

Proceedings of a budget workshop meeting of the City Commission of the City of Palatka, Florida, held on the 24th day of June, 2003.

PRESENT:	Mayor	Karl N. Flagg
	Commissioner	Mary Lawson Brown
	Commissioner	James Norwood, Jr.
	Commissioner	George E. Sanders
ABSENT:	Commissioner	Hernan Azula

Also Present: City Manager Allen R. Bush, City Attorney Donald E. Holmes, City Clerk Betsy Jordan Driggers, Finance Director Ruby Williams, Police Chief Gary Getchell, Police Lt. James Griffith, Fire Chief Kenneth Venables, Planning Director Adam Mengel, Sanitation & Streets Supt. Bernard Williams, Parks Supt. Jeff Norton, Cemeteries Supervisor Larry Hartman

INVOCATION – Ken Venables

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Ruby Williams

Mayor Flagg called the meeting to order and read the following call:

June 13, 2003

TO MESSRS: MARY LAWSON BROWN, HERNAN AZULA,
JAMES NORWOOD AND GEORGE SANDERS:

You are hereby notified that a special called meeting of the City Commission is called to be held at the regular meeting place of City Hall, 201 N. 2nd Street, Palatka, Florida, at 2:00 p.m., Tuesday, June 24, 2003.

The purpose of the meeting is to hold a budget workshop for the fiscal year 2003/04.

/s/ Karl N. Flagg
Karl N. Flagg, MAYOR

We acknowledge receipt of a copy of the foregoing notice of a special meeting this 24th day of June, 2003.

/s/ Mary Lawson Brown
COMMISSIONER

/s/ James Norwood, Jr.
COMMISSIONER

/s/ George Sanders
COMMISSIONER

FIREWORKS CONTRIBUTION – Main Street Manager Cathy Nagengast introduced Rick Leonardi, President of the First Coast Credit Union, who said they were formerly known as G-P Credit Union, but have changed their name and are looking for more ‘stand-alone’ recognition as an entity separate from Georgia-Pacific. They are also very community-minded and want to be a partner with the City of Palatka in sponsoring the annual 4th of July fireworks display. They have been involved in the planning and implementation of this year’s celebration and believe it needs to be more than it has been in years past. With that in mind, Mr. Leonardi presented Mayor Flagg with a \$5,000 contribution towards the cost of the fireworks program. Mayor Flagg asked him to express the City’s thanks to his Board and employees for their support.

GENERAL FUND BUDGET WORKSHOP – Mr. Bush said he has presented his proposed budget, noting it contains a millage increase from 7.8% to 8%, which will raise an additional \$50,000. The rolled-back rate would have taken it lower, but this is going to be a tough year. State shared revenues will not increase and hopefully will not be less than last year. Perhaps they will have a figure in mid-July. The first section denotes revenues; the second section denotes expenses. He presented the following budgets:

General Administration – Mr. Bush said this has picked up one part-time, 24/hr/week position, which is the current Experience Works employee, to assist the Clerk. He does not have insurance expense estimates from the League or Blue Cross/Blue Shield for next year, but has given it his best estimate based on experience. He plugged in a 6% increase.

General – Special Events funds will be offset 100% in revenues by money raised to cover fireworks. Social Services shows a zero balance; \$14,000 has been placed in contingency and will be available to those who come in and request it.

A power point presentation was given on the General Administration & General fund 5-year plans/capital outlay. The Commission stated they would like to see a new PA system for the Commission Meeting Room added for next year. Mr. Bush said the Clerk is getting a new recording system, and that can be added if the funds are available. Mr. Norton is looking at a grant to renovate City Hall next year.

Building Department – Adam Mengel said they picked up one Clerk's position since last year, which has worked out very well and helped them to meet the expectations of the contractors and the public. Operating expenses decrease next year almost \$1,000 primarily due to removing the line item for abatement action, which falls under the City Attorney and has its own line item elsewhere in the budget. They have also zeroed out demolition expenses. If there are any actions outside the joint city/county demo program, they can pull funds from program income, but he doesn't anticipate this.

As to the five-year capital outlay program, they will need a new roof soon. It is deteriorating quickly, especially in file storage areas. Mr. Bush said this is a major capital improvement that is eligible for Better Place funds. Per the question, there is a sheet in the front of the budget manual that lists all proposed Better Place projects. Per the question, the list of projects will go to the Better Place Plan Committee after this budget is approved. Other capital outlay items will bring their department in line with current technology, including computers, programming, a web page and point-of-sale credit card capabilities. They are going to have some structural issues with the South wall that are attributable to the roof situation. Mayor Flagg said they need to budget funds for a structural engineering study to determine if the building is structurally sound and will support a new roof, or if the building should be addressed first. Mayor Flagg said the City Manager should form a task force consisting of one person from each department and certain community experts who can make this type of evaluation on all buildings and coordinate these projects. The City will get a better price if it makes improvements and major purchases in bulk. Coordination of future purchases should be a part of weekly department head meetings. Mr. Bush said there are actually 3 new roofs scheduled in this year's budget. He'd like to hire an architectural engineer to come in with a recommendation on all the City's buildings; many of them are old and in need of attention. Per the question, the tile in the foyer and offices is in pretty good shape. They do have an abundance of vinyl tile and floor coverings that Wal-Mart donated to them that could be used for renovations.

Police Department – Chief Getchell presented his budget and five-year plan. This is not what he asked for, but it is acceptable as it stands. His report shows a comparison of what he asked for vs. what he received (filed). He gave a report of what his department is currently focusing on and what is happening in the City that will impact his department. They are working on an ordinance addressing false alarms, which will bring in revenues to help offset the equivalent of 3 full-time officers who do nothing but answer false alarms. They have also asked for an additional animal control person, which they did not get due to budgetary constraints. Mr. Bush said they have an interlocal agreement with the County for animal control, but the taxpayers were better served by hiring an animal control officer dedicated only to the City of Palatka. Mayor Flagg said that relationship should be re-visited to get better service from the County. They have to replace many of their cars; some of them should have been replaced last year. At this point they may have to cut out take-home cars. The older the car, the higher the maintenance costs. Some of their cars are five and six years old and are costing thousands of dollars a year to maintain. Five years is the life of a normal take-home police car, given the condition of the roads. After five years the maintenance costs double. They have proposed going to a

lease-purchase program for road patrol cars on a 3-year basis, so the fleet is rotated every three years. Administrative cars can last much longer as they aren't used like patrol cars. Currently they have 25 patrol cars, including the Animal Control truck. Bottom line, he can live with this budget, but there is no more room to make cuts.

Chief Getchell and James Griffith gave a power-point presentation on what is in store for Law Enforcement in the City of Palatka, law enforcement statistics, a vehicle lease program & other capital improvements (filed). The PD prefers to stay with the Crown Victorias, which are manufactured in a police model. The SUV's are not as suitable. Mayor Flagg said Crown Victorias can obviously only be purchased through a Ford dealership, so when the time comes to make those purchase the PD should inform the public of the particulars of these purchases, for the benefit of those business owners and residents who pay taxes here. Lt. Griffith said next year they anticipate entering into a lease-purchase program with a large lease-dealership in Florida, which will include eight vehicles and an animal control truck at a cost of \$51,500. They may be able to bring that cost down with trade-ins and such. Mr. Bush said they originally purchased many of these vehicles with grants, but can't purchase replacement vehicles with grants. Lt. Griffith said also the vehicles had to be allocated to specific programs. It ties them into programs that may not need to be implemented, and cost more than the vehicle. Mayor Flagg said as to the computer purchases this needs to be done in tandem with other departments' computer purchases. Per the question, Mr. Bush said there is adequate property by the Moody Road Fire Station to build a Police Station. Chief Getchell said he does not like to be in the business of recommending repairs to his building. He'd like to see a more qualified individual make those recommendations.

Fire Department – Chief Venables presented his budget and 5-year capital outlay plan. This year they need to replace the 1978 air supply truck. Next year they will need a p/u truck and fire marshal's vehicle, tentatively. In the 5th year they need to replace the snorkel truck. They need to replace five bay doors. Funding has not been allocated for that. They need to replace four bay heaters; funding has been allocated for that. They need roofs for both stations; that funding was allocated through Better Place funds. They are able to do many things thanks to fire impact funds. They plan to purchase an emergency generator with grant funds; they currently share one with the PD. Per the question, the PD needs to purchase a similar generator for their department. You cannot power both stations on one generator. Parking lot improvements & repairs, training maze renovation, replacement of kitchen cabinets & floor tiles, windows and air handlers are on the capital improvements list; some are funded, some are not. The purchase of a station alerting system allows them to comply with an ISO recommendation. They rate a community's fire protection class from 1 – 10. Palatka's ISO rating is a Class 5, the best in the County. They need to replace five pagers and two mobile radios every year, and need three more Nextels. His computer needs to be replaced. Most of the equipment & tools are being funded through fire impact fees. He has two part-time secretaries; one volunteer and one Experience Works person. Eventually they would like to add a full-time secretary, and one engine company which means adding two positions per shift per station in 05-06 and a third person for both a ladder and engine company in 06-07, to meet the recommendations in the Fire Services Study. They cannot add three firefighters to Kay Larkin this year unless they get some funding from the County. He was able to come up with funding for all but \$12,000 for six reserve firefighter positions, which would mean five more personnel on every day. If they can cut a deal with the County, they can have six on, which would be better. Due to vacations, one person is out almost every day. Through yesterday morning they are averaging 7.6 fire calls per day. They are now documenting all fire vehicle responses. False alarms went up 52% last year, mostly in commercial buildings. They are working with Chief Getchell on the false alarm ordinance. People need a financially punitive incentive in order to get their systems fixed and maintained. Mayor Flagg said the ordinance needs to be available to the public well in advance of its adoption and should be placed on the website.

Streets & Maintenance Department – Bernard Williams presented his budget for 2003-04 (filed). He was not able to get funding for a new dump truck, but was able to get funding for a used ½ ton pickup to replace a 1979 model. His plan includes funds for new mowers, weeders and edgers, cones, barricades, and metal sidewalk forms & stakes. He requested two permanent employees to replace what were temporary employee positions,

which was funded. He discussed his capital outlay plan for 2003 – 06. (filed). Per questions, the Davis Lake pump was rebuilt. The smaller green back-up pump is there in case the main pump fails, and on a very heavy rain, the primary pump won't handle all the water. As long as the line remains clear, it handles most rains. Per the question, the secondary pump doesn't have to left sitting there all the time, but if lightning hits the main pump you need to have the pump there for back-up. It is not practical to haul it out there every time it rains. The only other thing they could do is bring the hole up level with the rest of the ground, but that is not feasible. Water comes into that intersection from all four directions. The water collects there and comes up very fast; it floods into houses and the road becomes impassable. This solution was designed by an engineer and usually keeps up with the water collection. It pumps the water through a pipe, which ends up in the underpass. Discussion ensued on the practicality of leaving the back-up pump there all the time. Mr. Bush said it has a quick-connect on it and could probably be taken back to the Lot between uses. The primary pump has failed once due to a lightning strike in the last six months. Per the question, the drains are cleaned weekly, but build up still occurs. When it rains, the rain washes everything into the drains from all directions, including sand, pines needles, leaves and garbage. This happens on 15th Street, also. When it rains, on-call personnel are sent to clean out the drains. Per the question, Mr. Bush said that is how every city in the state has to do it; there is no way to mechanically move pine needles off of a grate. There is no other solution. It is much better now than it used to be. Mayor Flagg said they should all put their rain gear on and visit these sites the next time it rains.

Mr. Williams said his budget includes a list of streets to overlay with Better Place Funds. Per the question, the sidewalk crew also takes care of the brick streets. The rains wash out brick streets. He would like to overlay some of the brick streets; they are just hard to maintain. There is a maintenance program on them. Mr. Bush said they used to take up the streets and relay them. Now they go in where there is a 'sink' and level them out. Most people don't want to see brick streets overlain. Mayor Flagg said most people are tired of the brick streets and the wear and tear on their cars. Mr. Bush said last year the Commission was focusing more on street cleaning, so there are now two extra people in the department dedicated to that. If the personnel were available to keep up with the leveling of the brick streets, there would be no problem. Mr. Williams said he could dedicate personnel to fix the 'sinks', but that is a quick fix; when a line begins to leak or the rainy seasons begin, the problem will reoccur. Mr. Bush said they are fixing sidewalks and streets in addition to maintaining r/w's and picking up trash on the side of the road. They added two personnel last year, but still only have 11 people maintaining the entire city, which is growing. It is almost impossible to keep up with it all. They have a prison crew that almost exclusively does sidewalks. Mr. Williams should probably request another crew. Mayor Flagg said they need to devise a color-coded map inventory of streets showing ages and conditions in order to justify the prioritization of the streets receiving attention. Mr. Williams should be able to show them his system. Mr. Williams said he takes a list of streets to the City Manager and they go over it together before it is presented to the Commission. It is usually based on condition and not age. Per the question, street overlays are coordinated with W&S line replacement, and these concerns are factored into the street improvement lists. Per the question, 12th from St. Johns to Reid Street is not included on the list, but this is not a complete list; these are just the worst. This is what is available for the current year. Next year they may be able to pick up that street. The same applies to the sidewalk replacement list. Commissioner Brown said the sidewalks at Oak & S. 13th Street really need attention. On the whole, sidewalks are looking better. Commissioner Norwood said kids are walking in the streets in the 'weed & seed' area, and they are trying to correct some of that behavior. Without sidewalks, they are training another generation to walk in the street. There are very sidewalks in that area. He wants to see the new sidewalk plan. Mr. Bush said they can put that all into one map and distribute it. As to drainage, Mr. Williams said they plan to replace the ditch on Madison Street with a closed drainage system using a CDBG grant. Commissioner Norwood said they need to close those open sewers as soon as possible as he sees people in that ditch digging worms all the time. Per conversation, Commissioner Brown asked that the holding pond at the train station be improved with landscaping and a covered picnic area. There are grants available for that.

Cemeteries Department – Larry Hartman presented his budget and 5-year capital outlay plan (filed). Nothing has changed since last year on the 5-year plan. He would like to add a part-time receptionist to answer phones and deal with the public. Mr. Bush suggested an Experience Works worker for that. This year to date he has sold 90 lots. Most other cemeteries are just about sold out so lot sales are really starting to increase. He has sold 650 lots in Oak Hill West since opening it, there are around 2,232 remaining. The new addition will contain around 2,275 lots. This should suffice for the next 15 – 20 years. He has sold 24 lots in the Baby section at OHW and has 132 remaining. In West View cemetery there are no lots for sale, and Oak Hill has around 75 left to sell. He is in the process of taking bids to renovate his building at Oak Hill. He has been having some problem with getting reasonable bids for this work, which is why some of it has not yet been performed with funds budgeted for this year's improvements. He has another \$15,000 budgeted for next year. Mr. Bush said they have completed the asbestos study and architectural engineering. The \$15,000 is to strip out the carpet and replace it and to renovate the old projection room for a lounge for the men. The outside will have to be addressed later. They didn't have \$45,000 to do it all at once. Eventually they will have a reception area with maps and a computer for lot sales. They have a good start on the computer listing on prior burials. It is almost ready to be transferred to diskette. Commissioner Norwood said he would like to sit down and look at a Master Plan for the building improvements, as they want to have a first-class operation there. Mr. Bush said there are funds restricted for use for cemetery development and they will begin to improve the addition this year with some \$20,000 of those funds. The surveying is completed. Commissioner Brown said the building should be a priority; they won't sell out Oak Hill West in the next year or two. The Commission concurred. As to the cemetery rules, they need to be posted on the building after the renovation or on a separate signboard. The Palm Avenue fence should be readjusted just as it is on the west side, and the entryway should be paved for at least the first 150 – 200 feet.

City Seal - Commissioner Brown said she would like to have the barge removed and replaced with a paddle wheel boat as seals are replaced.

Parks Department – Jeff Norton presented his 2003-04 budget and 5-year capital outlay plan (filed). He said new parks and facilities are necessary to accommodate growth, and grants are going to be the key to those. They need to develop a park on the north and west ends, as well as a riverfront development at the end of 9th Street. This year they have created a transportation hub at the old Train Depot. His last year's five-year plan as submitted still stands. He is adding two laborers in 2004-05 in anticipation of developing a new park. He now has an inmate crew and a regular crew of four. He has budgeted for new mowers, replacement park equipment, and will need a new prison crew van in 2005-06. Grants for the renovation of City Hall, Price Martin Center and the Museum have been submitted. The new pump-out station is up and running. Commissioner Brown thanked Mr. Norton for all the grants he has secured for the City these past two years. It takes a lot of time and energy to secure those, and they are all grateful. Per the questions, there is still a lot of use of the baseball fields for Cap & Cactus leagues, girl's softball, Babe Ruth Baseball, YMCA baseball & soccer leagues, etc. In 2005-06 they will be looking at restrooms and renovation of the basketball courts at Hank Bryan Park.

Commissioner Brown said in September they will be hosting the NEFLC Dinner Meeting, and she would like to organize a tour for those who can come an hour early. Mr. Mario Taylor, the new DEP director, will be calling on Mr. Bush for a meeting, and she would like Mr. Bush to pull together all the people that he would be dealing with in for that meeting, such as the tax assessor, GP people, etc. She'd like to have a nice reception for him.

Mayor Flagg asked if there is a universal plan for planning for future staffing requirements for each department so that they will have a tool to use for projecting future personnel needs. Department heads shouldn't have to be in a defensive mode to justify staff needs. Mr. Bush said there is no standard. Most other cities have more staff to work with, but here in Palatka, employees wear many hats and do more than one job. The City can certainly use more people, but he knows of no formula for determining future staff needs. The staff at City Hall is smaller now than it was 20 years ago due to budget constraints. Some of the other departments have also decreased in size. Every

department can use additional help. You also need available workspace for more personnel. He can look at similar sized cities and see what their personnel figures are. Mayor Flagg said they don't need surprises; they need forewarning. It is just like a rotation plan for vehicles, or projected inventory needs. Mr. Bush said the City is constrained by lack of money. Vehicle use is different for each department; some vehicles last longer depending on the department. A good gauge for determining vehicle life is maintenance costs. All vehicles are on a preventative maintenance schedule. Per the question, Chief Getchell said their routine maintenance is let out for bid. Consensus was to include all city vehicles in on one fleet maintenance contract, instead of each department going to a different provider. Chief Getchell said the Ford Dealership does his fleet maintenance, as most of his vehicles are Fords.

Per Mayor Flagg's question, all employees received a 5% raise across the board. Mayor Flagg asked how Mr. Bush intends to handle raises for Commissioners. Mr. Bush said they are preparing an ordinance to give them a 3% or CPI up to 5%. Increases for employees are based on salary surveys. Mayor Flagg said the Commission gave back their raises last year in order to give each employee a raise, whether they had topped out or not. They don't like to deal with this issue. Most officials' salaries are set by another entity, such as the Legislature. They have to set their own. Some people think they should be volunteers. He represents the City seven days a week. The commission does not need to be shy about what they think they are worth. It doesn't need to be talked about every year. They need to be compensated for representing the City. Anyone with a problem with this can come ride with him. This city is on the verge of growth and they are meeting with committees and agencies every day. Palatka is the center of everything that goes on in this county and they are expected to appear at many functions. They don't just meet at City Hall twice a month and come in once a week to get the mail. They are all spread very thin.

Commissioner Brown asked if they can use the Mayor's office if they need to meet with people who come in from time to time. Mayor Flagg said his office is everyone's office.

The Clerk asked them to set a time for the called meeting on July 10. This meeting was called to deal with some Planning Department issues. Consensus was to set the meeting for 5:00 p.m. on July 10, 2003.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m. upon a motion by Commissioner Brown.

CITY CLERK

MAYOR