

**2022 COUNCIL RETREAT
THE RITZ-CARLTON, AMELIA ISLAND
4750 AMELIA ISLAND PARKWAY
AMELIA ISLAND, FL 30234**

I. CALL TO ORDER – JOHN HOWARD

All Council Members were present. Also present were City Administrator Logan Propes, Assistant City Administrator Chris Bailey, and Finance Director Beth Thompson.

II. OTHER BUSINESS & DISCUSSION

1. Opening discussion began with various topics from brainstorming about what each member would like to see in their community:

- a. Tyler Gregory: Downtown police presence or welcome ambassador for information when folks come into town.
- b. Myoshia Crawford: Wants to ensure a family style town.
- c. Charles Boyce: Need to ensure inclusivity in the community.
- d. Norman Garrett: Inclusivity. Need a big place to host large groups, i.e. new community center.
- e. Lee Malcom: Control growth and balance it.
- f. Larry Bradley: Inclusivity for seniors too, not just young people. Balance the needs of all demographics.
- g. David Dickinson: Continue great work on Parks and especially advance the multi-modal trail system to connect all of the parks and Downtown to most neighborhoods.
- h. Nathan Little: Balance growth and ensure proper planning. Focus on traffic and growth in addition to utilities.
- i. John Howard: Adopt several of the mantras that is portrayed at the Ritz Carlton (ladies & gentlemen serving ladies & gentlemen) and Disneyworld (aim to be the best and cleanest community assisted by ALL employees)

2. Mayor & Council pay - \$800/month council, \$1200 month Mayor. Proposed by Larry Bradley. There was a general consensus to approve this year to be effective January 2024 so it would be after all new municipal elections the preceding November.

3. Department Head and Director Pay: City Administrator Propes noted it was hard to ensure the team stayed in place long-term given the market conditions for this group of people. The comparable salaries were generally much higher in similar cities on the area/region not to mention the private sector that is generally far beyond the city salaries for similar transferrable skillsets. The general discussion was of consensus by all to allow the City Administrator to adjust the pay and pay scale as needed for this group with appropriate cuts elsewhere to offset any increases.

4. Millage Rate discussion: Finance Director Beth Thompson discussed the non-inflationary growth in the digest and recommended a full rollback rate. It was noted the City would still receive approximately \$630,000 in additional revenues from all the new growth on the tax digest. There was some discussion by Councilman Bradley that maybe we should not do the full rollback since we may need to fund so many additional police officers in the future. The remaining discussion all seemed focused on implementing the full rollback in light of the high inflationary environment and especially with Walton County not taking the full roll back which hits non-homestead property owners and small business owners especially hard. Staff will advertise the full-rollback rate for legal compliance.

5. LOST negotiation update: Administrator Propes briefed the Council that the City had just begun its first round of negotiations with the County and other cities. Propes said there was a long way to go since there is no consensus from what the county's split for the cities would be.

6. Propes then noted to City Council that at some point fairly soon, the City would need to excavate and replace all utilities along Walton Street as most are 50-100+ years old. The big issue for many residents of the historic street may be whether to repave with asphalt vs concrete. The Council asked staff to find estimates for both ways of repaving.

7. Propes then noted that in the upcoming budget, water and sewer fees would need to be looked at due to high inflationary figures based on chemical treatment of both water and wastewater alone, notwithstanding other higher costs such as fuel and personnel in servicing the utilities.

8. Fiber Optic Broadband Implementation: Due to the project progressing slowly with management in-house by our small telecommunications team, Propes noted that he sought the professional services of a firm to at first audit the process thus far and then make recommendations on how to proceed next and, if necessary, manage certain elements of the implementation. Mayor Howard noted that substantial progress has not been made if only 300 or so customers had been turned on in over two years. Additionally, other fiber-related projects had been stalled out such as downtown mesh Wi-Fi, cameras in the parks, full automated switches for electric, etc.

9. Short-term rental ordinance: Administrator Propes shared that he and legal staff had created the basic framework for short-term rental ordinances. Input was sought for additional drafting. Councilwoman Malcom wanted a cap on total individuals; Councilman Dickinson wanted to prevent renting rooms only; and, Councilman Gregory wanted to ensure security camera implementation at points of entry as a safeguard against human trafficking.

10. Gateway Signage: Assistant Administrator Chris Bailey unveiled renderings of gateway signage to go on Highway 11 at Charlotte Rowell Boulevard. All agreed in general that the design was good but perhaps change some materials. Several on Council wanted to see them implemented at all entrances to the City over the years. There was some discussion as to whether to keep the same look or create different signage for each area. There was no consensus reached. Want to discuss further as funding becomes available for additional signage.

III. ADDITIONAL OTHER DISCUSSION FOR PRIORITIES

1. New positions: Parks Director/Manager in a year or so.

Coker Park & EC Kidd were asked about by Mr. Garrett. These will be rehabilitated last due to many limitations and large funding needed as has been agreed upon in previous City Council meetings. Staff recapped where all parks' projects are in process right now.

2. See what Greensboro, NC has done with their parks. Housing, donations for park.

3. 3rd & 4th Street curbs and gutters would be appreciated.

4. Administrative allocation: Can it be reduced further in the budget? It was noted that our utility transfers were quite efficient in comparison to other utility cities that use as much as needed to balance the budget each year.

5. Finance: Where can we re-allocate or shelve priorities for the "downturn"? It was generally noted that we should finish up the multitude of big projects and in the downturn move to a small project and maintenance position unless great pricing presents itself for a certain needed project.

6. Public Safety:
 - a. Study the addition of three positions for traffic control - FY 2023. Potentially create another unit for high-crime deterrent add another 4 positions. Fire Station needs to be planned for the next SPLOST and locate on the west side.
 - b. Community police force. Out of vehicle patrols. Pros and cons of this in high-crime neighborhoods. Will this build better community policing while keeping officer safety in mind?
 - c. Need follow-up called Public Safety Committee Meeting August 2nd.

7. September 29th retreat for all of Council will primarily be focused on Planning, Zoning, & Code. Should discuss:
 - a. Form-based codes
 - b. Code rewrites in the works.
 - c. Modifications of form-based codes, how would that be modified.
 - d. HPC, public education for permitting.
 - e. Code follow-up on Historic Preservation items to ensure correct implementation.
 - f. Outsource for HPC staff reports - Staff will see if possible.
 - g. Marshals see something, say something, is request from Council if they notice potholes, needed signage, etc., since they are always out on the streets.

8. Multi-modal trail: Grant funding needed to complete. Possible options:
 - a. Walton healthcare foundation
 - b. GO bond - requires voter approval and designated millage rate each year.

9. Different neighborhood signage for each historic neighborhood such as the Mill Village, historic Church Street, McDaniel Street, Walton Street, etc.


10. Racial reconciliation – Uncomfortable conversations.
 - a. Form a group of community leaders. Led by outside consultant – UGA possibly.
 - b. Most were interested in pursuing this route at some point in the future. Roadmap needs to be laid out before crating ad-hoc committee.

Motion to increase the spending and approval limits of Department Directors from \$3,000 to \$10,000 and to increase the spending and approval limits of the City Administrator from \$10,000 to \$25,000, due to the higher cost of materials and supplies caused by inflation.

*Motion by Dickinson, seconded by Malcom.
Passed Unanimously.*

IV. ADJOURN

*Motion by Boyce, seconded by Gregory.
Passed Unanimously.*


MAYOR


CITY CLERK