

CATHERINE D. ROBINSON  
MAYOR

JOHN ROGERS  
VICE-MAYOR

DR. ALVIN B. JACKSON, JR  
CITY MANAGER



**COMMISSIONERS:**

TONYA GORDON

TINA-MARIE SCHULTZ

PETE YOUNG

**BUNNELL CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MINUTES:  
COMMISSION ADVANCE**

**Friday, January 26, 2024**

**Commission Advance- Vince Carter Sanctuary**

301 Justice Ln., Building G, Bunnell 32110

8:00 AM

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**A. 8:00 AM- Breakfast**

**B. Call Meeting to Order and Roll Call**

Mayor Robinson opened the meeting at 8:53 AM and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**Present:** Mayor Catherine D. Robinson; Commissioner Tonya Gordon; Commissioner Tina-Marie Schultz; Commissioner Pete Young; City Attorney Paul Waters; City Manager Alvin B. Jackson; Finance Director Kristi Moss; Infrastructure Director Dustin Vost; Community Development Director Joe Parsons; City Engineer Marcu DePasquale; Chief David Brannon; City Clerk Kristen Bates; IT Senior Analyst Donnie Wines

**Excused:** Vice Mayor Johns Rogers

**Members of Public:** Justin White; Daisy Henry; Shannon Martin

**C. Presentation**

**C.1. Welcome (City Manager)**

City Manager Jackson welcomed all to the Advance and provided an overview of the day. He stressed the importance of this event and how it helps the City prepare for the upcoming year.

*Note: Items C2 and C3 as published on the Agenda were swapped for order of presentation*

**C.3. Development Fees (Community Development)**

Community Development Direct Parsons went through a presentation discussing department responsibilities, differences between the Planning and Building divisions and the creation of the Building Fund in this fiscal year.

There was discussion by all about the current fees; they are too low to cover the department costs. The City is looking at almost a 50% proposed increase in the development fees. This may not be enough to cover the costs and annual increases may need to be looked at in the future. Commission Schultz asked if a 65% increase was possible to avoid bringing the item back every year.

It was stressed these fees are not paid by the existing tax base but are fees paid by developers coming into the City with projects. In order to reduce review times, additional

staff are needed, but to hire more staff, higher fees are needed. The City analysis looked at 20 other cities.

Shannon Martin (Grand Reserve) asked how often this type of study is completed and if there was a marketing plan in place to bring in more development. Staff advised, this is the first study in on these fees in about 10 years and the City cannot create a marketing plan yet as the infrastructure needed to support development needs to be in place first. The City is working on expanding the infrastructure now, but a market plan cannot be created and implemented until the City is ready for the growth with the right infrastructure.

Daisy Henry (Drain Street) asked about bringing in more fast food places and about well projects. Staff advised we need the infrastructure in place before marketing to fast food businesses and discussed the well projects planned for this year.

## **C.2. Developer Question and Answer Panel**

The following professionals served on the panel: Charlie Faulkner; Bob Porter; Helga Van Eckert. They were presented with questions about the development process, regulations encountered and the development in Bunnell experience.

### What makes Bunnell desirable for development?

- Staff- their ability to be accommodating and approachable; being able to develop relationships with staff
- Location; connection with agriculture; amount of land available for development
- Not Palm Coast or St. Johns County who both seem to put up barriers for development

### What Federal and State regulatory issues/obstacles do businesses encounter when developing?

- The time it takes to get State or Federal Permits; example given was the 404 permit for Commerce Parkway taking two years to extend and an FDOT permit taking over a year
- Costs to develop in floodplains

### What challenges do developers encounter in Bunnell?

- Availability of utilities; need to stay putting utilities in place to support the businesses coming into the City
- Review times; need to reduce review times or reduce the layers of approvals required
- The Land Development Code needs more flexibility to apply across a wide range of projects
- Staff needs training on apply common sense to the codes rather than black and white applications of codes
- Need a balanced tax base; there are many exemptions applied to parcels in the City; non-residential growth needs to be at a higher growth rate than residential

### What can developers do to assist municipalities with limited resources?

- Be open to public/private partnerships
- Assist with connecting the government entity with media partners to share project information; be at the podium to share project information during outreach efforts
- Help explore new revenue streams

### Why are Community Develop Districts (CDDs) created and what is their role in residential development?

- CDDs are allowed by Statute as a way to finance parts of the subdivision infrastructure and amenities; they are held to the same meeting and sunshine requirements of government and must adopt budgets based on the community needs/expenses
- Buyers are advised of CDDs at closing, but often forget about them until the tax bill is received
- Eventually after a number of years, the CDD will be turned over to the residents

#### **C.4. Police Department**

Chief Brannon spoke about the changes within the Police Department over the last year. Included in the presentation was a snapshot of crime statics and the events and community activities the Bunnell Police Department had participated in. He also reviewed the progress on the Police Department Strategic Plan.

There was discussion about the City's camera system and whether the Police Department can gain access to business community cameras or even a resident's security cameras to better judge what they may be walking into for a call for service. Commissioner Schultz asked about any restrictions or regulations on JAG grants.

#### **C.5. BREAK FOR LUNCH**

#### **C.6. City Finance Update & New Administration/PD Complex**

Finance Director Moss provided a summary overview of the City's financial information and budgets. An overview of each of the City's funds was included in the presentation. The City's funds are CRA, Debt Service, Impact Fees in the General Fund, Water, Water Impact Fees, Sewer, Sewer Impact Fees, Solid Waste, Building Department and General Fund.

The City needs to start planning for Fiscal Year 2024/2025 now; there are a number of obligations the City has committed to such as increased funding to the Police Department or out of the City's control like FRS and Insurance rates. There are bills gaining traction in the legislature now which may affect the revenue coming into the General Fund like the additional homestead exemption and eliminating local business tax receipts.

An overview of the new Administration/Police Department Complex was given. The brick program suggested by Commissioner Schultz was built into the proposed landscaping and estimates for a program started. Commissioner Schultz would like to see the brick program completed with the building, not installed afterwards.

#### **C.7. Master Utility Plan and Project Updates**

Infrastructure Director Vost gave a presentation on the Master Utility Plan projects and other projects currently going on within the City.

There was discussion about using water towers to help expand service areas.

Sara Spear from the Army Corp of Engineers provided an update on the stormwater study being conducted for the City. Problems identified so far are flooding across the City, undersized culverts and failing existing structures. Once the study is completed, it will help the City with funding opportunities just like the Master Utility Plan has.

#### **C.8. Bunnell A Look Back (City Manager)**

City Manager Jackson gave a presentation about the strides the City has been making over the last several years. A comparison of the SWOT Analysis from 2018 and 2022 was shown. He commended the Commission for making sound policy decisions based on the plans and studies adopted by the City and for the difficult decisions they have faced over the

last several years while recognizing that providing the high level of services offered by the City come at a price.

An update on the Land Development Code re-write was provided; the City is taking it one chapter at a time. The status of the Flagler Playhouse rebuild was discussed.

The City Manager stated the City is getting close to being able to start Visioning workshops, but we need to be further along with having infrastructure ready.

Mayor Robinson advised she received a call from Flagler County Commissioner Pennington regarding the old Court House. The private school will be moving out after this year and the fear is the County may try to demolish the building. Commissioner Young asked if the County would sell or give it to the City. Commissioner Gordon reported the Historical Society is doing their due diligence on the condition of the building and how best the building might be used. The Mayor would like to see the City take over and manage the building. Whatever is done, a new facility assessment will be needed to see what if any issues exist with the entire structure.

**D. End Session**

**Motion:** Adjourn

**Motion by:** Commissioner Schultz

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Young

**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously



Catherine D. Robinson, Mayor



Kristen Bates, CMC, City Clerk

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Date

2/12/2014  
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Date

**\*\*The City adopts summary minutes. Audio files in official City records are retained according to the Florida Department of State GS1-SL records retention schedule\*\***