

**City of DeBary  
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP**

**Saturday**

**March 15, 2008**

**9:00 AM**

Florence K. Little Town Hall

12 Colomba Road

DeBary, Florida 32713

**MINUTES**

**I. Call to Order**

**Members Present:** Mayor George Coleman, Vice Mayor Christopher Carson, Council Member Norman Erickson, Council Member Jack Lenzen, and Council Member Leonard Marks

**Others Present:** City Manager Maryann Courson and Assistant City Manager Anthony Gonzalez

**II. Discussion Regarding Goal Setting for 2008**

Mayor Coleman said he would like to review current contracts, assess the amount of money in reserves, possibly increase impact fees, maintain the current number of employees for police and fire safety, and research the idea of building a police station on the current city hall site. He also stated that the Council should work on street repairs, sidewalks, reviewing parks needs, upgrading the parking area at Rob Sullivan, installing the fence at Nature Park, providing pavilions and handicap access at Nature Park, changing the traffic lights to LED lights, and prioritizing the City's donations.

Council Member Erickson said that some of his goals overlapped with the Mayor's; he also said he wished to review current contracts, provide handicap parking at Nature Park, investigate the possibility of a police station at the old city hall site, and questioned using taxpayer money for City donations. He said he might like to add one police position.

Council Member Erickson asked the other members to share their thoughts regarding what extent they use the Land Development Code and the Comprehensive Plan to make decisions. Council Member Lenzen answered and emphasized that above all, he considers what is best for the City as a whole. Council Member Erickson spoke again regarding his wish to have staff recommendations written on agenda memos.

Ms. Courson said that what the Council should see for final site plans are the DRC minutes and the comments that were generated during the review process. She added that in the case of rezonings, staff would first touch upon the comprehensive plan and then the zoning codes. Ms. Courson gave some background information regarding the initial drafting of the comprehensive plan.

Council Member Erickson said that GAI has not lived up to the requirements of their contract.

Council Member Marks said he wished to review the City's contracts, address public safety, be careful with growth, cut fuel consumption, deny requests for City donations, and establish standard operating procedures for emergencies. Ms. Courson noted that the City already has emergency procedures outlined in flip charts developed by Alan Williamson. Council Member Marks suggested a public workshop with Safety Coordinator Alan Williamson to review what people should do during an emergency.

Council Member Marks recommended fixing the existing sidewalks before installing new ones and added that he had compiled a list of sidewalks needing attention on Highbanks Road. Ms. Courson asked Mr. Marks to bring the list to city hall.

Council Member Marks stated he would like the Economic Development Committee to bring in businesses themselves and not rely on Volusia County Economic Development; that he would like more citizen involvement in the government process; that he would like the City run more publicly than privately; that the City needs to stop its out of control spending; that he would like the Council to work towards unifying the business community; that they place emphasis on the environment, green space, and conservation; that they develop more senior and youth programs; and that he would like a citizen's advisory board to act as a liaison between the public and the Council.

Vice Mayor Carson stated that he wants to continue emphasizing the City's strengths rather than weaknesses; that the City should continue its stormwater efforts; that the Council should review its contracts with Volusia County and other consultants; that he wished to maintain the current budget; that he does not wish to discontinue City donations, especially Project Graduation because DeBary kids attend Deltona High; that he also liked the idea of moving the police department to the current city hall site; that he would like to revamp the Gateway Park office; and that he would like to install a LED sign to welcome people to the City near Gateway Park.

Mayor Coleman asked about the budget impact in the next year. Ms. Courson responded that the reduction in tax revenue would probably be about half a million dollars.

Council Member Lenzen said that he preferred to consider donations on a case-by-case basis and favored in-kind contributions rather than cash donations. He said he would like immediate attention to GAI in terms of the information they provide; that he wants to complete the city hall project; and that attention should be given to improvements at the Nature Park and phasing of Rob Sullivan Park in terms of small improvements. He added that for the long-term goals, he believes they should work on a maintenance facility and central location for the police department. He stated that immediate focus should be given to the new city hall and remodeling of Town Hall and addressing stormwater concerns.

Council Member Lenzen brought up the subject of Ms. Courson's employment, as Council Member Erickson and Council Member Marks voiced their criticism of her during their campaigns. He asked the Council to settle the question and move on. Mayor Coleman stated that it is not fair to a person to be in fear of losing his or her job day after day, and it makes the person ineffective. Vice Mayor Carson agreed.

Council Member Erickson said his criticism of the city manager began before he ran for office. He stated that he sees an abdication of power from the Council to Ms. Courson; that the meetings seemed to be incidental to happenings outside the public meetings; that he has concerns regarding the information the Council is given; and that it should be discussed and voted on in April.

Council Member Lenzen said he has full confidence in the City Manager.

Council Member Marks said the citizens are not happy with the City Manager and read aloud various comments supporting his claim. He added that he does not have confidence in Ms. Courson.

Mayor Coleman said he believes things are much better in the City currently than they were five years ago.

Ms. Courson said she has put twelve years of her life into the City and has never been dishonest in her work.

Vice Mayor Carson said he is very proud of the City because it does a lot with very little and the Council needs to keep a positive perspective rather than perpetuating negative opinions.

Council Member Erickson asked about the use and cost of the Reverse 911 system. Ms. Courson answered that there is a yearly maintenance charge with a fixed cost regardless of the number of times it is used.

Council Member Erickson said he would like the chairs of the committees to report to the Council periodically.

Council Member Erickson said he is concerned because there is a bus stop at Winn Dixie, and between 3:15 and 3:45, there is a dangerous traffic situation. Mayor Coleman suggested that he contact the School Board to advise them.

Council Member Erickson stated that he has not had any agenda meetings with Ms. Courson because it does not tell the whole story to the public, and he believes his questions should be answered in a public forum. He added that the Council has given too much power and too little direction to Ms. Courson.

There was discussion regarding the order of the Council's agenda.

Council Member Erickson questioned the type of government the City operates under. Council Member Lenzen said that Ms. Courson runs the City because that is her job to do so, and that the Council sets policy but the day-to-day operations are left to the city manager.

Bob Garcia, Chairman of the Public Safety Advisory Committee, voiced concern regarding parking on the sidewalks. He added that fire hydrants, law enforcement and gang intervention, water conservation, street signs, increasing reserves, and an additional fire station are goals he would like to see the Council pursue. He spoke of Ms. Courson's dedication to the City of DeBary, and stated that the Council needs to work with the city manager.

Council Member Marks discussed warning sirens. Mr. Garcia stated that his Committee had researched the cost of the sirens and recommended the weather radios.

Mayor Coleman suggested that it might move the meetings along faster if Council Member Marks and Council Member Erickson would go over the agenda with Ms. Courson prior to the meeting. Council Member Marks said he believes it is a violation of the Sunshine Law to speak with Ms. Courson about items on the agenda before the meeting. Mayor Coleman disagreed and stated that Ms. Courson cannot serve as a conduit between Council members, but she can advise Council members individually on agenda items.

**III. Adjournment** The workshop adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

**APPROVED April 2, 2008  
CITY OF DeBARY  
CITY COUNCIL**

**George Coleman, Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

**Stacy Tebo, City Clerk**