

A Workshop Meeting of the Apalachicola City Commission was held on Tuesday, August 27, 2024, at 6:00 PM at the Apalachicola Municipal Library, 74 6th Street, Apalachicola, Florida.

Present: Mayor Brenda Ash, Commissioner Adriane Elliott, Commissioner Despina George, Commissioner Duncan, Commissioner Grove, City Manager Travis Wade, Finance Director Lee Mathes, City Clerk Sheneidra Cummings, and Chief Bobby Varnes.

Mayor Ash asked for an Amendment to the agenda to include Public Comment.

Motion to adopt the agenda and to add public comment was made by Commissioner Grove, seconded by Commissioner George. None opposed. Motion carried, 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Michael Richter with Boyd Insurance presented the Commission with a handout and spoke about wanting to obtain the City's business.

Dennis Winterringer commented on the proposed fee schedule, the code enforcement department, cemetery maintenance and the language included in the proposed budget in reference to patriarch tree(s). Mr. Winterringer stated that the language presented in the budget regarding patriarch tree(s) are referenced as "heritage trees" and is not congruent with the City's Ordinance. Mr. Winterringer suggested that the language be congruent to avoid confusion and/or misrepresentation.

Liz Perkins commented on PALS and the role of the non-profit and contribution to the Library department.

No further comment.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Finance Director Lee Mathes presented the Commission with updates to the proposed budget and changes that were made in accordance with the discussion held on August 20th Budget Workshop Meeting. Finance Director Lee Mathes discussed the reductions per department and answered questions presented by the Commissions. Finance Director informed the Commission that an additional \$76,681 from the previous budget presented at the August 20th WS meeting. In regard to the millage rate and how it would affect the budget, Finance Directed stated that If the Commission adopt the tentative millage rate of 9.0 mills, the City's 24-25 FY Budget would be in the positive, \$187, 302. If the City adopts a millage rate of 8.3457, the 24-25 FY Budget would be \$15,458 in the positive; and if the Commission adopts the rollback millage rate of 7.5402, the 24-25 FY Budget would be \$196,097 in the negative.

Discussion held.

Mayor Ash inquired about the Reforestation Fund. Finance Director Mathes informed the Commission that there is not a concrete dollar amount however, she has established a separate fund for reforestation fee(s) and moving forward the funds will remain totally separate and accounted for. May Ash asked Finance Director to discuss the City's sanitation expense and options available.

Finance Director Mathes informed the Commission that if Waste One assumes billing, the City would be relieved of the collection costs and with the current millage rate of 8.3457 mills, the 24-25FY Budget would see even more of an increase and would be \$40, 458 in the positive.

Commissioner Grove commented about the Reforestation Fund and that the City should have an idea of the amount that is supposed to be in the fund based on previous research and calculations conducted by Mr. Winterringer.

Discussion held.

Commissioner George commended Finance Director on her work on the budget. Commissioner George pointed out the deficiencies in 23-24 FY Budget stating various estimates presented were not accurate, projected revenue(s) were overstated, and significant expenses were understated. Commissioner George suggested staying with the current millage rate, analyze existing systems within the City, and determine what is needed and what is not, and make some hard decisions moving forward.

Mayor Ash commended Finance Director for her hard work and dedication exhibited while working on the budget and presenting the Commission with a budget that is based on facts and reflects the City's financial standing. Mayor Ash

Commissioner Grove commented on the proposed facility rental rates, as well as changing the wording from "heritage tree" to patriarch trees to be congruent with the City ordinance.

Commissioner George agreed with the proposed rental rates. No Commissioners opposed the proposed rates.

All Commissioners agreed to move forward with the proposed budget presented at the meeting. No additional changes were recommended by the Commissioners or Staff.

Commissioner George suggested having a workshop & special meeting if needed, to work out any remaining budget issues and specifics in regard to the hospital and interlocal agreement proposal. None opposed.

Mayor Ash confirmed with Board that no additional budget workshops are needed and that a workshop and special meeting would be scheduled for 4:30pm, prior to the 9/3 regular meeting if needed, to further the Interlocal Agreement and hospital issue. The first Budget Hearing was scheduled for September 10, 2024, at 6pm.

Commissioner Grove inquired about the costs to maintain the Johnson Complex and suggested a workshop to discuss alternative options. Mayor Ash shared that she has directed Manager Wade to

research alternative options, locations, and/or funding opportunities including USDA grants and asked Manager Wade to present his finding to the Commission after the budget process has passed.

No further comments.

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Grove, seconded by Commissioner George. None opposed.
Motion carried, 5-0.

Meeting adjourned.

ATTEST:

BRENDA ASH

SHENEIDRA CUMMINGS