



**CITY OF COOPER CITY
CITY COMMISSION**

**COMMISSION BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES
TUESDAY
JULY 9, 2019 at 6:30 PM**

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Ross opened the meeting at 6:30 PM and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call

Present were Commissioners Pulcini, Meltzer, Green, Curran and Mayor Ross.

3. Public Comments (each member of the public is allowed to speak for four (4) minutes)

Jennifer Goldfarb, 11869 SW 55 St, thanked staff for their work on the budget. She advised concerns in following areas after review of the budget: positions review merging and changing positions, membership dues budget for the Commission, concerns with the communications consultant potential hiring, BSO costs, lobbyist fees and park renovations.

David Nall, 3620 NW 89th Way, thanked staff and the members of the Commission who reached out to Mr. Nall for his thoughts. He spoke on concerns with costs in the budget for artificial turf after the bond for the parks was voted down.

Mark Besohek, 2880 W. Aviary Drive, spoke on updates needed to the Pool and Tennis Center fitness room.

Marjorie Waldman, 3402 Bridge Road, spoke on updates needed to the Pool and Tennis Center fitness room additionally she does believe that the Commission should talk about employee benefits.

Sam Horowitz, 2625 Bass Way, spoke on updates needed to the Pool and Tennis Center fitness room. He asked if the gym is making money and if it is then we should improve the gym to gain revenue.

Commissioner Meltzer said the equipment is not up to standards and believes if we update the equipment maybe we can gain revenues.

Sam Horowitz said that the fees should increase for those who can afford it.

Finance Director Sherry Walker will look into revenues involved with the gym.

Interim City Manager Sims said there is \$45,000 included in the budget for FY 20 for gym improvements.

4. Budget Input

Interim City Manager Sims thanked staff for their hard work and dedication.

Interim City Manager Sims and Finance Director Sherry Walker spoke on the proposed FY 20 budget.

Mrs. Walker said the General Fund Fund Balance is projected to increase. The ending fund balance for FY 19 will increase to around \$6 million dollars. This does not include EMS analysis or FEMA. The budget includes a cost reduction. The proposed budget for FY 2020 is \$54.8 million.

Mrs. Sims spoke on staffing levels in FY 18 we had a staffing level at 56 fulltime and other at 48. In FY 20 we have 56.6 fulltime and 49 other. In the General Fund we have cut 3 positions, 2 administrative specialist positions and an electrician position. That is a cost savings of \$211,000 in salaries and benefits combined.

Mrs. Walker went over budget highlights. The millage rate is reduced to the roll back rate. The overall millage did decrease 4.5%. In the proposed budget staff did recommend an increase to the Fire Assessment rate. Single Family Residences would increase from \$161.28 to \$180.03. Net savings to the residents from the millage rate and fire assessment proposed changes is \$618,000.

Mrs. Sims spoke on are millage rate compared to other cities. Cooper City is currently 23 out of 31 cities with the highest millage rate. With the proposed decrease, Cooper City would move to 21. Currently Cooper City is ranked the 9th lowest in Broward in regard to Fire Assessment fees. If we would increase the fire assessment at \$19.75 for residential we would be the 11th lowest in the County. A fire assessment study will take place in FY 20 and the methodology revisited.

Mrs. Walker spoke on the breakeven point, 79% of residents will see a tax cut and 21% will see a taxable increase. Next, she spoke on assumptions in the budget. There was a reduction of three positions, a 1% COLA and up to 3% merit, health insurance was budgeted for a 10% increase with no change

to employee contribution, operating expenses are tightly constrained, BSO contract was designed based on the consideration letter at a \$1.8 million increase and a termination of the annual \$356,520 for station rent, major reduction to the General Fund Capital Improvement Program from \$6.99 million to \$448,000, Road and Bridge Fund expenditures at elevated FY 2019 level, Water and Sewer loan will be in repayment in FY 20 and a \$300,000 contingency is included.

Mrs. Walker went over the General Fund Revenues. The revenue can be divided into 3 categories City Commission controlled which is property tax and fire assessment fees, these categories make 63.6% of the general fund revenues. Approximately 34.5% of general fund revenues is core stable revenues, that includes revenues from state and governmental revenues. The last are variable revenues, and they make up 1.9% of general fund revenues.

Mrs. Walker spoke on general fund expenditures comparing FY 20 vs. FY 2017. Salaries have a compound growth rate at 2%. Benefits had a compound growth rate of 6.6%. The General fund expenditures decreased from 2017. BSO has increased 5.8%. The General Fund Budget is budgeting for a contribution to fund balance. The BSO contract was included at the letter amount. Transfers out to the Road and Bridge and Capital projects were budgeted

Mrs. Sims spoke on the general fund expense summary. There is a 1.8% increase compared to FY 19. The increase is due to vacant positions. Non-departmental is now including all retiree health insurance costs. The increase in dues and memberships is due to movement from non-departmental.

Mrs. Walker spoke on Building Inspection Services; the city budgeted for an increase in permitting fees based on an in-house study. Road and Bridge Fund the activity is budgeted to be similar to FY 19 at \$1.6 million. That includes a contribution from general fund and revenues from the state. In the CIP plan we have decreased the activity to completion of major projects. The City is going from approximately \$7 million dollars to \$450,000. That includes \$208,000 from general fund funding 5 small projects, 2 are partially funded by grants. The General Fund CIP we do have grant funding of \$182,250. A list of unfunded projects were included. The non-funded projects are \$750,000. With not completing these projects, we do lose \$250,000 of grant revenue. Water and Sewer fund is budgeting for an increase in rates of 1.9% and a total increase in revenue of 4% due to new meters. We are budgeting the use of fund balance in this fund; this is an alternative to getting funding from outside the city. The water distribution fund and the WW transmission funds show increases with truck purchases. The CIP fund will be \$4,850,000. Included in projects is the injection well and lift stations. The Storm water fund, we are looking to increase the rates to cover operations. The rates will be implemented in 2020. In the parking lot fund, the rates are significant to cover operations.

Mrs. Sims gave a list of budget options not recommendations from staff. A millage rate change, an increase in the fire assessment fee, revisiting the optimist contract, staff compensation changes, and healthcare contributions. Some smaller options can be discounting the Florida Benchmarking Consortium, discontinuing the newsletter, in house trainings, ID printer, lobbyist reduction or elimination, reduce school assistance, reduce donations, reduce public relations and events, and reduce advertising. The recreation Department will look into the Areawide Council on Aging to see how a change would affect residents. Other eliminations could include the household hazardous waste program, tree workshop, supplies, a reduction to the repairs accidents and vandalism for Public Works property maintenance. The CERT program could be eliminated, recreation events, repairs in the road and drainage. The Card access system could be deferred as well as impact windows and an emergency generator at the P&T Center.

Mrs. Walker spoke on the General Fund outlook. She advised an increase in the millage rate may be needed if one of the following do not occur. Increase in revenue sources, further cost reduction, more sustainable police and fire expense and further CIP reduction.

5. Commission Discussion

Mayor Ross recommended open dialogue.

Commissioner Meltzer asked about the replacement of the meters and what is the increase in revenue.

Mike Bailey advised a significant revenue increase of 10% would occur.

Commissioner Meltzer would like to see an analysis on increased revenue. He thanked the Finance team for their work on the budget book. He said the fund balance is down 2 million dollars from FY 18/19 and he wants to know how we can get the fund balance up.

Mrs. Walker said we are using 1.5 million in the water and sewer fund while we contributing 4 million to the water CIP. Water and Sewer we do have the 2 months reserves.

Commissioner Meltzer said in 2 years our fund balance Citywide will be a little more than half. He said last year 6.8 million was spent on capital projects. He also asked when we will resurface Stirling Road. Commissioner Meltzer said the road needs repairs. Prioritizing needs to be done in regard to infrastructure.

Commissioner Pulcini said the budget is a ceiling for staff and it always help to be conservative. Expenses should not exceed revenues.

Mayor Ross said his concern is the increase in the Fire Assessment due to the City's past experiences. A fire study should be completed before any increase should occur.

City Attorney Horowitz said that the City has history with a lawsuit concerning the Fire Assessment. The current proposal falls within the existing methodology that we have; that is valid and legally enforceable. He advised that we must be mindful that the study is old and we need to stay below the maximum.

Commissioner Meltzer said we are currently at \$161.28 and the proposed increase is \$181.03. The fire assessment has not been increased in 7 years.

Commissioner Pulcini said it's not fair to residents to increase fire assessments and not the millage rate.

Commissioner Curran said the park is an easy scapegoat but BSO increases need to be looked at as well. He believes the biggest issue is to address BSO costs. In 2008, the fund balance plan was to build up fund balance and then use it for projects. Stirling Road is not an unsafe road the concern is tree roots issues. Everything being cut from the budget needs to be looked at closely to see what long-term affects it will have.

Commissioner Pulcini said that BSO is in negotiations. We cannot work on that price tonight.

Commissioner Curran said that we need to look at services and see what BSO can provide at what prices.

Mayor Ross said that he contacted the Union and has not heard back. He heard that BSO will not be paying rent. Documentation that the City has requested is not being supplied and we need to work together to make this work. He asked for suggestions from BSO so we can continue to keep BSO as a vendor. We can change personnel numbers and we can take Code Enforcement in-house.

Captain Cates said that rent was a pass threw and taken out of the contract.

Mayor Ross would like suggestions from BSO on how we can work together.

Chief Caruso answered to go back to the negotiation table.

Mrs. Walker said we never received actuals from BSO as requested.

Mayor Ross said suggestions have been made and has not heard back from BSO.

Commissioner Green said that BSO costs are a major factor. We can only cut so much on the City side and police and fire costs need to be looked at. He asked staff if there is documentation in regards to rent.

Commissioner Pulcini said the rent has been compounding.

Commissioner Green said he knows we have been asking about the confiscation funds for years. He also said that the BSO contract is an increase substantially. BSO comprises 69.5% of General Fund expenses. He said BSO is phenomenal but we cannot just cut City services. He also spoke about staff and how some employees wear many hats.

Commissioner Meltzer said that it may be time to include more Cooper City residents and get back to the 70/30 participation rule in the Optimist Resolution.

Mayor Ross said spoke on concerns with out of service vehicles from BSO. He spoke on concerns with the equipment at the Pool and Tennis Center. He suggests that BSO bring recommendations to the table.

Commissioner Pulcini said that he requested information concerning BSO and requested information on an issue he has in reconciling numbers.

Mrs. Walker said that there are differences that we need to reconcile.

Commissioner Curran asked how much originally was set aside for the Pool and Tennis Center weight room. He said that the detreating issue of the room was recognized last year but items were cut for this fiscal year. He said that if the City can make cuts BSO should make some cuts as well. He said the wants the documents requested from BSO and wants all parties to work together.

Commissioner Meltzer asked about the Code enforcement budget

Commissioner Pulcini asked for the budgets from BSO.

Ryan Shrouder said they received information but what they need is actuals.

Commissioner Curran asked Utilities Director Mike Bailey about lobbyist Ron Book and what he has brought to the City.

Mike Bailey said he obtained \$600,000 in grant money for water main replacements and half a million dollars for Natalie's Cove.

Commissioner Pulicini asked if we could have got the grants without the lobbyists.

Mr. Bailey answered he doubts it.

Public Works Director Denise Yoezle said the Senate appropriations committee grant moneys may have been obtained with the lobbyists help.

Mayor Ross answered Mr. Book did help secure that grant as well as his daughter. Mayor Ross also said that is why his travel budget is important.

Commissioner Curran asked Interim City Manager Sims to explain the gain of having a PR firm.

Mrs. Sims answered when Michelle Alvarez the City Managers administrative specialist and PIO announced she would be leaving the City the administrative specialist in the Finance Department was moved to the administrative specialist position in the City Manager's Office. Michelle was being paid over \$100,000. With Lisa moving into her position her salary including benefits is around \$70,000. We are saving \$5,500 going with a firm instead of hiring someone for the position.

Commissioner Curran asked about the 5-year plan and said that the plan does not mean all those projects will be completed. It's a list of potential projects that are ready if grant moneys become available.

Mrs. Yoezle agreed with Commissioner Curran that the 5 year list is a plan. It does not mean the projects will be completed. Grant moneys will be lost if we do not complete some of the steps in the near future. The first grant expires mid 2020. We would need an action plan to move forward and an extension can be granted. She also advised the dugouts flooding at Bill Lips is a drainage issue.

Commissioner Meltzer asked Mr. Bailey about grant writing and if there is anyone else in the City that can write grants besides him.

Mr. Bailey responded not in his department.

Commissioner Meltzer said maybe it's time to hire a grant writer and look into what we are paying the lobbyist.

Mayor Ross said that he knows BSO has grant writers and asked BSO when was the last time a grant was written.

Sergeant Holness said that grants are written in general not for particular cities. The last grant we received was the health and wellness grant about 3 years ago.

Mayor Ross asked about any grants written after.

Sergeant Holness said that every year they write grants but they are limited to the type of grants.

Mayor Ross asked if there are radio grants.

Sergeant Holness said they did apply for radio grants they were turned down.

Commissioner Meltzer asked Mrs. Sims if we could possibly wait one more year with the PR firm.

Mrs. Sims said the firm will be present at the July 16, 2019 Commission meeting. She believes the firm could help the city with a professional look. The firm could manage our social media sites and work on sponsorship packages that could potentially be a revenue source for the City.

Commissioner Meltzer asked what other cities use the firm.

Mrs. Sims responded Wilton Manors and the Broward League of Cities.

Commissioner Green asked who was doing the Cities PR prior to use reaching out to a marketing firm.

Mrs. Sims responded Michelle Alvarez.

Commissioner Green said that the individual in her position now does not possess those skills.

Mrs. Sims answered correct.

Mayor Ross asked about pensions.

Mrs. Walker said that pension contributions increases have been included. The actuarial calculations there are certain assumptions the plan picks.

Commissioner Pulcini asked what the pension number is.

Mrs. Walker said that the pension's number based on the discussion with their actuary.

Commissioner Curran said he would like to pass on the PR firm and look into a grant writer. He also asked Captain Cates if Lauderdale Lakes and Tamarac got funding for a deputy.

Captain Cates said the funding was assumed for a year or two.

Commissioner Curran asked how many vacancies we have.

Captain Cates answered two.

Commissioner Curran asked if we could talk about the funding. He also asked about grants for the fire positions that Dania received.

Sergeant Holness said that was in 2011 Dania was riding 2 on an engine. They reapplied for the grant and it continued up to 3 years ago.

Commissioner Curran asked if we applied for a safer grant.

Chief Caruso said that request needs to come from the City.

Commissioner Curran asked why it was not brought up to the City.

Sergeant Holness said the City would need to apply.

Commissioner Curran asked what vehicles are available in Fire currently.

Chief Caruso answered two rescues, an engine and a quint.

Commissioner Curran asked the ages of the vehicles and spoke on his concerns about taking care of aged vehicles.

Mayor Ross asked what the national standard on equipment.

Chief Caruso said 15 years.

Mayor Ross said that the 20-year-old truck then is not up to standards.

Chief Caruso said it must be out into reserve status.

Mayor Ross said that the BSO is not working with the City with updated equipment when a new vehicle was just purchased.

Chief Caruso said the current contract reads the Sheriff's office shall provide equipment.

Sergeant Holness said that he knows the Sheriff wants to work with the City.

Commissioner Green asked Mrs. Yoezle about the 2 grants she spoke of earlier, 1 for \$400,000 and 1 for \$500,000. If those are matching grants.

Mrs. Yoezle said yes those are reimbursable.

Commissioner Green asked Mrs. Yoezle in her experience is it a given that every year we will receive grant funding.

Mrs. Yoezle answered no it is not a guarantee.

Commissioner Green also said that in 2010 the City did negotiate the contract with the lobbyist and Mr. Book did reduce his fees. He said we should take full advantage of grants when available. He also said that a grant writer is a

sought after skill set. He wants to make sure; if we hire a grant writer, we hire someone who understands what type of grants the City needs. He also said that that Mr. Book has been great and the best there is.

Commissioner Meltzer said that comparing our Police budget to Weston's we are paying about 45% more than Parkland and he would like to look into that.

Ryan Shrouder answered we have more non-sworn deputies than Parkland.

Commissioner Meltzer would like to look into Parklands numbers.

Commissioner Curran no longer wants to look into a grant writer after speaking with the Public Works Director there is a company that is available.

Mrs. Yoezle said the company cost a flat rate generally \$3000 it is part of what is reimbursable to the City. They assist in deadlines and technicalities. Last year we spent about \$6000 on the grant company and received 1.8 million.

Mayor Ross asked how many days was the quint not in service over the last year.

Chief Caruso will look into it.

Commissioner Meltzer asked Mrs. Yoezle if having the park out West will help take strain over the two other parks and do we have anyone in house who are experts in turf management and drainage management. Also he mentioned possibly lowering the amount of use on the fields.

Mrs. Yoezle answered existing staff can take care of the turf but the drainage problem is an infrastructure issue. The overuse of the fields is the issue. The fields need rested with constant use there is problems.

Commissioner Curran said that no Cooper City child has been turned away from a sports program. He also said less feet on the field won't help with the issues.

Commissioner Pulcini said when he coached in Plantation and he does not remember them replacing sod they rested the fields instead.

Commissioner Meltzer asked about the structural inspector, the change in professional services amounts, and salary increases.

Building Director Ted Fowler said that is based on a full time inspector being hired.

6. Additional Public Comments (each member of the public is allowed to speak for an additional two (2) minutes)

Bob Sands, 10582 Grove Place spoke on an article from 2013 the Broward County Commission believes we are paying too little. He said that BSO is a vendor and we need to look into other options if we are not getting what we need. He has concerns with how BSO is approaching the subject.

Jennifer Goldfarb, 11869 SW 55 St, said that she agrees with Mr. Sands the contract will last one year at the same price and that will give us time to look at options. She also said no one spoke of cutting benefits she said they are looking at costs of health insurance. She said we need to consider charging the nonprofits. The increase to the Optimist needs to be addressed and the new park should help with usage of the other 2 parks. She also said we need to look at all parks and the dugouts. She also spoke on the PR firm and the staff changes made from 2018.

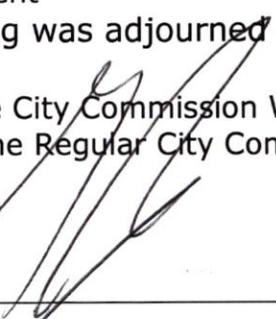
Ryan Shrouder said the BSO staff here has been helpful. He would like to meet with the interim sheriff who has not met with him. He also said the City needs to make staff cuts and look at merging departments such as Growth Management and IT. He also spoke on monitoring BSO costs and efficiency.

David Nall, 3620 NW 89th Way, thanked staff for cutting expenses and believes more can be done. He also believes the Union would be more proactive with the contract if there was potential of BSO employees losing their jobs. He wants BSO to work together with us.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM.

The minutes of the City Commission Workshop Meeting of July 9, 2019 were approved during the Regular City Commission Meeting of September 24, 2019.



Greg Ross, Mayor



Kathryn Sims, City Clerk

NOTICE: This meeting is open to the public. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, all persons who are disabled and who need special accommodations to participate in this meeting because of that disability should contact the Office of the City Clerk, 954-434-4300 ext. 220, not later than two days prior to such proceeding. One or more members of the City of Cooper City Advisory Boards may be in attendance and may participate at the meeting. Anyone wishing to appeal any decision made by the Cooper City Commission with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing will need a record of the proceedings and, for such purpose, may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. Agenda items may be viewed online at www.coopercityfl.org or at the Office of the City Clerk, City of Cooper City, 9090 SW 50 Place, Cooper City, Florida, 33328, 954-434-4300.