
COMMISSIONERS:

Terry Knowles, Mayor
Eleanor Randall, Vice Mayor
John Martin
DeLoris Roberts
William Carlton

CITY MANAGER:

Chad M. Shryock, City Manager
Donna R. Mayes, City Clerk

CITY ATTORNEY:

Steve Lee

**MINUTES
SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING
AUGUST 15, 2006 @ 7:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Knowles called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Board present was: Mayor Knowles, Vice Mayor Randall, Commissioners Carlton, Martin and Roberts. Staff present: City Manager Shryock and City Clerk Mayes.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Vice Mayor Randall gave the Invocation and Commissioner Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA

Moved to approve the agenda of the Special Meeting

Motion – Commissioner Martin

Second - Commissioner Roberts

Vote – 5-0

1. FIRE ASSESSMENT

City Manager Shryock informed that the Fire Assessment Committee had met on August 14th and made recommendations. He presented an overview and graphs of the three options, of which #3 was recommended by the committee. Option #1 was the existing formula but Option #3 seemed the fairest and most efficient at \$0.040 per square feet for non residential with a cap at 10,000 sq. ft. and dropping to \$0.010 per square feet above that. The residential rates remained the same. He advised that going with this option, the yearly cost would be covered to the County for Fire Assessment, reducing the cost by \$36,000. He recommended leasing the Fire Department building to the County for one dollar a year, letting them pick up the maintenance and utilities, with the City including their part in the payment to them.

Moved to approve on First Reading Ordinance 2006-43 by Title Only

Motion – Commissioner Martin

Second – Vice Mayor Randall

An Ordinance of the City Commission of the City of Hawthorne, Florida, relating to the provision of fire services and collection of special assessments therefore in the City of Hawthorne, setting forth purpose and definitions; making legislative determination of special benefit and fair apportionment; setting forth a schedule of assessment rates; adopting an assessment roll; imposing a fire service assessment; providing for collection of the fire service assessment on property tax bills; and providing for an effective date.

Discussion – City Manager Shryock related that second reading would be on September 11th and notices must be sent to all property owners twenty (20) days prior to the meeting date.

Vote – 4-1 Commissioner Carlton voting NO.

2. POLICE DEPARTMENT PRESENTATION

City Manager Shryock provided copies of the executive summary to the Board and presented his review of the cost of establishing a department for law enforcement. This model presented provides for 3.1 full time equivalent employees. The Hawthorne Police Department would not replace the Sheriff's Department but rather to enhance the services for greater visibility and better response times. The County has requested that the City opt into the MSTU for Law Enforcement currently at 1.7816 mills, generating \$77,247 in revenue, but this mill would go against the City's 10 mill cap. If the City were to establish a local police department, we could enter into mutual aid agreements with area agencies for backup. City Manager Shryock related he was confident that a local police department could be established for \$150,000 for the first year with a 2.0 mils plus the fine revenue. Discussion on issues such as salary range, vehicles, which Mr. Shryock expressed, the City could get donated through other cities, office space that is available at the wastewater treatment plant. The largest concern within the proposal was communications however; Alachua County Sheriff's Department currently provides dispatch services to the City of Waldo at no cost. They currently dispatch all emergency calls within the city and there would be mutual benefits to the County in continuing these services.

Benefits of a Local Police Department would be a decrease in crime rate, visibility or police presence, enhanced response time and greater opportunity to engage in community policing activities. City Manager Shryock anticipated a phased implementation to the establishment of a police department but would anticipate that it should be fully implemented within 6 months of the adoption of an ordinance establishing the department.

Mayor Knowles encouraged not giving up home rule to the County, who can raise the millage and the City would have no say or control over this. He voiced looking at other avenues in starting the City's own police department or talking with FHP. Commissioners Martin, Roberts and Randall responded with positive remarks in having a local police department and keeping home rule also. Commissioner Carlton expressed his concerns with the cost of establishing and maintaining one and was reluctant to endorse at this time.

Audience members Ms. Wagner and Mr. Higginbotham voiced their support for the City's own local police department.

Commissioner Martin – Moved to approve passing a non-binding resolution approving a Police Department for the City of Hawthorne then withdrew his motion.

Mayor Knowles advised continuing with the direction staff was going and explore ways and means of having the City's own police department. He polled the Board to see if they wanted to proceed with this action.

YES – Mayor Knowles, Commissioners Martin, Roberts and Randall

NO – Commissioner Carlton

Mayor Knowles also related he would inform the Chamber of the decision.

There was discussion on having a Town Hall Meeting with the City and Business Owners to receive their input on the City having their own law enforcement department.

Moved to call a Town Hall Meeting for the specific purpose of discussion on the proposed Police Department, Enforcement and other possibilities, on Tuesday, August 29, 2006 at 6:30 PM in the City Hall Auditorium.

Motion – Commissioner Martin

Second – Vice Mayor Randall

Roll Call Vote – YES'S - Mayor Knowles, Commissioner's Martin, Roberts and Randall

NO'S – Commissioner Carlton

ADJOURN

Moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 PM.

Motion – Commissioner Carlton

Second – Vice Mayor Randall

Vote – Unanimously

These Minutes of the August 15, 2006 Special Meeting are submitted for approval.

Chad M. Shryock, City Manager

Terry Knowles, Mayor

Donna R. Mayes, CMC
City Clerk