

CITY OF CLEWISTON
Regular Commission Meeting and Final Budget Hearing
September 18, 2023

The Clewiston City Commission held its Regular Commission Meeting and Final Budget Hearing in the City Hall Commission Chambers Monday, September 18, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor James Pittman. Mayor Pittman led those present in the reciting of the Lord's Prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioners Present: Mayor James Pittman, Vice Mayor Greg Thompson, Commissioner Barbara Edmonds, Commissioner Mali Gardner and Commissioner Hillary Hyslope.

Personnel Present: City Manager Randy Martin, Finance Director Shari Howell, Police Chief Thomas Lewis, Community Development Director/Fire Chief Travis Reese, Director of Operations Danny Williams, Assistant Utilities Director Lynne Mila, Consulting Engineer Andy Tilton and IT Administrator Justin Lucas. City Attorney Dylan Brandenburg attended via telephone.

Visitors Present: Kevin McCarthy and Jerry Cochrane

Additions/Deletions/Changes and Approval of the Agenda – There were no additions, deletions or changes to the agenda.

Public Comments – Resident Kevin McCarthy of 1011 Ponce de Leon Avenue came forward to request policy clarification on field use of Sugarland Park and distributed a handout for the Commission to review. He stated that about 5 years ago through an agreement between the City and the School Board, the School Board started paying \$50,000 a year to the City for high school sports to use their facilities. For the last two years, the City started charging for the golf teams to use range balls which he feels should be covered under the \$50,000. If it's not, he'd like that to be clarified. He then mentioned that the soccer league spent \$18,000 on goals and his understanding is that should be used with the recreation assessment for capital items which he's still paying for on his utility bill. He asked if there has been a policy change. Commissioner Gardner thanked Mr. McCarthy for three very good points and stated that with the City's new recreation advisory board it's the perfect opportunity to address these issues at their first meeting on Thursday, September 21, 2023 in the Commission Chambers at City Hall.

Resident Jerry Cochrane of 219 Ridgewood Avenue came forward to inquire about RV's and trailers parked in front yards which is a violation of city ordinance. He had also brought this subject up a year ago to the commission and was told they would need to study it. He does not understand why the need to study enforcing an ordinance. City Manager Martin stated that discussions did happen but with budget meetings, it was put aside for further consideration. Commissioner Gardner stated that she looked up the ordinance and said that trailers/RV's are allowed but must meet a setback requirement. Vice Mayor Thompson asked that the City Manager put it on the next workshop and with the help of Code Enforcement Officer Debbie Clay, a decision can be made.

1. Consent Agenda

- A. *City Commission Special Meeting Minutes – July 31, 2023*
- B. *Resolution No. 2023-079 – approves Hendry County Library Cooperative Long Range Plan 2024-2028 and Annual Plan of Service 2023-2024*
- C. *Resolution No. 2023-080 – approves the State Aid to Libraries Grant Agreement and Certification of Hours, Free Library Service and Access to Materials Between the State of Florida, Department of State and the City of Clewiston*
- D. *Resolution No. 2023-081 – approves the distribution of \$6,089.86 of FY 2021 Edward Byrne Memorial JAG Program funds for Hendry County projects*
- E. *Resolution No. 2023-082 – approves the MOU with the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office*
- F. *Resolution No. 2023-083 – Lakeside Equipment Emergency Purchase*

Commissioner Gardner made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hyslope, to approve the Consent Agenda. Vote 5 yeas, 0 nays

PUBLIC HEARING

2. **Final Public Hearing of the FY 2023-2024 Budget – 5:05 p.m.** (A copy of the FY 2023-2024 Tentative Budget was a part of the September 7, 2023 City Commission Tentative Millage & Budget Hearing Agenda and can be viewed on the City's website or a copy may be obtained from the Finance Department.)

- A. **Resolution No. 2023-084** – Resolution No. 2023-084 adopts a millage rate for the levy of ad valorem taxes for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. The proposed millage rate is 6.5314 mills.

Mayor Pittman opened the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Final Budget Hearing. He read Resolution No. 2023-084 by title and stated the proposed tax on all property located within the City is at the rate of 6.5314 mills for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 which represents a 6.99% increase over the 6.1047 rolled-back millage rate.

Commissioner Hyslope made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Edmonds, to approve Resolution No. 2023-084. Vote 3 yeas, 2 nays (Vice Mayor Thompson and Commissioner Gardner voted nay.)

- B. **Resolution No. 2023-085** – Resolution No. 2023-085 adopts the budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.

Mayor Pittman stated the total of the proposed capital and operating budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 is \$47,302,180. He then asked for public comments. None were heard. Mayor Pittman read Resolution No. 2023-085 by title and asked for discussion.

Commissioner Edmonds made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hyslope, to approve Resolution No. 2023-085. Vote 3 yeas, 2 nays (Vice Mayor Thompson and Commissioner Gardner voted nay.)

C. Resolution No. 2023-086 – Resolution No. 2023-086 adopts the City’s FY2024 Capital Improvement Plans.

Mayor Pittman read Resolution No. 2023-086 by title.

Commissioner Hyslope made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Thompson, to approve Resolution No. 2023-086. Vote 5 yeas, 0 nays

Mayor Pittman closed the Final Budget Hearing.

RESOLUTIONS

- 3. Resolution No. 2023-087** – Resolution No. 2023-087 authorizes the Mayor to execute the Audit and Examination Letters of Engagement from Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC dated August 17, 2023 for professional auditing services, to include the Clewiston Redevelopment Agency.

Mayor Pittman summarized and read Resolution No. 2023-087 by title. He stated the financial impact is \$67,600.

Commissioner Gardner made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Thompson, to approve Resolution No. 2023-087. Vote 5 yeas, 0 nays

- 4. Resolution No. 2023-088** – Resolution No. 2023-088 authorizes the application for a Beautification Grant from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for the installation of 13 Royal Palms in the median of Sugarland Highway from San Luiz Avenue to the western terminus of the city.

Mayor Pittman summarized and read Resolution No. 2023-088 by title. Manager Martin summarized the project and stated that the future plan is to reapply for grant funding for future phases for the installation of additional palms outside the median of the highway once sidewalk improvements in this area are completed.

Commissioner Gardner made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Edmonds, to approve Resolution No. 2023-088. Vote 5 yeas, 0 nays

- 5. Resolution No. 2023-089** – Resolution No. 2023-089 approves the award of the Polymer Meter Box Lid contract to Core and Main and authorizes the city manager to sign the purchase order on behalf of the city.

Consideration of this agenda item was tabled as some of the information for this item was inadvertently omitted from the agenda packet. This item will be added to the agenda for a future meeting.

- 6. Resolution No. 2023-090** – Resolution No. 2023-090 approves the modification to the Phase 2 FDEM Watershed Planning Grant, Contract Number H0878 between the Florida Division of Emergency Management and the City of Clewiston

Mayor Pittman summarized and read Resolution No. 2023-090 by title. Director of Operations Danny Williams stated that this modification is to extend the time for performance to December 31, 2023.

Vice Mayor Thompson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hyslope, to approve Resolution No. 2023-090. Vote 5 yeas, 0 nays

- 6a. Resolution No. 2023-091** – Resolution No. 2023-091 authorizes the Plumbing Services Agreement for the provision of plumbing services for the maintenance and repair for facilities owned by the city.

Mayor Pittman stated that Resolution No. 2023-091 is added to the agenda for consideration as Agenda Item No. 6a. The information for this item was included in the agenda packet but was not listed on the agenda in error. Director of Operations Danny Williams reported that this agreement will be for additional plumbing services to set the rates at less than what the City has been paying for contracted services.

Commissioner Hyslope made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gardner, to approve Resolution No. 2023-091. Vote 5 yeas, 0 nays

MISCELLANEOUS ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 7. Old Business** - Vice Mayor Thompson asked if any action had been taken on his request on the legislative week in Tallahassee. Manager Martin stated that he would be scheduling with legislative staff and the City's lobbyist.

Mayor Pittman reported that the old police station next to City Hall had been rented. Manager Martin stated that they are using the facility on a month to month basis until a short term lease with the DOT sidewalk contractor is drafted.

- 8. Departmental Monthly Activity Reports** – Vice Mayor Thompson suggested the department directors attend the meetings in case the Commission has questions.
- 9. Comments from City Manager** - Manager Martin asked the commission if they were available on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 to schedule the next workshop. The Commission by consensus agreed to schedule the next workshop for Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. to discuss golf cart regulations, RV & trailer regulation issues, adult gaming establishment and mobile food vendor regulations.
- 10. Comments from City Attorney** – There were no comments from Attorney Brandenburg.
- 11. Comments from the City Commission** - Commissioner Edmonds stated that she thinks it was a reasonable budget and is looking forward to the next workshop. Vice Mayor Thompson feels the city is moving in the right direction. Commissioner Hyslope concurs that the city is moving in the right direction and extended a special thank you to Director Howell

and her staff who worked so hard this budget season. Commissioner Gardner expressed concerns regarding some of the new legislative items as time has passed on some of the actions. Manager Martin commented that some of the legislative changes may require modifications to other ordinances for consistency but the city will follow state law until modifications to local regulations are complete. Mayor Pittman was thankful that the city got through the budget process. He thinks next year may be more difficult with a lot of expenses as Clewiston has a lot of amenities that other towns our size do not have. He also echoed thanks to Director Howell and her staff for the hard work on this year's budget. Commissioner Gardner asked about the status of various liens and requested that it be added to the workshop agenda for the September 26th. After discussion, based upon the list of agenda topics, the Commission members by consensus agreed to modify the start time of the September 26, 2023 workshop from 4:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Commissioner Hyslope made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Thompson, to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Vote 5 yeas, 0 nays

James Pittman, Mayor

Mary K. Combass, City Clerk