

Thursday, April 20, 2023 – 6:30 P.M.
High Springs City Hall
23718 W. U.S. Highway 27
High Springs, FL. 32643

The Alachua County Board of County Commissioners met for the Joint Meeting.

PRESENT: Chair Anna Prizzia; Commissioner Charles S. Chestnut IV, Commissioner Ken Cornell, and Commissioner Marihelen Wheeler

Mayor Gloria James, Vice Mayor Ross Ambrose, City Commissioner Tristan Grunder, City Commissioner Katherine Weitz, and City Commissioner Bryan Williams

ABSENT: Vice Chair Mary Alford

ALSO PRESENT: County Manager Michele Lieberman, Deputy County Manager Carl Smart, Assistant County Attorney Corbin Hanson, and Deputy Clerk Steve Donahey

City Manager Ashley Stathatos, Assistant City Manager Bruce Gillingham, Deputy City Clerk Angela Stone, Assistant City Clerk Jami Echeverri, City Attorney Scott Walker, PIO Kevin Mangan, Chief of Police Antoine Sheppard, Finance Director Diane Wilson, Planning Tech II Kristy Adkins, Public Works Director Thomas Henry, Building Official Alan Alligood, Interim Recreation Director CJ Wakeley, Executive Assistant Ashley Mauldin

Call To Order

Welcome

Introduction

Mayor, Gloria James, City of High Springs

Chair, Anna Prizzia, Alachua County Commission

Adoption of the Agenda

Commissioner Cornell moved adoption of the agenda as printed. The motion carried 3-0 with Commissioner Alford and Commissioner Wheeler out of the room.

City Commissioner Ambrose moved adoption of the agenda. The motion carried 5-0.

Items for Discussion

Commissioner Wheeler entered at 6:35 p.m.

1. County Update on (A) Ballot Surtax (B) Trunk Radio (C) Broadband 23-0703
Recommended Action: For information
Fiscal Consideration: N/A
Strategic Guide: N/A 2023

Wild Spaces

Conservation Lands Manager Andi Christman presented the above item.

Ms. Christman displayed maps that showed the lands that have been purchased, those that are on the acquisition list, and the State wild corridor that are a priority for land purchases. She advised that this cycle will make the conservation of farmland a priority through the purchase of conservation easements which will pay the landowners for the development rights on the land but allow it to continue to be used for agricultural purposes. The Hitchcock Ranch is a great example of this practice. The tax is expected to raise \$150,000,000 for conservation lands and \$37,500,000 for the County active parks.

Commissioner Wheeler, Commissioner Cornell, and County Manager Lieberman presented comments.

Assistant County Manager Peebles advised the City that their expected revenue for the City is \$921,625.00 per year.

Parks and Active Recreation

Assistant County Manager Peebles presented the above item.

Mrs. Peebles informed the City of the Parks Master Plan process that the County undertook and displayed the results of the plan to the City showing them the plans for the High Springs area to meet the needs of the community. She further stated that staff is proposing changing the fee structure for Poe Springs Park. Fees would only be collected during the peak months and then be free for residents during the off season.

Commissioner Cornell, Commissioner Wheeler, County Manager Lieberman, and Penny Richardson presented comments.

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Pavement Management Program

Assistant Public Works Director Brian Kaufman presented the above item.

Mr. Kaufman explained the County's 10 year plan towards road pavement management. He advised that a software called AgileAssets has been employed to help maximize the effectiveness of the revenues spent and that inequity has been factored into the formula to help address some of the historical failings of road funding. He advised that some bonds the County issued for road paving will be paid off in 2027. The staff is looking to reissue bonds in 2028 to make an additional \$9,000,000 in funds available for road projects.

Chair Prizzia, Commissioner Cornell, City Manager Ashley Stathatos, City Commissioner Grunder, Vice Mayor Ambrose, and Commissioner Cornell presented comments.

Chair Prizzia stated that she would love for the City to share their strategic plan with the County so that any efficiencies that could be gained by aligning projects could be realized.

City Commissioner Weitz, Penny Richardson, and Janet Evans presented comments.

Trunked Radio System

Alachua County Fire Chief Harold Theus presented the above item.

Chief Theus stated that an agreement has been reached for the County to purchase the GRUCom radio system. The attorneys are currently working on the contract. The County has projected the cost and will send an agreement to the City for the service. The agreement will have a fixed cost for 5 years so that the City will be able to budget for the contract. Phase 2 of the process will be an expansion of the service and develop the pricing to the users of the system. The County sees this as a vital service and is not looking to make money off the system. It will cover the cost and funds for necessary enhancements to the system.

Commissioner Cornell and Vice Mayor Ambrose presented comments.

Broadband

Broadband Program Manager Jim Woody presented the above item.

Mr. Woody advised that tomorrow is the submittal date for the capital projects list. He stated that four vendors will be submitting and they are IBT, Cox, Windstream, and

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AT&T. He stated that \$15,000,000 has been set aside by the County from American Rescue Plan Funds for the effort. He stated that he feels $\frac{3}{4}$ of the County will be covered by this plan. Once the maps are released then staff will determine which areas have been left out.

Chair Prizzia, City Commissioner Ambrose, and Commissioner Cornell presented comments.

2. Water Resources Update 23-0705
Recommended Action: Hear staff presentation
Fiscal Consideration: N/A
Strategic Guide: N/A

Water Resources Programs Manager Staci Greco presented the above item.

Ms. Greco stated that the State is looking for projects to reduce water consumption and increase aquifer recharge. She stated that currently there is not enough water to keep the springs system healthy. The largest use in Alachua County is the Public Supply which is mostly residential use and some restaurants and other commercial uses. The County is focusing on irrigation systems in residential use. The County is proposing new design codes to reduce consumption. One proposal is restricting the irrigation to 50% of the residential lot. Also require the control system to be placed outside so that County staff can access the control system. She stated that a program called H2OSAV allows water consumption to be reviewed at the parcel level. Staff will use this to target water conservation incentives to high water users.

Vice Mayor Ambrose and Chair Prizzia presented comments.

3. Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Expansion Discussion 23-0706
Recommended Action: For information
Fiscal Consideration: N/A
Strategic Guide: N/A

City Manager Ashley Stathatos presented the above item.

Ms. Stathatos stated that the City is looking to expand the boundaries of the CRA. The current CRA is 107 acres. The proposed expansion down US 27 would add an additional 58 acres. The reason that the City wishes to expand the CRA is that the area down US 27 meets the criteria of blight under the statute and citizens have proposed projects to rejuvenate the area but had to be turned down because it was not within the boundaries of the CRA.

Commissioner Wheeler, Commissioner Cornell, and Chair Prizzia presented comments.

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Tree Planting Program

Land Conservation Manager Andi Christman presented the above item.

Ms. Christman stated that the County is looking for opportunities to partner with agencies to find locations to plant trees. If the City of High Springs has any suitable locations for tree plantings the County would appreciate being able to plant trees on the site. The County is looking to get on the City agenda to present the details of the program.

Public Comment

Janet Evans, David Linch, Nancy Piety, Eric Piety, Mayor James, Chair Prizzia, Commissioner Wheeler, City Manager Stathatos, and City Commissioner Weitz presented comments.

Commission General Comments and Information Discussion

County Commission Comment

Commissioner Chestnut, Commissioner Cornell, Commissioner Wheeler, and Chair Prizzia thanked the City for hosting the meeting look forward to working with the City in the future.

City Commission Comment

City Commissioner Grunder, City Commissioner Weitz, City Commissioner Williams, Vice Mayor Ambrose, and Mayor James presented comments.

Adjourn

There being no further business before the Board the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.