

REGULAR MEETING

OCTOBER 19, 2004

A Regular Meeting of the Arcadia City Council was held on October 19, 2004 at 6:00 p.m. in Room D of the Way Building at 23 N. Polk Avenue. Councilmembers attending were: Whitlock, Heine, Johnson, Goodman and Fazzone. Also in attendance were: Administrator Strube, City Attorney Holloman, Fire Chief Rutherford, Assistant City Marshal Anderson, Special Projects Coordinator Hewett, Ms. Way and Recorder Baumann.

Mayor Whitlock called the meeting to order.

The Invocation was given by Pastor Ted Land of the First Presbyterian Church of Arcadia.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The minutes of the Public Budget Hearing of September 13, 2004 and the Final Budget Public Hearing of September 28, 2004 were adopted on motion of Heine; seconded by Goodman and carried.

Goodman moved to adopt Resolution No. 2004-27 in Appreciation to Richard P. Fazzone for serving as Mayor; seconded by Heine and carried. Fazzone thanked the Council.

RESOLUTIONS 2004-27

WHEREAS, RICHARD P. FAZZONE was elected by his fellow Council Members to serve as Mayor of the City of Arcadia from October 7, 2003 to October 5, 2004, and

WHEREAS, because of his dedication to office, his willingness to serve, and his strong commitment to make Arcadia a better community, he faithfully served in this position of leadership,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Arcadia that the Council, along with other City Officials, do hereby express their sincere appreciation to Mayor Richard P. Fazzone for serving the City with diligence, dignity and steadfastness, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this expression of appreciation be presented to Richard P. Fazzone at a regular scheduled Council Meeting and that this Resolution be made a part of the minutes of that meeting.

PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ARCADIA, FLORIDA, IN REGULAR SESSION this 19th day of October, 2004.

/s/ PAUL P. WHITLOCK
PAUL P. WHITLOCK
MAYOR

/s/ ROOSEVELT JOHNSON
ROOSEVELT JOHNSON
COUNCILMEMBER

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(Resolution 2004-27 continued)

/s/ ROBERT W. HEINE
ROBERT W. HEINE
VICE-MAYOR

/s/ SHARON T. GOODMAN
SHARON T. GOODMAN
COUNCILMEMBER

/s/ DAVID C. HOLLOMAN
DAVID C. HOLLOMAN
CITY ATTORNEY

/s/ EDWARD J. STRUBE
EDWARD J. STRUBE
CITY ADMINISTRATOR

/s/ MARGARET WAY
MARGARET WAY
CITY ADVISOR

ATTEST:

/s/ RACHELLE M. BAUMANN
RACHELLE M. BAUMANN
CITY RECORDER

Mayor Whitlock proclaimed the month of November as "National Epilepsy Awareness Month" and urged everyone to spread the true message about Epilepsy throughout their communities. Fazzone moved to endorse this action; seconded by Johnson and carried.

Ms. Jackie Tucker with 5 Star Youth of America addressed Council to request permission to close Oak Street at Orange Avenue East to the Courthouse on Thursday, November 11, 2004 from 9:00 A.M. until 10:30 A.M. for the annual Veterans Day Parade. Goodman moved to grant the request to close Oak Street at Orange Avenue East to the Courthouse on November 11, 2004 from 9:00 A.M. until 10:30 A.M. for the Veterans Day Parade; seconded by Johnson and carried. Subject to approval by the City Marshal and Fire Chief.

Pastor Ted Land on behalf of the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) addressed Council to request support of a Disaster Relief Coordinator to be employed by The DeSoto County Economic Development Council. The position would be paid by funds made available through the United Way of Sarasota. This position would coordinate all relief efforts for one (1) year or less. Fazzone stated that he would not want to do anything that would downplay what FEMA could do for us. Pastor Land stated that FEMA supports the establishment of this position. Mr. Bill Hackney with VOAD then addressed Council stating that this position would not be managed or hired by the County. Goodman inquired who this person would answer to and was informed they would answer to the DeSoto County Economic Development Council. Goodman stated that she agrees that there is a need for someone from

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the local area/community to oversee the relief efforts as they will be here to see it through. Ms. Lois Wright asked why the County had refused Jay Gardner's offer to help out and was told that Mr. Gardner is a General, they are used to giving orders. This position will not give orders or make decisions. They will have responsibility, however no authority. The estimated pay will be between \$800.00 and \$1,200.00 per week. Johnson stated that it is very generous of the United Way to fund this position. Mr. Stan Abram asked if the City's interests would be addressed on the same level as the County and was informed that they would be which is why this position would not be paid from either agency. Mr. Hackney noted that the FEMA long term plan would be a large part of this position. Attorney Holloman recommends that Council sign a letter of endorsement rather than a resolution as was originally requested noting that a resolution is an expression of a governing body. Johnson then moved that the Council sign a letter of endorsement for the hiring of a Disaster Relief Coordinator to be paid for by funds from The United Way; seconded by Goodman and carried.

A report of Police Fines and Forfeitures for the Month of September 2004 indicates fines \$1,303.35, law enforcement \$81.00 and radios \$62.50.

Administrator Strube addressed Council regarding Budget issues for Fiscal Year (FY) 2004/2005 noting that the 3% merit raise would not be forthcoming do to projected revenue shortfalls. Administrator Strube stated that the State may grant additional relief tax relief to homeowners and could again lower the projected tax revenue; this may not be known until December 2004. At this time it is anticipated that we will receive a reduction in tax revenues of between 25%-35%. Administrator Strube stated that even if we get through this year we will still have to deal with shortfalls next year as not all repairs or new homes will be completed before a new tax year begins. Administrator Strube said that he can not in good conscience say that the budget that was passed for FY 2004/2005 is ok and will hold true. He then reported that along with our projection of reduced revenues we have now received the proposed increases to the liability insurance of \$28,000.00, workers compensation of \$16,000.00 and health insurance of \$17,000.00. He estimates that costs must be reduced by about \$400,000.00. The proposed budget cut of \$387,443 are all personnel driven and include the forgoing of merit raises, Police longevity raises, one week bonus to employees with over 20 years employment, vacation & sick buyback and Christmas bonus along with not filling vacant positions with the exception of public safety personnel. Administrator Strube believes that any cuts should be done equally to all. He also noted that a reduction in pay may also be necessary in order to avoid laying off any employees. After discussion Council agreed to hold a budget work session on Tuesday, October 26, 2004 at 4:00 P.M. and request that all department heads be present. Fazzone stated that he is concerned with cutting the Parks Department and would like to still see programs for the youth.

Administrator Strube reported that to date the City's FEMA Project Worksheets are estimated at over \$9,000,000.00 of which the City must match 5% or possibly \$500,000.00. These Project Work Sheets do not take into account any upgrades to projects. Administrator Strube noted that after all the project work sheets are submitted we can get a loan as an advance of FEMA funds in order to begin the repair and restoration process.

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The Flowage report of Air-Cadia, Inc. for the month of September 2004 for the Municipal Airport was presented.

Mr. Bill Minnear of Air Cadia addressed Council to report that since Hurricane Charley gas sales at the airport are down noting that many planes were damaged in Arcadia and Port Charlotte. He stated that he needs the use of heavy equipment to remove some of the metal debris. Mr. Minnear also noted that some of the tenants do not feel that they should have to pay hanger rent as the doors are off of the hangers. They do still have their belongings in them. Fazzone moved to deny the request for the suspension of rent payments on damaged hangers; seconded by Heine and carried.

The Fire Department report of ambulance runs and collections for the month of August 2004 was presented showing mutual aid given was 8, and mutual aid received was 0.

Fire Chief Rutherford then reported that all of his staff are relocated to Station 1 as Station 2 suffered extensive damage and has not yet been repaired.

The September 2004 Public Works report was presented.

Heine stated that he would like to have all department heads attend Council meetings, especially the Director of Public Works. Fazzone agreed.

Two letters of request were received and discussed, one from Betty Long of Lot 79 Kentucky Avenue and one from Linda Hinson of 72 Colorado Avenue. Both letters request that they be allowed to replace their damaged mobile homes with a new mobile at their current address. Fazzone moved to grant the request from Betty Long of Lot 79 Kentucky Avenue and the request of Linda Hinson of 72 Colorado Avenue allowing them both to replace their damaged mobile homes with new homes at the Arcadia Municipal Mobile Home Park; seconded by Heine and carried.

Administrator Strube addressed Council to request authorization for the Mayor and the City Administrator to sign all appropriate documents for the Department of Community Affairs Emergency Housing Grant awarded to the City in the amount of \$217,989.80. Steve Weeks, City Grants Coordinator addressed Council stating that originally we had wanted to use the grant funds to repair or replace roofs, however if funds are put into a home the home must then be brought up to code. The Emergency Housing Grant will build three (3) new homes; all funds must be spent within six (6) months. Mr. Weeks suggests that if more than three persons qualify a lottery system be put in place to select the three individuals who would get a new home. It was noted that DeSoto County has been awarded over \$700,000.00 in SHIP funds which can also be used in the City. Heine moved to authorize the Mayor and City Administrator to sign all necessary documents in connection with a Emergency Housing Grant with the Department of Community Affairs in the amount of \$217,989.80; seconded by Fazzone and carried.

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Ms. Geine Martin with the Arcadia/DeSoto Beautification Committee inquired if there was a plan in place to pick up behind Grubbs. It was noted that when Grubbs picks up their last pass they are to rake up everything.

Ms. Martha Craven with the Main Street Program requested that light bulbs be placed in all of the lights downtown before the Fall Festival which is scheduled for Saturday, October 30, 2004.

Kathy Gamiotea reported that USDA does have home loans for the low income population.

Special Projects Coordinator Ernie Hewett addressed Council and reported that the City does have contractors in place to begin repair work on Fire Station 2 and the Airport, however we are waiting for FEMA funds as the insurance funds received are not enough to cover all of the expenses. On Saturday structural engineers with FEMA began to look at all City, County and School buildings to review the project worksheets and insurance claims as some of the original estimates appear to be too low.

Administrator Strube noted that our roads are a major concern and Craig Smith and Associates are working with the City on this issue. It seems that the multiple hurricanes have accelerated the decline of our roads. Water and sewer lines will be addressed at the same time that the roads are being reviewed.

Administrator Strube then reported that the temporary housing facilities are a go. Ernie Hewett inquired if the City should be charging an additional fee for the additional water and sewer hookups when RV's or trailers are placed in the yard of damaged homes. It was noted that some of the RV's are occupied by relatives of the homeowner who suffered damage and not the homeowner themselves. Current City Code does not allow for the placement of trailers in the City, however due to extensive damage caused by three (3) hurricanes they are being allowed in connection with FEMA. FEMA will keep up with the eligibility of individuals and getting the RV's removed within eighteen (18) months.

It was noted that the Department of Transportation (DOT) will be cleaning up the state highways such as SR 70 and SR 17.

Johnson stated that he will be attending the Florida League of Cities Legislative Conference in November and that a free Disaster Relief Assistance session will be held on Friday during the conference.

Fazzone informed Council that Karen Blanchette, Community Services Manager for the Senior Friendship Center sent a letter to the City requesting that funds originally designated to the Center from the City's FY 04/05 Budget be applied towards repair of the Margaret Way Building. Fazzone moved that a letter be prepared for the Mayor's signature thanking Ms. Blanchette for donating their funds back to the City in this time of need; seconded by Johnson and carried.

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Heine thanked outgoing Mayor Fazzone for all of his hard work during the hurricanes.

Mayor Whitlock believes that all City employees should be able to play golf at the City owned course for free. Fazzone moved to waive greens fees at the Arcadia Municipal Golf Course for all current and retired city employees; however they must still pay cart fees; seconded by Goodman and carried.

The Central Regional Planning Council (CRPC) will hold a disaster recovery meeting at Warner Southern in Lake Wales later this month.

It was noted that FEMA's first community meeting to discuss long range goals will be held on Thursday, October 21, 2004 at 6:00 P.M. at the DeSoto Middle School.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.


CITY RECORDER


PRESIDENT