

July 16, 2024
5:30 PM

The City Council of the City of Inverness met on the above date in Regular Session at 212 W. Main Street with the following members present:

President Hepfer
Vice President Davis
Councilwoman Bega
Councilwoman Lizanich
Councilman McBride
Mayor Plaisted – *Absent*

Also present were City Manager Williams, City Attorney Hartley, Staff Members, and City Clerk Jackson.

The Invocation was given by Councilman McBride and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by the City Council.

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Councilman McBride motioned to accept the Agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.

PRE-SCHEDULED APPEARANCES

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS / WORKSHOP

5)a) City Council Full Budget Workshop – Public Notice DATE: March 1, 2024

PLEASE BE ADVISED **BUDGET RELATED WORKSHOPS FOR FY 2024/25** ARE CALLED FOR THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF INVERNESS, AT 212 W. MAIN STREET, INVERNESS, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS:

April	2, 2024	5:30pm	Overview Workshop of Projects & Goals
May	7, 2024	5:30pm	Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Workshop
July	16, 2024	5:30pm	City-Wide Budget Workshop
Sept.	3, 2024	5:30pm	Tentative Budget Adoption - 1 st Public Hearing
Sept.	17, 2024	5:30pm	Final Budget Adoption - Final Public Hearing

/s/ Jacquie Hepfer
President of City Council

City Manager Williams began the 2024/25 full City-Wide Budget Workshop and presentation referencing the City’s mantra, since 2020 of Plan, Fund, Execute with a proposed spending plan, proposed revenue sources, and goals and objectives.

Plan – proposed spending to increase 8.7% in operating expenditures in the General Fund over Fiscal Year 2024. The spending plan focuses on Capital Projects including roads and streets, infrastructure, expected levels of service, etc. It also addresses maintenance and growth of reserves to address maintaining existing assets. **All Funds** compared expenditures of FY2024 and FY2025, with total appropriated expenditures, transfers,

reserves, and balances – FY2024 \$64,475,845 and FY2025 \$87,590,890. **General Fund** expenditures of FY2024 and FY2025, with total appropriated expenditures, transfers, reserves, and balances – FY2024 \$26,907,695 and FY2025 \$34,397,682. City Manager Williams continued with **General Fund Reserves** referencing prepaid expenses, equipment, litigation, buildings, fire, infrastructure, etc. Comparison included FY2023 (actual) at \$10,879,802; FY2024 (projected) at \$13,609,330, and FY 2025 (projected) at \$20,509,330. **General Government Fund Balances** referencing ICRA – unreserved and CIP – unreserved with FY2023 (actual) at \$9,984,190; FY2024 (projected) at \$8,000,571, and FY 2025 (projected) at \$1,173,508. **Utility Fund Reserves and Fund Balance** were FY2023 (actual) at \$9,138,088; FY2024 (projected) at \$11,018,516; and 2025 (projected) at \$22,313,298. Councilwoman Bega questioned the use of reserves and the CIP with City Manager noting the CIP is separate. Councilman McBride questioned the American Rescue Plan funds required to be spent by December 31, 2024 with City Manager Williams clarifying the funds must be appropriated by December 31, 2024.

Fund – City Manager referenced that this budget was built using the Proposed Tentative Millage of 7.76. The total 2025 revenue came to \$41.7M. **All Funds Revenue Comparison** spoke to ad-valorem taxes, permits, grants, service charges, etc. with Total Revenues, Transfers and Balances for FY2024 at \$64,475,385 and FY2025 at \$87,590,890.

Execute – City Manager Williams spoke of spending geared toward specific accomplishments and return on investments; focus on Capital Improvement Projects that address citizen needs; and promoting operational efficiencies. **Functional Areas** – *General Government* will maintain staffing levels at competitive rates, project/growth management, lobbying efforts, grant, and cooperative funding, intergovernmental and community partnerships, and policy development and implementation. *Public Safety & Fire Dept.* will include volunteer recruitment and development, level of service/ISO rating, and utilization of revenue opportunities (grants). Enhanced Law Enforcement related to the Citrus County Sheriff's Office agreement. *Economic Development* noted incentive programs, CRA plan/annual report, infrastructure investment and Medical Arts District, *Transportation* addressed road resurfacing and improvement, multimodal, and infrastructure investment and partnerships. *Cultural Recreation* focused on marketing and programming that maintains and creates energy and momentum and continue public private partnerships (PPP) for events, vendors, and facility operators. *Physical Environment* will monitor management of parks system, parking and lighting improvements, and shared downtown sanitation. *Cemetery* addressed promotion of pre-need sales, landscaping enhancement, and intergovernmental and community partnerships.

City Manager Williams announced Public Hearings to adopt the Budget will be September 3, 2024 at 5:30pm for the tentative adoption hearing and September 17, 2024 at 5:30pm for the final adoption hearing. Councilwoman Lizanich was thankful for the increases in staff pay and questioned if the Charter Officers were included in the increase. City Manager Williams clarified that the Charter Officers were not included, as only the Councilmembers can alter the salary of a Charter Officer. Councilwoman Bega stated it is time to review and increase for the Charter Officers. Councilman McBride agreed stating the City has a healthy budget. Councilman Davis questioned if the millage rate could be reduced by even 1/10 of a point, equal to approx. \$66,000 drop, to make a statement to the

community. Would the budget remain sustainable? Council consensus was to bring it back at the next meeting with the change to be considered. The workshop was closed.

Council President Hepfer spoke of raising the salaries of the Charter Officers and of the normal protocol used in the past with the Council President meeting one on one with the City Manager, as well as with the City Clerk. Council consensus was for the Council President to follow the protocol and meet with each Charter Officer as soon as possible.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING

Anna Loughridge of Crystal River spoke of behalf of the Say No to 4 political committee. Asked that Council seriously consider adopting the Resolution to officially oppose. Spoke of history and Nazi Germany, etc. Highlighted certain language in the Amendment and other cities and counties that have opposed the Amendment.

Sharon O'Donnell of Beverly Hills asked Council to adopt the Resolution to oppose Amendment 4 as it contains misleading language. Spoke of limit of government interference.

Mike O'Connell of Floral City stated Amendment 4 is deceptive and read excerpts of the language contained in the Amendment. Spoke of the Resolution.

John Labriola of Inverness asked at the next Council meeting that the Resolution be approved to condemn Amendment 4. Noted various governments that have adopted the Resolution. Spoke of the deceptive working in the Amendment. Asked that this be put on the agenda and spoke of public awareness.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Bill Listing*
 - Recommendation – Approval
- b) Council Minutes – 07/02/2024*
 - Recommendation – Approval

Councilman McBride motioned to accept the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. The motion carried.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT

None

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

10)a) Resolution 2024-09 Residential Sanitation Rate – FY 2025* with City Manager Williams stating in March 2020, a solid waste and disposal service fee was implemented for each residential unit within the City that became effective 10/01/2020. The initial fee for FY 2021 was based on the rate study done by Tindale Oliver, with the recommendation that the fee be reviewed and adjusted annually based on costs such as the collection of residential waste by contract and an outside party, cost of providing the technical study, and administrative expenses related to the residential solid waste service. Staff reviewed the program cost for FY 2025 and recommended the residential solid waste fee be set at \$15.82 per residential cart, to be effective 10/1/2024 beginning with the September billing

cycle. Councilman McBride stated this was a very modest increase. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to have the Clerk read Resolution by title only. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.**

RESOLUTION 2024 – 09

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF INVERNESS, FLORIDA SETTING THE RESIDENTIAL SOLID WASTE AND DISPOSAL FEE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2024 THRU SEPTEMBER 30, 2025; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Councilwoman Bega motioned to adopt Resolution 2024-09 roll-call vote. Seconded by Councilman Davis. Roll call vote was as follows: Councilwoman Bega, yes; Councilman Davis, yes; Councilman McBride, yes; Councilwoman Lizanich, yes; President Hepfer, yes. The motion carried.

10)b) 2024-2025 Florida Fire Fighters Assistance Grant Program* with City Manager Williams stating the Inverness Fire Department has had much success in receiving grants in the past. Florida Department of Financial Services Division of State Fire Marshal has issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity for the FY2024-25 Florida Firefighter Assistance Grant Program. The fire department is seeking approval to apply for this highly competitive grant to purchase 5 complete sets of turnout gear valued at \$20,489.15. There is no share cost or matching funds required for this grant. Fire Chief Bessler spoke of last year's success with grant funding for 5 SCBAs and noted the rising costs of bunker gear. **Councilman Davis motioned to authorize the City Manager to make application to the 2024-2025 Florida Assistance to Firefighters Grant as presented. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. The motion carried.**

10)c) Project/Program Updates (Verbal)

- First Annual Jeep Appreciation Day will be July 27 in the IGC parking lot from 1:00-6:00pm in Downtown in collaboration with the Downtown merchants.
- Proposed County MSTU for Law Enforcement Services will probably be tabled for this year by the Citrus County BOCC. Spoke of letter from County Administrator and explained the MSTU history and aspects.
- Cootertober is coming with lots of marketing in the near future.
- Other included July 3 event and appreciated the staff for an unbelievable event. Noting how the community and volunteers were involved in this hallmark event. Also, great concerts.

COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS

Councilman Davis spoke of the commercial businesses being separate from the residential sanitation rates. Thanked the citizens for their comments regarding Amendment 4.

Councilwoman Lizanich thanked everyone for coming and listening to the meeting and speaking at the meeting. July 3 event was amazing.

Councilman McBride thought the July 3 event was great except for the rain. The next Hernando/Citrus MPO meeting will be August 1, which he will be unable to attend, and Councilman Davis will go. Regarding the Amendment 4 and those that have spoken at the last

2 meetings of Council, he suggested deliberate thought should happen and a decision of Council action should be decided next meeting.

President Hepfer stated that July 3 was amazing and had a wonderful time. There have been several people still talking about the event. Questioned if there were any grant funding for the Depot District with City Manager stating no. Questioned who on staff research for grant opportunities with City Manager noting that everyone looks for those opportunities.

CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA

Alicia McBratney of Inverness asked Council to not pass the referenced Resolution regarding Amendment 4. The topic of the matter is not a City Council issue. Everyone fears government interference and spoke of personal experience and health issues during pregnancy. All need the freedom to follow their faith and beliefs.

John Labriola agreed that health of the mother issues is important, but still asked the Council to pass the Resolution condemn Amendment 4.

Paul Hertensen stated he did not think the City should be involved with the Resolution and recommended to stay out and let the voters decide.

Mike O'Connell spoke about unborn being human beings and reiterated the details of the Amendment.

Meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

City Clerk

Council President