and the city may not be in a position to move that quickly. Ms. Galbreath feels the assessment would help the city to survive. Mr. Summerlin asked if the stormwater assessment would have to only be spent on stormwater only. Mr. Sloan said yes, it would free up funds, but the budget would need to be redone to show that stormwater repairs are needed. Ad valorem would be able to be used for any city needs. Mayor Kelly said that the beach told him ad valorem must be in a referendum. Ad valorem funds would not be available this year. Ms. Galbreath stated that the budget may be revised. Ms. Gibson reminded everyone that Florida Rural Water stated we needed more income to repair the system and we need to stop running on water revenues only. Assessment can be used as a match for grants. Mr. Lawson can assist with reworking the budget for stormwater assessment. Mr. Sloan is asking for direction as to move forward with resolution for assessment, does not mean it will be enacted, but gives the council the opportunity to keep the option on the table. Ms. Gibson questioned how much longer the city can survive with just the water revenue? If we placed ad valorem on a ballot, all property owners may not live in town to vote. Also, many voters are not property owners. Not all citizens understand the position that the city is in with regards to infrastructure. Ms. Galbreath asked for other council members' opinions. Ms. Barrow asked about nuisance abatement? Mr. Sloan stated that not all liens come to foreclosure if a mortgage is involved. Mr.

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Summerlin stated he manages repairs on the 50-year-old system, he comes to council when big repairs are needed. Discussion of ad valorem with or without a referendum. Mr. Sloan will explore the ad valorem option more. Mayor would like to hear from the people of Parker as to how to proceed. Mayor feels the people need to know what is needed to keep the city running, but if the citizens don't want to vote for ad valorem or an assessment then the city will fold. Mayor feels the city has waited too long to look at taxing. Ms. Galbreath feels that citizens put the council in charge of making the best decisions for the city to help it function, she feels that citizens don't know what is going on. Mr. Bill Libby put the notice on two social platforms about today's meeting and still no one showed up. Mayor Kelly feels assessment is charged to everyone at one rate and not based on tax value. Mr. Mark Rega feels a water rate increase is more of a use tax and not a mandatory tax like a property tax. Mr. Rega feels that getting water shut off is much less of an impact than possibly losing your home for not paying property tax. Mr. Rega said a mandatory tax is the most resented tax there is. Mr. Sloan said we cannot increase license fees. Mr. Rega was shocked when the council voted to not allow a land use change previously that would have allowed for more residential units which would have increased revenues for the city. Discussion that other cities charge a commercial rate for water use, Parker does not. The census in 2020 per Ms. Gibson showed 60% of residents are renters. Mr. Rega would like the council to search for other revenue streams. Mr. Sloan recommends that we publish the resolution and leave the option open for an assessment with an ordinance at a later date in January or February. An assessment can be temporary or permanent. The fee for Mr. Lawson will still be owed if assessment is stopped before his 10-year contract. Ms. Barrow would like the assessment option to be placed on the next agenda. The council took a straw vote to put an ad in paper regarding assessment resolution. A letter will be emailed to residents to come to the 5th Tuesday meeting to discuss possible assessment.

Adjournment at approximately 10:10 am.



Jami Hinrichs, City Clerk