

## **CITY OF APOPKA**

### **Minutes of the City Council Grant Workshop held on December 15, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., in the City of Apopka Council Chambers.**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Bryan Nelson  
Commissioner Doug Bankson  
Commissioner Kyle Becker  
Commissioner Alexander Smith  
Commissioner Diane Velazquez  
City Administrator Edward Bass  
City Attorney Michael Rodriguez

**PRESS PRESENT:** John Peery, The Apopka Chief

### **PRESENTATION**

Edward Bass said this is the Grant Workshop that we promised and said before we get started, he wanted to recognize our Staff including Shakenya Harris-Jackson; Nicole Kennedy; as well as the Fire Department; the Police Department; as well as the Public Services Department. He said all of the departments have been very instrumental in this process and have worked very hard to obtain these grants. He noted that it takes a lot of effort and a lot of work to get to step 1 and said they've done a remarkable job. He said we have a good grant team and said they work very well together and you'll be able to see the process as we move through these grants. He said staff is here as well if you have any questions or need additional information regarding any of these grants. He said some of these grants you've seen as they've come forward and been approved by Council.

He said we'll start with the grants that we currently have and are working through. He said if you recall, in our budget process, we applied for some grants for Police and Fire, consisting of personnel and equipment and said he'll show you those grants. He said unfortunately, those are the grants that we were not awarded. He said then, we'll talk about some new awarded grants and those are grants that are newly awarded to us. He said as promised, we'll talk about the rescue dollars and said he has a slide for that and you'll be able to see those dollars. He said we'll also review the Duke Energy dollars and said some of those dollars have already been appropriated and some have been designated so we'll go through all of that. He said we'll discuss some pending grants that we're still working on. From there, he said we'll review the infrastructure bill and said we'll review the slide on this and show you the amount of dollars and the different categories that are available. He said as you know, this bill is still being put together and we've been working with Congresswoman Demmings to make sure we get our projects in for those dollars as well. He said we'll have time for questions and comments at the end.

### **AWARDED GRANTS**

He said in FY-21, we received approximately \$5.2 million and said already in FY-22, which we're in now, we've received \$12.7 million and as we move through these, you'll see this and said to date, we've been awarded almost \$18 million dollars so staff has been busy.

### **PUBLIC SERVICES**

Edward said we're currently working on a grant for our Golden Gem Apopka West Storage Pump Station and the Storage Facility. He said this was a 50% match grant and continues to be a 50% match as we move through this project.

### **RECREATION**

Edward said that as you're aware, the Land and Water Conservation Fund awarded us \$107,000 toward improvements to our Alonzo Williams Park, including the trail, parking, the pavilion and some park benches.

He said the FRDAP grant is for \$50,000 and is for playground facilities at the Northwest Recreational Complex and will include the water fountains and benches as well.

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Edward said some of the open grants we have as you know are the State Fire Marshall Grant that we've received through the Legislature in the amount of \$1 million dollars and said we have a match for that million dollars, which is the \$2 million dollars that was budgeted for the construction of Fire Station #6.

He said the volunteer Florida Cert Grant that we applied for was a \$5,000 grant that the Fire Department's working through now putting that CERT team together which is a group of volunteer citizens.

### **UNFUNDED GRANTS**

Edward said some of the grants we applied for that we were not awarded include:

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

- 1) Assistance to Firefighters Grant – This was for the Exhaust System, which is the system that we talked about for the removal of the vehicle exhaust for all Stations.
- 2) Safer Grant – This was for 6 new positions that were in our Budget that we were hoping to receive the grant money for those 6 positions but unfortunately, we did not. He said

that request was \$1.2 million and said keep in mind, these dollars you see for personnel was for a 3 year period. He said we hoped to get the grant to fund this for the 3 year period.

- 3) Fire Prevention and Safety – He said this was for the educational trailer that we hoped we would get where we could partner with neighboring jurisdictions to bring on an educational trailer.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Edward said you'll recall from our Budget, we discussed that if the grants were not funded, we would bring these back to you for consideration.

Edward said what we've done is the 6 positions for the Fire Department, as you recall were for 3 new District Chiefs and 3 new Firefighter positions. He said what we've done here is we're recommend hiring in March of 2022, those 6 positions and said the number of \$261,150 is a prorated portion of those salaries to complete FY-22. He said the equipment for those 6 firefighters will be about \$45,000 and said we'll need an additional District Chief vehicle at approximately \$50,000.

He said regarding the Exhaust System, we originally applied for a grant in the amount of \$115,000 however after speaking with Chief Wylam, there is an exhaust system where the actual apparatus goes on the vehicle exhaust and the Fire Department would prefer we upgrade to this system. He said the grant would only let us put in the exhaust system in but said this is better technology and allows us to put this on every vehicle so if you move the vehicle from station to station, it won't matter as it will always be on the vehicle. He said that's an added cost as this will be \$250,000 to do this to all 25 vehicles. In addition, any new vehicles we purchase will be a part of the cost for that vehicle moving forward. He said it's roughly \$10,000 per vehicle.

Edward said the total request to fund the 6 positions and the vehicle exhaust system is about \$606,000 in Fiscal Year 2022.

### **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Edward said as you are aware as every one of these grants has come before you, the Police Department receives a lot of smaller grants which add up to a total of \$339,000 in grants that they've received. He said some of these grants include funding for overtime; aggressive driving; bulletproof vest replacement; education; equipment and supplies.

Edward said as you can see, there are a lot of little grants that the Police Department has applied for and we're currently working through these open grants. He said as discussed in the budget workshop, we applied for the COPS grant for 10 positions and said we were hoping we'd get funded for the 10 positions. He said if you recall in the budget, we budgeted the equipment of \$200,000 for those 10 positions and this amount is already in our current budget. He said we also budgeted for the vehicles for those 10 positions in the amount of \$500,000. He said the equipment and vehicles have already been appropriated. He said we hoped that we'd get the grant for the 10 positions that we applied for however we did not. He said you can see the list of municipalities that received them including Miami-Dade; Ft. Pierce and Ft. Myers.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Edward said the total request we're asking for is \$472,000, and we will present this to you at the CC Meeting following this Workshop. He said we recommend hiring 5 of the 10 Officers in January of 2022 and hire the other 5 Officers in April of 2022.

Commissioner Velazquez said so we'll have 5 start in January and 5 in April to which Edward confirmed.

### **AWARDED GRANTS**

Edward said the grants we've been awarded and are currently working through include:

- 1) Orange County CDBG Entitlement Grant, which is our South Apopka Sidewalk Project (Phase I). He said we have been awarded \$249,950 for that with NO match requirement.
- 2) Florida DEP Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant, which is for the Camp Wewa Acquisition. He said we've been awarded \$1,000,000 for that and said we have our \$1,000,000 match for that grant.
- 3) Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds – FDEP Grant, is for the Camp Wewa Septic to Sewer Conversion we've been awarded \$250,000 for that and said there is a \$250,000 match for this.

- 4) Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds – FDEP Grant, is for the RV & Trailer Park Package Plant to Sewer Conversion. He said this grant is in the amount of \$5,000,000 and that match portion will come from those individuals that take advantage of this grant to connect their current sewer to our City sewer.

### **AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN**

Edward said, as you recall a few meetings back, I gave you the packet on the American Rescue Plan, which explains how these dollars are to be used. He said as we go through this, they continue to make changes to what we use this funding for. He said we need to be very careful in how we spend these monies and said he feels confident that what you'll see before you that you'll be good with those dollars and said he'll explain more as we move through. He provided some of the areas that we can use these dollars for including:

- 1) Support Public Health Expenditures
- 2) Premium Pay for Essential Workers
- 3) Water, Sewer & Broadband Infrastructure
- 4) Lost Public Sector Revenue

He said he'll show you where we've allocated some of these dollars and provide some of the reasoning behind our recommendations. He said as you know, we were awarded a little more than \$7,000,000 and we've received \$3,518,653 currently and that is sitting in our Grant Fund. He said if you recall, from our Fiscal Year 2022 budget approval hearings in September, we've already allocated \$1,000,000 of that \$3,518,653 to road resurfacing. He said you'll see that tonight in your City Council Meeting in a Presentation on the Pavement Conditions Program that Deodat will present. He said we've listed Yother's Road as it is one of the worst roads in Apopka and said we've been patching it for a while. He said we're proposing to use \$1,000,000 of this as Deodat has said this project will be anywhere from \$800,000 to \$1,000,000 to resurface and pave that road. He said the Fire Department Exhaust System that was talked about earlier was \$250,000 and said we're proposing to use some of these dollars for that system to our Public Safety vehicles. He said the Camp Wewa Septic to Sewer Conversion has a \$250,000 match so we're proposing to use \$250,000 of these dollars for this as it meets the definition of an allowable project. He said we're proposing to use \$2,500,000 of the \$3,518,653 dollars for these projects, which leaves \$1,000,000 in the grant fund, earmarked for the American Rescue Plan. He said he wants to be cautious and said if they do come back and give us different uses and places we can use these dollars that can benefit us in other areas. He said the Mayor has been very instrumental in working with our other elected officials and trying to get more dollars as we feel like we were shortchanged in this distribution. He said the City of

Ocoee got about \$24,000,000 and said our population is not that much different but said we're still working really hard with them to see if we can get some additional funding.

### **DUKE ENERGY DOLLARS**

Edward provided a list of the items from the meeting where you approved to designate the Duke Energy dollars. He said if you recall, we talked about paying off the Tower Truck but elected not to do that and said those dollars were used to help with the purchase of Camp Wewa. He said you've already approved the Budget Amendment for the Amphitheater Bathroom and Concessions as well as the Fran Carlton Storage Building and those have already been appropriated. He said the Fire Engine replacement for #1 was included in the FY/22 budget in the amount of \$300,000. The drainage for Border Lake, Lake Hammer and Lake Page have been designated but we have not yet done a Budget Amendment for those however you will when the time comes to use those dollars. He said the Connelly Property Design is also designated and will come back to you in the form of a Budget Amendment. You've approved the Birding Park Improvements through a previous Budget Amendment. He said the Welcome Signs and the Resource Center dollars have been designated but we have not done a budget amendment or appropriated those dollars.

### **PENDING GRANTS**

Edward said there are a few other grants out there that we've submitted applications for including:

- 1) Water Protection Grant for Innovative Technology in the amount of \$2,500,000 that Nicole Kennedy has been working really hard on this grant. This is for citizens that choose to move from septic to mini-sewer plants. He said we've applied for these to help our citizens in those areas.
- 2) CDBG Mitigation Grant in the amount of \$2,400,000 that has been applied for and should cover pipe replacement for our sewer, utility lines we need to replace.
- 3) CDBG Grant in the amount of \$850,000 is for the CRA Sidewalk project (Phase II).

Commissioner Bankson said are these on top of the \$18,000,000 or are they part of this to which Edward confirmed that they are in addition to the \$18,000,000.

Commissioner Velazquez said with these that we're waiting for, do we have an idea of when

we'll know something to which Edward stated they're open but we should know in 2022.

Edward said keep in mind that once the grants are awarded, they'll come to you with an Agreement.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE BILL**

Edward said there is a lot of money in the Infrastructure Bill and said as you know, the Federal Government is still working behind the scenes on this but there are a lot of dollars in there and we want to make sure we get our big projects in there. He provided a slide of all of the projects that are included and the dollars that are labeled for this. He said staff will continue monitoring this and we will put in for everything that's on our 5 year plan and things that we can qualify for so we can get some of these dollars. He said as you know, we have our big reclaim project as well as some road projects that we will hopefully qualify for. He said we'll be working very closely with all of our partners to make sure we get everything we have that we can qualify for.

### **QUESTIONS**

Commissioner Velazquez said she knows we talked about Yother's Road being one of the worst roads and said she knows we have a street study and asked if that's available to us.

Edward said at the Council Meeting tonight, there's a presentation on this and Deodat will lay out the 2 year plan for this. He said our Consultant we hired for this will attend via Zoom and they'll provide a summary of how they rated all of the roads and the breakdown.

Commissioner Bankson said first, he wanted to thank all of those who worked on this to get this kind of resources through grant writing. He said he knows grant writing is tedious and tiresome and said good job on that. He said regarding the Infrastructure Bill, we need to work just as hard to have our projects ready because this will create massive inflation of goods and services as well so the cost of all of these projects will increase. He said we need to stay ahead of that curve. He said between the Police and Fire, less the exhaust, will be \$828,200 and asked whether these grants free up somewhere else in the budget to help us deal with this or does this need to all come from reserves?

Edward said this will actually come from carryover appropriations and said we're doing the audit now and based upon the audit numbers we're seeing, we should not have to get into the reserves for these. He said if you recall, the last 2 years, our budgets have used reserves to balance the budget. He said we wanted to apply for these grant funds to see if we could have an opportunity to receive some of these grant funds before we use our taxpayer dollars. He said we were able to take care of these items in our current 2022 budget. He said we're seeing some carryover appropriations from our 2021 audit that will be able to cover the additional \$800,000.

Commissioner Smith said he also wanted to thank staff for an outstanding job in applying for the grants and receiving them. He said you've done a great job and we commend you for your work. He said in reference to the American Rescue Dollars, he said he has some concern and knows we mentioned that we wanted to spend these funds as much as possible in big chunks but said he feels it's also important that we invest some of these dollars back into the community as well. He provided a couple of items of things that were listed as to where these funds may be spent and he would like these to be considered. He said he'd like us to spend some of these dollars on our youth programs at the Billie Dean Community Center and maybe set aside \$50,000 to do this. He said our non-profits have been hurt by the pandemic as they couldn't have fund raisers to generate funds and would like to set aside another \$50,000 for non-profits. He said in addition, we have some residents who suffered and couldn't pay their City utility bills and asked if we could set aside some funds up to \$100,000 to help up to 200 households pay their utility bills. He said he for our small businesses, he suggested setting aside \$90,000 for this. He said in addition, our First Responders did an exceptional job during the pandemic with helping our community and put themselves at risk as well as their families and said he would like to allocate a \$500 bonus for our First Responders. Lastly, he suggested we also set aside \$50,000 for Community Policing for Community Events.

Edward said we will take these items under advisement and come back to you at a future Council meeting.

Commissioner Becker said to be clear, what you'll be asking for during the Council meeting will all be coming out of appropriations to which Edward confirmed yes. He then asked if we didn't have a better indication of what our carry forward appropriations are going to be, meaning, we could've had advertised and funded these positions prior to.

Edward said we're currently under audit and said we have to authorize and appropriate the positions before we can advertise for them and said we also wanted to wait to hear whether we received the grants first. He said future wise, we could look at changing this however, we need to be careful about this in the event that the auditors come back with a significant adjustment. He said he's confident we're ok. Commissioner Becker asked what our current unassigned reserve balance to which Edward said that at our last audit, it was \$14,000,000. He said the 2021 budget is still under audit and the auditors continue to work on this. He said once the 2021 audit is complete, we can give you the new balance. He said the Firefighter positions that we're hiring are a pivot from what was requested in the grants and asked if the strategy has changed.

Edward said we will promote 3 District Chief positions and 3 Firefighters and said once those 3 District Chief's are promoted, that leaves 6 Firefighter positions to be filled. Commissioner Becker asked if those were Firefighter Paramedics or just Firefighters to which Edward said if we can get Paramedics, we'll hire Paramedics and said the Paramedic pay is in this budget amendment. He then asked if the Exhaust System is double in terms of expenditure

and asked if the value is greater with this upgrade to which Edward confirmed. Commissioner Becker asked for additional information on the \$5,000,000 for the RV & Trailer Parks Sewer Conversion to which Edward said that the trailer parks that are in our Utility Service area, have package plants currently and said one of them is failing and they'll have to come off of the package plants. Edward explained that this is an opportunity for funding that allows them to come and connect into our sewer system at a 50% reduced fee. He said this is also critical for our V Map and said the matching funds will be paid by the mobile home parks. Commissioner Becker asked about the \$50,000 for the Connelly House coming from the Duke money and said he thought that there was some person that was going to do this for us. Edward stated that that individual has the construction portion of this and that this is for the design portion. He said we're going out to bid for an architectural design service so that we can have one we can use for all of our design projects. Commissioner Becker said it's good that we have the numbers for the grants but it's equally important to understand the dollars that we didn't get from grants, that we applied for to which Edward said there weren't many but said he'll provide that number. Commissioner Becker asked how quickly we can get the positions filled with Police and Fire. Edward said he knows Chief McKinley has been hiring some of our vacant positions we have and said Chief Wylam has a list and is getting ready to bring on some people and said we may have an easier job hiring Fire than Police as we've seen that. He said Chief McKinley has been getting applicants for the Police Department and is doing what he can to promote these positions and said this is a statewide issue.

Edward said he wanted to thank the Mayor and City Council and said it's been a trying time and there's a lot going on and a lot of grants and said we could not do this without the staff and thanked them again for all of their help. He said we've been successful in obtaining these grants.

Mayor Nelson echoed these sentiments and said it's been a much more collaborative effort here in the last 12 months and said Parks and Rec feeds off of Public Works and we all work together to come up with a great plan for these grants. He said as we look at the Infrastructure Bill, we need to go big or go home and said we're going to look at each of the different line items and see what's out there and what we can afford.

**ADJOURNMENT** - There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

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Bryan Nelson, Mayor

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Susan M. Bone, City Clerk