

City of Clermont
MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
February 21, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

The City Council met in a workshop session on Tuesday, February 21, 2023 in the Clermont City Council Chambers. The workshop was called to order at 6:30 pm with the following Council Members present: Mayor Murry, Council Members Pines, Entsuah, Gonzalez, and Purvis.

Other City officials present were City Manager Bulthuis, City Attorney Mantzaris, and Deputy City Clerk Wisniewski.

OPENING COMMENTS

City Manager Bulthuis stated this workshop was to update Council on the water and sewer rates and the system itself. Most of the updates were planned between 2017 and 2019. Information will be provided on the status of the projects and the needed upgrades in the future.

AGENDA ITEM

Water and Sewer System Update

Public Services Director Brunson reviewed the current water and wastewater projects including the expansion of the wastewater facility. Mr. Brunson provided the status of the project and future updates coming forth.

Discussion ensued on the capacity the wastewater facility provides to the Town of Oakland, City of Minneola and the Town of Montverde. Council discussed the contracts the city has with each municipality, including the amount the city charges for the service.

Murry Hamilton, Vice President of Raftelis, introduced himself to Council and gave an overview of the water and wastewater rate study that his company conducted for the city.

The last rate study conducted on water and wastewater was done in 2017, and at that time, Council implemented an annual index for the water system to adjust rates year over year. The water and wastewater indexing provisions are based on the prior year change in the GDP price deflator index which lags actual inflation by almost two years. Mr. Hamilton stated that Clermont utility rates are the lowest in Lake County.

The city is in the process of expanding the wastewater treatment plant and making water and wastewater transmission upgrades and improvements. Mr. Hamilton reviewed the estimated cost of the expansion and improvements and the needs to fund the project and sustain adequate reserve.

Council discussed the utility rates for customers and utility impact fees, bonds versus direct loans for the project and what is in the best interest of the city. There was talk regarding a future Council being able to change what this council decides to which Mr. Bulthuis remarked that there is always a possibility of a future Council not wanting to move forward with decisions of a past Council.

Mr. Hamilton explained that according to the study Raftelis preformed, their recommendation would be to phase in adjusted rates for residents utilities over a time period of 5 years.

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This would be to match inflation over the years and bring Clermont rates up to standard to continue service and improvements.

City Manager Bulthuis explained there will be a contract for wastewater treatment plant improvements on the next meeting agenda for approval, the pricing of the contract is good until March 1. By waiting until after March 1 to approve the contract, the price could increase.

Mr. Bulthuis spoke about water and sewer rates and setting rates. The previous Council went with an automatic index, GDP price deflator, for adjusting prices every year. If the consensus from Council is to move forward with the set rates, then staff will send a special mailing to all water and sewer customers regarding the change to notify residents of a meeting March 28 for Council to consider the price adjustment.

Council gave staff direction to place the contract for wastewater treatment plant improvements on the agenda and to move forward with notifying customers.

Council agreed to have the rate adoption and the presentation at a regular City Council meeting.

CLOSING COMMENTS

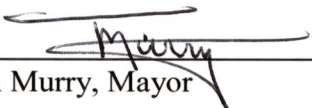
The notices for water testing will be included in the utility bills this month.

City Attorney Mantzaris informed Council of the annual ethics training required by the state. The class can be in person or virtual for a total of 4 hours.

City Manager Bulthuis informed Council of a community meeting on March 8 at 6pm regarding the redevelopment of the 8th Street pier and surrounding area. Council is invited to attend, and requested they sit separately to observe.

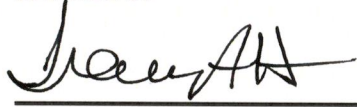
ADJOURN: With no further comments, this workshop adjourned at 8:40 pm.

APPROVED:



Tim Murry, Mayor

ATTEST:



Tracy Ackroyd Howe, MMC
City Clerk

