

Budget Workshop
August 7, 2003

The Freeport City Council met for a workshop at 7:00pm on August 7, 2003.

Mayor Marse opened the second budget workshop meeting.

Members Present: Mayor J.M. Marse, Council members, Earl King, Jean Arrant, Janice McLean, Mike Helton and Scott Brannon. Also present Clerk Riley.

Councilman Helton gave the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Clerk Riley stated that FL League of Cities insurance rate quotes were in and they would increase about 17%. Thus increasing each person's premium about \$61.00. Councilwoman Arrant asked her Blue Cross/Blue Shield representative to get a quote.

Mayor Marse talked about the retirement plan that now the City pays. He suggested reducing the contribution to 3%. It appears that several employees are taking the money out as soon as the city deposits it. Clerk Riley explained briefly another plan offered by Mutual of America. Mayor Marse asked that we set up a meeting with a representative of MOA and look at alternative options. Another concern was the life insurance that the City pays for employees. Council would like to look at the state retirement plans.

Council wants the front office to get uniform shirts for the City Hall employees.

Auditors fees were increased due to the new regulations of GASB 34, the Council stated that they could hire an internal auditor to help with the adjustment entries during the month.

Discussion on enlarging the City Hall and trying to purchase the property belonging to the American Legion on hwy 331 S for parking. Several ideas were put on the table.

The Council discussed buying a new GATOR for the City. It appears that the old gator has not been serviced in awhile.

Intense discussion was on the Fire Department concerning their requested budget. Councilwoman McLean talked with Ronnie Bell about Walton County taking over all the fire departments in the southern portion of the county. He felt that this would happen within 5-10 years. Councilwoman McLean stated that the proposed budget showed part time employees. Council talked extensively about the County building the substation at Black Creek and the liability of having paid firefighters. The Council agreed that a starting pay scale for the part time help could be \$8.00 per hour, due to the present pay scale of the City employees.

Motion to adjourn at 9:30 pm.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

J.M. Marse, Mayor

Diane Riley, City Clerk

Janice McLean, President of Council