



MINUTES
WORKSHOP CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 25, 2002 AT 7:00 P.M.
CITY HALL, 116 FIRST STREET
NEPTUNE BEACH, FLORIDA

Pursuant to proper notice a Workshop Meeting of the City Council of the City of Neptune Beach was held March 25, 2002 at 7:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 116 First Street, Neptune Beach, Florida.

Attendance:

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mayor Richard A. Brown	City Manager Richard A. Linn
Vice Mayor Robert D. Shimp	City Clerk Lisa Volpe, CMC
Councilor Jimmy Gilbert	Finance Director Steve Ramsey
Councilor Ronald Patronik	Building Official Dan Arlington
Councilor Harriett Pruette	Deputy City Clerk Karla Strait, CMC
City Attorney Christopher A. White	

Call to Order/Roll Call The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

City Manager Linn reviewed and identified the stormwater projects that could be funded with a stormwater utility fee. The source of the information was from the Stormwater Master Plan that was completed in 1998 by PBS&J. Some of the work on Kings Road and Acacia Road had already been completed. There was not a cost attached or priority list to the projects. Mayor Brown asked why it was mentioned to pump water out of certain retention ponds. City Manager Linn replied he had to check with PBS&J. He stated that Drainage Problem #5, Florida Boulevard west of Penman Road intersection, was a City of Jacksonville problem. The city could ask them to fix this problem that could be a danger to motorists. Vice Mayor Shimp asked if the work completed on Hopkins Creek helped with the drainage. Mr. Linn stated it helped move the water but did not totally solve the problem.

Vice Mayor Shimp asked if grants could be acquired to do these projects. Mr. Linn answered that it was necessary to have a utility in order to receive grant money from St. Johns River Management.

Discussion ensued on how to set up the stormwater utility.

Councilor Pruette asked if a record of when and where the city cleaned up for maintenance. Mr. Linn stated the city only has record of contracted work. The state was now mandating us to record what we do and a program was being set up to do this. Councilor Pruette stated we could use any extra money through renegotiation with Jacksonville Beach Electric to use for stormwater and therefore lower the fee. City Manager Linn stated the new fee would be minimal considering the amount the city

needs for stormwater.

Councilor Gilbert stated if constituents understood what the money was for they would be less likely to be upset about it. He felt if was necessary to stop depleting the gas tax fund.

Councilor Patronik asked if the state mandated the creation of a stormwater utility fee. Mr. Linn stated there was no mandate but there is a permit necessary for stormwater, which requires certain activities that need funding.

Councilor Patronik asked how the billing would be done. Mr. Linn clarified that the stormwater utility fee would be added to the monthly utility bill based on the number of dwelling units per property.

Councilor Pruette questioned how commercial properties would be charged. Mr. Linn stated they would be charged per ERU (equivalent residential unit) basis. Close to 50% of the total revenue would be paid by the commercial areas.

Councilor Pruette asked for concreting to be permitted before dealing with stormwater. Discussion ensued about this type of permit. Building Official Dan Arlington stated this could be done by a policy change because it was already mentioned in the code. He felt guidelines should be set up before starting a fee. City Attorney Chris White stated there should be some guidelines so that it could not be ruled an invalid fee. Discussion ensued.

Mayor Brown asked what the gas tax was earmarked for besides stormwater. Mr. Linn stated it was for the maintenance of our streets. This would start to be a problem after the water and sewer work was complete and streets need to be rebuilt. Repaving would be impacted if gas tax money was depleted.

Vice Mayor Shimp questioned how the gas tax is funded. Mr. Linn stated it is a penny on the gallon of gas and is approximately \$238,000 a year in revenue.

Councilor Gilbert explained that along with the stormwater utility they were attempting to encourage builders to use pervious surfaces by giving them a break on permitting fees. He announced three ways to help the cities stormwater problems. 1) to have a percentage of a property not be allowed to be impervious in the land use codes, 2) to have a stormwater utility fee to fund projects 3) to have a reason such as a permit break for people not to concrete in their whole yard. This will be helpful as more people renovate their home. Discussion ensued about permitting for impervious surfaces and percentage of the lots. Problems with yard waste going into the storm drains was also discussed.

Building Official Arlington explained that the stormwater ordinance was the same as at the last workshop with the addition of sections 8 and 9. These sections amend the sections of the code that call for impervious surfaces for driveways and allows pervious surfaces to be used. He explained he could start charging a permit fee for paving if the council wished but he felt they should wait until better guidelines could be formed. Mr. Arlington clarified for council that private property drainage problems had to be corrected by the homeowners. The city could not be responsible.

City Manager Linn commented that a small permit fee would not stop people from using impervious material on their property. He felt the best control would be having a percentage of the lot that could not be built on. Councilor Pruette felt permits were for keeping track of the concrete, not to stop people from concreting. Mayor Brown stated it could be discussed in the future as a type of incentive for people to use impervious surfaces.

Mayor Brown stated that instead of having different amounts for districts now the council could establish a basic rate and then in the future could increase certain areas if necessary.

Consensus: **TO ESTABLISH A \$3.00 STORMWATER UTILITY AND TO MOVE THE STORMWATER UTILITY ORDINANCE TO THE APRIL REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING.**

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Richard A. Brown, Mayor

Attest:

Lisa Volpe, CMC, City Clerk

Approved: _____