



CITY OF CORAL SPRINGS, FLORIDA

CITY COMMISSION FINANCIAL FORUM & SPECIAL MEETING

SUMMARY

Tuesday, June, 16, 2009
6:30 PM

Parkside Elementary

Call to Order

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Scott Brook	Mayor	Present	
Vincent Bocard	Vice Mayor	Present	
Claudette Bruck	Commissioner	Present	
Roy Gold	Commissioner	Present	
Tom Powers	Commissioner	Present	
Michael Levinson	City Manager	Present	
Sam Goren	City Attorney	Present	
Peter Richardson	City Clerk	Present	

Invocation

Rabbi Marc Gross
Temple Beth Orr

Following brief introductory comments by City Manager Mike Levinson, Deputy City Manager Ellen Liston made a presentation outlining a proposed preliminary strategy to address the unprecedented fiscal situation presently facing the City of Coral Springs. Ms. Liston reviewed a proposed three-pronged strategy, including a one-year wage freeze for all City employees, the adoption of a rolled back tax rate and the judicious use of financial reserves. Mr. Levinson stated that the proposed three-pronged strategy would be pivotal in maintaining the City's fiscal solvency and balancing the budget.

Mayor Brook invited comments from any interested parties. Denis Wakley, a member of the Financial Advisory Committee, said that the Financial Advisory Committee had reviewed and analyzed the proposed plan in detail. He stated that the Committee felt that the three-pronged strategy was very well conceived and was a fair and equitable plan.

Thomas Vo, a team member of the Public Works Streets Division team, expressed appreciation to the City Commission and staff for their efforts to ensure continued fiscal stability by employing the proposed three-pronged strategy. Mr. Vo said that he had undertaken a number of cost-saving initiatives relative to his daily tasks and encouraged his fellow City employees to take similar steps.

Ken Fink, a local financial services industry consultant, noted that trend in declining housing values would likely not abate before the year 2011. Mr. Fink urged the City Commission to adopt a strategy that would avoid the need for layoffs or pay cuts for City employees.

George Rahael commended the City Commission for their efforts to hold and potentially reduce, City expenditures. He also expressed concern about the fact that some local businesses could potentially see increases in their property tax bills by up to sixteen percent. Mr. Rahael concluded his remarks by thanking the City Commission and City Manager for their excellent leadership during a period of profound fiscal challenges.

Jerry Schwartz commended the City Manager and his staff for a realistic approach to addressing the current fiscal challenges. He requested that staff make arrangements to place a property tax estimator for City property taxes on the City's website.

Michael Singer noted that although he did not favor the layoff of City employees, he nonetheless inquired whether reductions in City staff were commensurate with cuts in the private sector.

Rhon Ernest-Jones noted that his firm had reduced total staff from 48 to 28 employees since this time last year. He noted that demand for public sector services tended to increase during periods of economic decline. Mr. Ernest-Jones stated that any proposed wage freeze or wage reduction must be across the board throughout the entire organization.

Dr. Mark Gendal commended the City Commission for keeping current service levels using available fiscal resources. He suggested the possibility of having a citywide event to unite all community members.

Phillip Solar commended the City's Police Department for their exemplary efforts during the incidents of May 23, 2009. He urged the City Commission not to reduce salaries.

Dave Hulett urged the City Commission to keep in mind that local government service levels should be maintained during economically challenging times. He requested that the City Commission focus on maintaining the quality of life by focusing on neighborhood policing and code enforcement programs. Mr. Hulett also commended City staff for making an excellent and thoughtful presentation this evening.

Officer Michael Hughes stated that he had received telephone calls earlier today to advise him of this evening's financial forum. Officer Hughes stated that the Fraternal Order of Police needed time to study recently requested public records relative to the ongoing negotiations process.

Commissioner Gold said he sincerely believed that the City had tried to share the existing economic burden as equitably as possible among stakeholders. He stated that City staff and elected officials were trying to maintain existing service levels while looking out for the best interest of all City employees. Commissioner Gold urged the City Commission to support the three-pronged plan proposed by City staff.

Commissioner Bruck stated that although City staff's presentation took a matter of minutes this evening, it took long and arduous efforts to formulate the proposal. Commissioner Bruck said that the City Commission should place the greatest degree of emphasis on taking all necessary steps to maintain property values in the City. She also stated that the plan outlined by City staff was a solid one that she hoped would be supported by the City Commission.

Commissioner Powers said that the City Commission was charged with balancing the City's budget from a policymaking standpoint. Commissioner Powers said he was willing to receive further input and suggestions from interested parties.

Mayor Brook stated that City staff had made budget reductions by not filling certain vacant positions and by taking other steps to contain costs wherever possible. He also expressed appreciation to all City employees or residents who had taken the time to attend or speak at this evening's financial forum.

Vice Mayor Bocard said the present economic conditions presented a difficult challenge for the

City Commission and staff. He thanked all persons for attending this evening's forum for their support and suggestions.

There were no additional public comments. Mayor Brook expressed appreciation to all in attendance for their interest in this evening's forum. He also expressed appreciation to the City's management team, City staff, volunteers and residents. He noted that although the present times were difficult, the City maintained control over expenses and the overall financial landscape. The financial forum element of the meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

The special City Commission meeting was called to order by Mayor Brook at 8:46 p.m., with all members of the City Commission in attendance.

Mr. Levinson requested the City Commission's direction on the proposed three-pronged approach as offered by City staff during the earlier financial forum portion of the proceedings.

Commissioner Gold moved, seconded by Commissioner Bruck, to move forward with the three-pronged fiscal strategic plan outlined by City staff in support of the presentation by Deputy City Manager Ellen Liston earlier this evening.

Mayor Brook said that City staff would be dynamic and fluid with any new information received and would be open to receiving additional information from the Fraternal Order of Police or other entities. The motion to move forward with the three-pronged fiscal strategy was approved unanimously (5-0).

Mr. Goren stated that City staff was respectfully requesting that the City Commission make a finding of financial urgency in order to implement the three-pronged strategy proposed by City staff. Commissioner Powers inquired about the possibility of granting another two weeks to all parties. Mr. Goren stated that this would provide all parties with additional time to gather their thoughts. Mr. Levinson said he had no problem with honoring the Fraternal Order of Police's request for an additional two weeks.

Commissioner Gold moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Bocard, to make a declaration of a finding of financial urgency effective June 30, 2009, two weeks from today. Mr. Levinson said this was a good faith preventative measure and that plan could be implemented on a timely basis. The motion was approved unanimously (5-0).

The special City Commission meeting adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Peter M. J. Richardson, CRM
City Clerk

This summary is a permanent record of the City of Coral Springs maintained in the City Clerk's Office.