

Clearwater Neighborhood Coalition (CNC)

Meeting Minutes Monday August 6, 2018

Clearwater Fire Training Center Conference Room

1. President Karen Cunningham called the meeting to order at 7:15
2. Self introductions
3. Officer Reports
  - a. Secretary – Minutes of June 4, 2018 were posted to the web site. On motion by JoAnna Siskin the minutes were approved as posted.
  - b. Treasurer – Dough Williams – Report covers the period May 31 to July 31. Ending balance in the operating account is \$3872.29. The Coalition Foundation balance is \$4739.04. On motion by Howard Warshauer the report approved. Mr. Williams encouraged members to buy a Coalition shirt for a discounted price of \$10.00
  - c. Vice President Report – no membership update.
  - d. President Report: Very busy two months
    - i. Update on Strong Mayor Forum joint project with the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County. They have agreed to run the forum the end of September. Currently trying to locate a neutral moderator for the meeting which has been tentatively scheduled for September 25. This would be an educational forum that would be open to all members of the public.
    - ii. David Lillesand reported the CNC's Strong Mayor subcommittee has been meeting weekly on Sunday evenings to monitor the activities of the City Appointed Task Force to write an amendment to the City Charter to implement a Strong Mayor form of government.
      1. A brief summary of the changes was handed out to the group. Last week the Council on first reading approved placing the revised document on the November ballot by vote of 3 to 2.
      2. The salaries were reviewed noting that the current Mayor of Clearwater makes less than a person who cleans hotel rooms in Tampa.
      3. Most of the responsibilities of the existing City Manager will be switched over to the Mayor.
      4. Questions:
        - a. In response to a question Mr. Lillesand reported that the NAACP is very interested in switching to Council districts rather than Councilmembers elected City wide. A Charter Review Committee will be appointed in 2019 as required by the City Charter. That group will likely consider Council member districts instead of seats elected city wide.
        - b. One member was offended by the use of the term "weak mayor" for the existing form of government. Technically the current form is Council-Manager form of government. The so-

called Strong Mayor form of government is actually the Mayor-Council form.

- c. With there still be a City Manager in the Mayor-Council form of government? There will be an experienced Chief Administrative Officer that will be hired and fired by the Mayor under the proposed Mayor-Council form of government.
- d. What is the rush for this November? This is a major change and have seen other Cities have taken a lot longer to consider the change. The concern was expressed for the citizens fully understanding the change. What is the plan to educate the public? That is part of the reason to have a forum with the LWV. The NAACP has already had a forum on this issue.
- e. Does the proposal have the endorsement of the City Council? The Council voted 3 to 2 at first reading on August second to put the Strong Mayor on the November ballot. A second reading will take the final action on Tuesday August 14<sup>th</sup>.

- iii. Ms. Cunningham explained that the Strong Mayor subcommittee was an experiment to address issues that can't be covered in the regular CNC meetings. She felt the process was very successful. She invited the group to think about other areas that could benefit from the subcommittee/study group process.

#### 4. Monthly Reports

- a. Police Liaison – Officer Raniel Heredia introduced himself as replacing Officer Hippolite and supporting the Hispanic Outreach Center. He has been with CPD for five years.
  - i. The major new crime pattern is commercial vehicle burglaries from lawn care, cable and even City maintenance vehicles. They are using stolen cars and is occurring in all three districts. Need to keep vehicles locked and closed. Wallets, cell phone, guns, and equipment has been taken.
  - ii. Otherwise always an issue with unlocked regular vehicles. June had 72 unlocked (or not forced entry) July 96 cases were reported and 79 were left unlocked. For the year 79% of vehicle burglaries were unlocked.
  - iii. Residential unlocked or open windows in June had 5 and in July it was 16. These are crimes of opportunity.
  - iv. Vehicle thefts in June 29 thefts and were 19 where the keys were left in the vehicle. July had 19 and only 10 had the keys left in the vehicle.
- b. Clearwater Neighborhood Coordinator – Lawrence Young
  - i. Neighborhoods Day is tentatively scheduled for late February
  - ii. Citizens Academy will start September 4<sup>th</sup>. Notifications will be going out soon.
  - iii. The Council selected the Drew Street Complete Street Option B
  - iv. Neighborhoods can ask for City staff to attend neighborhood meetings on request through Mr. Young.
  - v. Imagine Clearwater Coachman Park Improvements will be the subject of two public meetings on August 21 Main Library) and 22 (Countyside Library)

- vi. Ms. Cunningham asked about a City information sub-station at the Countryside Rec/Library. The City is considering some kind of a rack and board. Not sure of staffing.

5. CNC Committee Reports

- a. Public Relations Committee Report – Ms. Agnew and Mary Ellen Landsburg have been working on this. They will be official greeters at our meetings. Ms. Agnew asked how many people say the announcement in the *Bacon* Community paper. Will be putting that in the paper every week.
- b. Skycrest Neighborhood Storage Facility rezoning report: The appeal was taken to the County Commission where the final decision was not what the neighborhood desired. Ms. Cunningham stated that the CNC will support neighborhoods. She further reported that the CNC went to the City Budget meeting and received a commitment that they will look into specific requests for assistance that we may need.
- c. Skycrest Neighborhood passed on the appreciation to the City for applying for the Complete Street grant and moving so far with the design.

6. **Guest Speaker – Deputy City Manager Jill Silverboard – Fiscal year 2018-2019 City budget development**

- a. Ms. Silverboard has been with the City of Clearwater for about over 10 years and has worked with seven different cities during her 30-year municipal career. She oversees the operating departments including the Finance and Budget Office.
- b. A one-page summary of the proposed General Fund budget was distributed at the meeting. The General Fund includes most of the public safety services, parks, recreation, library, streets, and urban forestry.
- c. The City staff is currently considering a 15% increase in the millage rate. This is the first increase in nine years.
- d. The City portion of every dollar of property taxes the city's portion will be 29 cents. Last year it was 24 cents.
- e. Property taxes only pay 49% of the total General Fund.
- f. About one half of the properties in Clearwater are homesteaded. There is also a Save our Homes Cap that limits the amount of assessment increase in any one year. This coming year it is 2.1% max increase.
- g. The average taxable value of a home in Clearwater is values at \$111,452. Based on this value the City taxes are \$575 with the proposed millage increase, you would be paying \$103.10 more based on Council's proposed millage increase.
- h. The 0.8 mills increase for the City of Clearwater will generate a little over \$13 million.
- i. Why increase the millage?
  - i. We use a General Fund model that projects costs for existing level of services and facilities for a 10 year forecast.
  - ii. The City's savings account is pretty much depleted at this point. We have a minimum reserve requirement of 8.5%. This is about half what an average general fund is. We get to do this because we have a Central Insurance Fund that has a cash balance that can be used if needed.

- iii. About one half of that or \$6.5 is proposed to go into the saving account because we are at the 8.5%. We are worried that we don't have anything over our minimum reserve. Over the last couple of years we have spent a little over \$11 million out of the general fund reserve account.
- iv. The other half will be used to offset the decreases in other revenues and will cover additional staffing and costs. Including the new Morningside Recreational Center, the just completed the opening of the new East Community Library that requires the City to match College operating hour. We do have 4% built into the budget that will cover personal costs (salaries, benefits and insurance).
- v. It doesn't have to be 0.8 mills increase, the revenue model would allow to cut that increase in half to pay for all those things in the coming year. The concern is that would have to come back later and do the other half. In talking about this staff is recommending do the 0.8. There is an option there for them.
- j. Two public hearings 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of September prior to adoption.
- k. There is a proposed amendment to the State Constitution that proposes a third Homestead exemption. This will mean less money for the General fund. Expect it to pass. This would cost the City about \$1.5 million if it passes.
- l. 62% of what you pay for in the budget are people because we are in the service business.
- m. We do a citizen satisfaction survey every couple of years. I ask you to participate in that in the future as a report card for city council on how well we are doing or not doing. Will have one coming up in 2019.
- n. Questions:
  - i. Q: How does the 5.9550 millage compare to other cities. A: With the 0.8 millage increase, it will move Clearwater from the 7<sup>th</sup> highest to the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest in Pinellas County.
  - ii. Q: Does the 'road millage' include sidewalks. A: Yes. Q: Does it cover bike paths? A: No, it could be used for that, but generally use Penny for Pinellas for trails. We try to resurface all roads every 12 years.
  - iii. Q: How many people (FTE's) were added this year last year and the year before that? A: Coming year it is less than one, this year it was 24 (but not all general fund) and the year before it was 30 to 40 positions. This includes people adds in the enterprise funds.
  - iv. Q: What are the other revenue source names mean?
    1. Intergovernmental is state shared revenue on gasoline and sales tax
    2. Charges for Services: Building permits, rec cards, classes
    3. Transfers In: Generally, are payments from our enterprise funds and utility funds that pay the General Fund that pay the general fund to provide internal services like Human Resources.
    4. Other taxes: telecommunications tax,
    5. Other revenue: fines and forfeitures

- v. Q: Did you plan and budget for the likely passage of the Homestead Exemption additional exemption? A: We propose a portion of the 0.8 would cover that \$1.5 million loss.
- vi. Q: Why isn't the City having to provide School Resource Officers in every school. Will some schools not have armed guards? A: The School Board will be providing additional "guardians." As a result, Clearwater will not have to provide police officers in the Elementary schools. Guardians are trained armed personnel, but they do not have arrest powers like a police officer. They are currently already in place.
- vii. Q: Would you address the questions that were sent to you in advance of this meeting?
  - i. Q: How does the City plan to address the Coalitions May 7, 2018 request for increased neighborhood outreach?

**As reflected in the meeting minutes for May 7<sup>th</sup>, the City Council took no action nor provided any direction to the City staff to follow-up on the subject beyond our current allocation of one employee to neighborhood service. Further conversation on August 2<sup>nd</sup> also did not result in City Council support for additional City staff resources for neighborhoods outreach or programming beyond our current resources.**

- ii. How does the Budget respond to the citizen concerns reported in the Clearwater Community Survey last summer?
  1. Lowest performing responses City wide
  2. Geographic disparity between various segments of the City

**Former Cm Jonson raised this question to City Council at the November 17, 2017 Worksession. City Council provided no specific direction to the City staff to follow-up on the subject. However, the neighborhoods in question were identified prior to the survey and are addressed in various City and County initiatives and programs. For example, there is currently specific focus on Lake Belleview/South Greenwood area for neighborhood stabilization and improvement focus.**

- iii. Of the millage increase, how many mills are needed to offset the potential passage of the additional \$25,000 homestead increase? If that does not pass this November, would the City reduce that millage the following year?

**The estimated loss of revenue estimated for Clearwater, based on 2017 values, is approximately \$1.5 million per year, which would equate to .14 mills.**

- iv. The Imagine Clearwater Stantec plan estimates \$52 million over a 65-month period. The proposed fiscal year 2018/2019 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) includes \$8 million of funding from Penny IV in FY 20 and FY 21. Additionally, the funded Capital project ENGF180013 has an unencumbered balance of \$5,568,577. What is the funding plan for the rest of the project?

**City Council has not yet addressed the funding for Imagine Clearwater. The design documents are currently at only 15% and there are planned community meetings to discuss the proposed elements and scope before City Council will determine what to build, when to build it and how to pay for it.**

- v. The recently approved “term sheet” for the upgrade of the Phillies complex at Carpenter and Spectrum Field called for the City to contribute \$16 million.
  - 1. The Budget CIP plan shows Penny IV spending of \$10.5 million for Carpenter Field Complex, Spectrum Field, Ross Norton Bar Fields, Frank Tack Park, Countryside Sports Complex, Joe DiMaggio Sports Complex, E.C. Moore Complex, and McMullen Tennis Complex.
  - 2. What is the funding source for the difference between the \$16 and \$10.5 million?

**A funding source for the difference has not been defined, but City Council is aware of the shortfall in planned funding.**

- 3. How will planned improvements for the other athletic facilities be funded?

**This is part of the same conversation City Council has yet to have to determine how to fund the original planned scope of projects in Penny IV given a proposed higher funding commitment to the Phillies Projects. City Council is aware of the shortfall and the need to address in a revised Penny IV schedule.**

- vi. The preliminary budget book reports that the City pension will be funded above the required actuarially required contribution rate of 10.69% by \$2.7 Million.

- 1. How much of this increase impacts the General Fund?

**Approximately \$1,750,000, in one-time available dollars (This is not a recurring cost or benefit to the General Fund)**

And what is the millage equivalent of that general fund impact for FY 2019?

**Approximately 0.16 mills**

- 2. How many years is this supplemental funding level anticipated in the City’s 10-year sustainability plan?

**There is no supplemental funding assumed in the 10-year plan other than Fiscal Year 2019. Pension plan contributions are budgeted at expected actuarially required levels. We review actuarial results each year. However, if future pension investment earnings exceed expectations and reduce the required contribution, we consider it prudent to contribute a portion of the savings toward the reserve balance for future market downturns, as we are**

**doing for Fiscal Year 2019. The pension estimate in the 10-year plan is only escalated by estimated percentage of wage growth.**

o. Additional Audience Questions

- i. Q: This year will spend more on Parks and Rec than Fire Safety and in the seven years the police budget has gone up a little under 21% fire has gone up 25% and the Park and Rec has gone up 53.6%. I know that it went up because of Morning Side but there must be more? A: The Parks and Rec Department is also responsible for many of the responsibilities of Public Works functions: streets and sidewalks, pot hole repairs, urban forestry. So there is more than just Parks and Rec Centers. A lot of that more is the result of reassignment of costs centers to the Parks and Rec Department. Also includes beach guards.
- ii. Q: Where did the money come from to move City Hall to the Bank of America Building and what was that cost? A: There was a budget amendment that just happened in June that provided for that cost. It actually will save money over staying in the building. We had some monies set aside for replacing carpet and elevator repairs and other things. The only direct costs initially will be moving. It doesn't entail moving furniture, so it is a fairly small dollar amount. We will be able to take the new chiller that was recently installed at City Hall.

7. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.