

**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL VISIONING WORKSHOP
CITY OF ARCADIA
SATURDAY, JULY 21, 2012
9:00 AM**

CALL TO ORDER

The workshop session was called to order at approximately 9:00 AM.

Arcadia City Council

Mayor Keith Keene
Deputy Mayor Alice Frierson
Councilman Robert Heine – Absent

Councilman Joseph E. Fink
Councilman Robert Allen

Arcadia City Staff

City Administrator Judi Jankosky
Captain Matt Anderson

City Recorder Virginia Haas

CALL TO ORDER

1. Introduction – Dr. Ted Land, Workshop Facilitator
 - a. Proposed Format of Workshop

Dr. Land requested that Mr. Ernie Hewett act as the scribe and he announced the meeting would follow the same format as the last workshop. Dr. Land reviewed the items on the proposed agenda and asked if there would be anything additional that might like to be addressed. Dr. Land noted if time permits they might talk about promoting investments within the Community and the Golf Course. Councilman Fink requested to speak about the City Finances.

Dr. Land gave the invocation.

2. Summary of January 28, 2012 Workshop

Dr. Land summarized that at the last meeting they talked about the vision for the City and came up with a top priority list which included the Airport, infrastructure, gateways to the City, youth activities and Law Enforcement to name a few key points. Mayor Keene confirmed if time permits we should speak to all the priorities listed from the last meeting. Mayor Keene expressed that it was a great starting point and brought together common goals in a positive improvement for the City and prioritizing items that need addressing.

Dr. Land reviewed the ground rules: Speak no more than three minutes and speak one time to an issue until all have spoken and no arguing back and forth.

3. Airport

Mr. George Chase, Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association,
Airport Support Network Representative for Arcadia Airport

The following is verbatim from Mr. Chase's notes as relayed at the Visioning Workshop on July 21, 2012.

"Our airport has such great potential. Our goal should be to capitalize on that to make it a place where businesses can prosper and grow. Even though it has not seen any growth over the last 20 years it's still self-sustaining and costs the taxpayers nothing.

Local General Aviation Airports like Arcadia can make a huge difference when it comes to attracting new businesses to the area. Statistics show that municipalities that do not have a G.A. Airport within their borders find it much harder to attract new business.

The forming of the Arcadia Airport Advisory Committee has proven to be a brilliant idea. Since that Committee's inception just over three years ago the airport has begun to seek State and Federal Grants. It had been 18 years since the City applied for any grants for our airport.

By now you should have all seen phase one of the new security fence. This grant is from the FDOT and is 100% funded. (No matching funds from the City taxpayers)

Shortly you will see runway resurfacing, runway lighting & re-striping projects underway. When these are finished we will be over *One Million dollars* in grants. Again 100% funded. These projects and more that are in the works, and made possible by lots of hard work by the Committee and Airport Director Judi Jankosky.

However we must change the way we do business. We must begin to do things that will attract new businesses and make it easier for them to start up. Airports make their money by leasing hangars and land.

We have a poor record when it comes to businesses locating at our Airport. A few years ago we had a thriving War Bird repair shop located here. Things didn't work out and the business moved to Punta Gorda.

Trudeau Warbird Enterprises lease 22,150 square feet of hangar space and pay rent of \$72,000 a year. They currently maintain 24 - T-28's plus other Warbirds and also some G.A. aircraft. They employ 10 people. They purchased \$36,000 in fuel last year. On the weekend that they hold their "Wounded Warrior Flyover" they bought \$1,000 of fuel in just that one weekend. Their figures show that for hotels, car rentals, food, and tourist's visits they generate over \$500,000 annually to the local economy in Charlotte County. They spend close to \$300,000 annually on fuel, parts and supplies at the local level.

This business started out here and should still be located here.

Just as a side note they do all major overhauls and repair work inside a very large hangar and the Charlotte County Fire Marshal does not require them to have a fire sprinkler system, something that is being required locally for new businesses at our airport for the same type of work.

Then there is the local Airframe & Power Plant mechanic that filled out an application to operate a business at our airport back in December and still has not gotten approval.

We need to set in place a simple set of procedures that can be followed by any business that wants to locate here and do whatever it takes to help them open up shop.

If you talk to any Chamber of Commerce member they will tell you that the easier it is to start a new business the more businesses you will have.

The potential is here, we must make sure it's utilized.

A change in attitude is in order, from

"We can't do that" to "We can make it happen" – end of comments.

Mr. Chase responded to Dr. Land that the figures are strictly for the Trudeau Warbirds. Mr. Greg Smith confirmed he obtained the same figures.

Dr. Land asked if the Wauchula estimates had been substantiated. Mrs. Jankosky responded that she did not have the exact numbers in front of her however what are included are onsite rentals and when accepting grants that puts people to work which in turn generates money in the community. As to the actual hanger rental numbers she could not remember. Councilman Fink inputted \$2.2 million overall for the entire effect the Airport has on the community. Dr. Land confirmed that includes hotels and meals for all jobs created.

Mr. Chase stated that Trudeau contributes \$500,000 in those type costs to Charlotte County and in his opinion the Trudeau Warbirds should still be located here in Arcadia.

Mayor Keene reported that some time ago he was contacted by a Physician who was thinking about relocating his business to Arcadia. Charlotte Airport has changed a lot and with those changes he could not do certain things and he was looking at Arcadia. We need to look at every aspect to bring businesses here and create the economic impact that those businesses at the Airport can bring to the city.

Councilman Fink thanked Mr. Chase for the information. He explained that he would like to see the City work as a one-stop shopping in having businesses come to the Airport. The rules are there and you fill out the forms or we give the power to the Administrator to handle so we don't have someone waiting for months to open their business. If they want to spend and make money with the Airport it should happen and we should get them in and out as quickly as possible and he gave the example of Walmart.

Mr. Greg Smith inputted that the Wauchula Airport used to have a yearly Gyrocopter event which filled all the hotels and people spent money all week long. He spoke with some of the hotels and they are booked during the event which shows that the Airport has a very big impact in revenues.

Mr. Chase stated the Airport has potential but we need to work on making it easy for people to locate here and grow the airport.

Mayor Keene added that one of the roadblocks is there are no utilities. He thinks that is one opportunity in how can we get utilities to the Airport and there are ways to do this and make us available for economic development. Do we have sewer and water is always the big question and he is suggesting if we can get water available to the Airport setting up businesses will be easier just don't forget about the infrastructure.

Councilman Fink responded if we are able to get infrastructure do we have a consensus to put that on the agenda later and have the Attorney supply a list of business criteria that we can give to staff to deal with this directly so it doesn't have to come to Council except through the consent agenda. He would like to see it done this way and empower staff after the form is secured then and if no agreement secured it comes to Council for review otherwise it is placed on the consent agenda.

Mr. Greg Smith stated that there is an easement on Forest Pine owned by Bobby Mixon which would allow access to run the waterline.

Mr. Hewitt added that there was a plan at one time to run a line during the Casa San Juan Bosco project however that was never approached. Mrs. Jankosky responded that no loop was added to the project and the project was already approved.

Mrs. Jankosky explained that it would cost \$1.5 to \$2 million to bring the sewer line however the County is willing. She stated that Airport projects are gradual in how they work because projects are seen in priority where safety and security measures are addressed first then we have to complete the Airport master plan. The water and sewer extensions will be included in the master plan however it may be 2016 before that happens. The Airport Committee is reviewing the rules to establish businesses and address minimum standards.

Mayor Keene asked how long the lease is for the current FBO and has the audit been completed. Mrs. Jankosky responded that the Air-Cadia lease is 2 years and 8 months longer and the audit is complete. The audit will be provided for the next budget meeting.

Deputy Mayor Frierson stated that when we address businesses going in we need some guidelines as to the business so we don't have hodgepodge going in at the Airport. She noted that the Advisory Committee could give input as to how they see it as they are all connected to the Airport and recognize all the issues.

Mr. George Chase responded that is an excellent idea. Dr. Land asked who flies out of Punta Gorda as there are lots of changes with a new control tower, new roads and upgrades to the terminal. This means that some of those businesses are under the restrictions growth has placed upon them which will impact their access. This will make our Airport that much more attractive so let's do what we can to make Arcadia Airport attractive.

Dr. Land stated that they have naturally moved into discussing infrastructure and talking about providing water and sewer to the Airport and asked who might want to begin the discussion.

4. Infrastructure

Councilman Allen stated that since we have started the new budget because of the lack of funds it may be impossible to improve infrastructure at this time however Council will do whatever they can but you can't pull money out of the air. He continued that the main topic is going to be how to generate revenue to do anything. We also have debt services we have to pay off. We don't like to pay taxes and revenue has been stable, not increasing, which will not allow us to include the infrastructure in the budget. There are many things that need to be done and it is always money which is also what the problem is with the Airport.

Deputy Mayor Frierson stated that Councilman Allen said it well and we are aware of the problems with infrastructure and for the public to condemn us because we don't do these projects it is all about lack of money. We can vision all we want and it is still about money.

Councilman Fink stated when the economy comes back, and it will, we are still the United States of America, we will get out of what we are in now. The infrastructure may not have been put into place because of the lack of money but we do a disservice unless we look into ourselves and the County and this is what we expect to be done. The coastal counties won't expand anymore. They are looking into limiting growth. He is not suggesting that we want to be a Sarasota or Manatee county but we are fooling ourselves into the belief that we don't want things to change. Unless you structure change you allow change to occur and the result is chaos. We need to look at the bigger picture and look where the City can and should expand as a City into the County if it exists and pull it off and make a viable City again. It is the key to the health of the City and attracting people to move to the City. If we don't do this then we might as well figure we are Pine Level and that means outlining where infrastructure needs to go. We have a new sewer and water plant and those are big pieces in this puzzle. The County can't move water on the North side of the City but we can. We can't move water on East side but the County can. We need a joint planning agreement with the County as to how and where expansion should take place today so when the economy comes back we will have everything step up.

Dr. Dixon stated his concern is that we constantly hear about the financial problems the City is in and he is waiting to hear about a solution. How do we resolve the problem with the City? What do we need to do to balance the budget?

Mr. Greg Smith agreed with Councilman Fink and stated that he thinks we need to make plans in a vision as to what needs to be done so when revenues increase we can jump right in. He asked why we pay to give water to the orange groves up at the North end of town when it costs to pump it out of ground. Why do we have a lot of businesses that operate out of their houses and pay no commercial taxes when legitimate businesses pay the brunt of the taxes? Those properties should be taxed as commercial properties. He knows that those properties should be rezoned commercial and the process could be streamlined. He said that the City could go around and take away their homestead exemption which would bring in missed revenue.

Mrs. Jankosky reported that the City is applying for a CDBG infrastructure grant and a preliminary analysis was conducted on neighborhoods near the Bridle Path area. Improvements to three or four streets consisting of water, sewer, stormwater and streets are approximately \$1 million and the grant is only \$600,000. A rough estimate to repair the infrastructure to the entire city would be \$25 to \$30 Million. We are close to going into contract with Kimley-Horne to see if they can acquire a USDA rural grant at \$2 to \$3 million per grant depending on what we can afford for a grant/loan option. It does take initial money for a grant for example the City has to put \$46,000 toward engineering services for the current CDBG.

Mayor Keene stated he was glad the Council looked toward the infrastructure grant and he hopes there is a priority list for infrastructure projects. He explained that Team Arcadia received some money for refurbishing Lake Katherine and there is so much that goes forward for engineering costs so it is important for engineering and planning to occur ahead of time. Too many times grants ask where the plans are or you can't be considered. It is important that we evaluate what we have and where we can improve first.

Councilman Fink stated that the County is Local Agency Program (LAP) certified which means the engineering costs that are so expensive is provided by engineers in house to do those sorts of projects. If we can get on with the County to minimize the costs involved we can ride along with them if we can work out an agreement. He didn't see the County as not wanting us to succeed and that would cut out substantial costs in engineering. We need to know what the big projects are and the improvements that are priority.

Dr. Land stated for too long there has been an adversarial position between the City and the County. The time has come to put that to rest and work for the good of all. He named many examples of Cities and Counties coming together in a common goal.

Dr. Ernie Hewett explained to Mr. Smith that the City needed a place to get rid of the grey water because the Golf Course can't take it all and we could dump it in the Peace

River but that would not be good. As long as there is no demand for the grey water there needs to be somewhere for it to go. He continued that the City's infrastructure is operational and is not that bad however there are places where we need road and pipe repairs. The biggest concern is City expansion so we can increase our tax base. He noted that there is an area around the City that is reserved for City expansion in water and sewer and the biggest problem is that the outer lying areas don't have pipes into that area larger enough to expand.

5 minute break

Dr. Land stated that you can't talk about infrastructure without talking about finances. He asked if they wanted to talk about finances in relation to infrastructure a bit more. He asked if anyone had anything to add. Councilman Allen inputed that to do anything in Arcadia you have to talk about money and if you start talking about raising taxes you're going to get your head bent.

Mr. George Chase asked if anyone thought about a grant writing position which may pay to have someone on board that all they do is go after grant money. Dr. Land replied that they have heard that for the last 25 years and we need someone just writing grants and you need one to first write grants to cover their salary.

Mrs. Jankosky agreed that one grant writer and that's all they do all day long. She said our roll back rate brings in only \$1.42 million and even if you brought that up to 10 mills it would only be \$430,000 additional in ad valorem and wouldn't cover all the needs. She continued that the trend is to move away from raising the millage and move to fees and assessments that require all to pay across the board. She noted that she spoke to Mr. Ken Small at the Florida League of Cities (FLC) and he may be able to visit and speak about revenues.

Dr. Lorenzo Dixon stated that this is a public meeting and he was about to talk about finances if we are on the right path. He stated that he was waiting to hear how we come up with the money, what we cut in order to complete the infrastructure. He added that the workshop he is excited about is where the money is going to come from.

Mr. Greg Smith stated that he discussed with others that everyone needs to pay something and one of his pet peeves is that there is undervalued properties that pay nothing in taxes. He asked if there was any avenue of addressing homestead exemptions and starting them above a certain rate so everyone pays something. Everybody gets benefits from the Police Department, the roads, the sewer and everyone needs to pay something towards maintaining those services. Dr. Land replied that to change the homestead exemptions requires an act of the State legislature, but cost shifting from a tax base fee to a fee for services basis as Mrs. Jankosky referred is the goal. Dr. Land gave an example of area Churches which are not taxed on property but every Church pays fees for garbage collection, sewer etc. and if those fees can be implemented that would be helpful. He added that years ago you subscribed to fire services and if you did not pay your house would burn.

Mayor Keene shared that going back to a grant writer he has stressed many times the need to collaborate. He gave an example of a lady resident who volunteered to write the Tiger II grant. We have talent in our community possibly at a lower rate. He asked why we can't work with County or other cities in close proximity and partner with them to fund a grant writer position. We have done cutting and examining the budget and we talked about the millage rate going up, so it's his feeling by incentivizing businesses to come to the City of Arcadia we can improve the budget. They can setup shop, bring their family and get involved in our school system. We are missing a Public Information Officer, no person to be liaison between City, the newspaper and the radio station. Mayor Keene echoed what Deputy Mayor Frierson said in a previous meeting that we need to accentuate the positive, focus on why you would want to come here. He continued that there is a lady who has an IT business in Sarasota and she is moving to DeSoto County hopefully she sets up in Arcadia. She came to Arcadia and fell in love with the area but when you get to the bottom line they will move here because there is grant money helping her move to this economic distressed community. This is an item that the Public Information Officer could announce the City can offer to businesses.

Councilman Fink stated that it behooves them as a Council to make sure we make it easy for people to relocate their business here. We need to empower staff to make this fast, set the standard, but make it fast so there are no delays. The County was very easy to work with when his business location moved and the City needs to be just as easy. He added that he would also like the Council to think about revisiting the joint planning agreement with the County and the possibility of all the businesses that generate taxes. How many businesses are located in the County and how many in the City limits. We are not getting what we should because they are basing it on population instead of location and he thinks that is negotiable. He stated that it would seem to him that all the business located within our borders we should be getting our share. He added that Mrs. Jankosky can attest to Lady Lake who had the highest business to population ratio in the state, and they made tons of money. So whatever formula Lake County uses we should look into.

Mr. Chase stated that incentives are great however you have to be careful between incentives and making it easy for business to locate. Look back over the years when DeSoto County gave incentives and gave away the bank and when they were upgraded to pay taxes the businesses moved. Mrs. Jankosky stated that regarding the Public Information/Relations Officer Ms. Haas made contact with Mr. Jordan Stone, intern, who is helping the City to put some positive articles in newspaper for no cost. She continued that they are working with Mandy and Mike at the County on the enterprise zone incentive, for example we may possible be getting a Dunkin Donuts at the old Checkers restaurant. Mrs. Jankosky explained that Lady Lake had a 50/50 ratio on commercial to residential. They made sure they had the homes available so the people would spend their money in the City. Lady Lake is very successful in their business model and they were able to give employees a 4% raise this year.

Mayor Keene stated that even commercial businesses are asking for volunteers and maybe we don't have a population that is interested but we should make an effort to

ask. The CDBG Grant was another opportunity because we don't have a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) in place, now might not be the best time, but maybe that is an option to consider in the future so we can go after funding to improve the downtown. He is concerned with fire inspections being a stumbling block to revitalizing the downtown area.

Councilman Fink stated that the Fire Inspectors worked very well with him and got him up and running in less than a week. Deputy Mayor Frierson replied that she had a friend that had the opposite experience where it got to the point where he said if you want me to open this business back off.

Dr. Land asked about Aviation Day and volunteers for next year. Mrs. Jankosky responded to Dr. Land that there were 2,500 attendees at Aviation Day last year. Dr. Land stated that volunteerism is near and dear to his heart and we have not recognized our volunteers. If we are going to ask them to volunteer we need to praise and reward them and volunteerism is the key to what we are doing. Mr. Smith asked if we could work with the college and get students to do the grants and possibly some engineering at less costs. Mrs. Jankosky replied that there are some regulatory issues, and last Aviation Day she requested 7 or 8 volunteers who signed up from the school but they did not show. She has also asked for volunteer receptionists for the City and Senior Friendship Center but they could not find anyone because there are other opportunities like schools and hospitals instead of government. Mr. Hewett replied that grant writers don't like to write for free and partnering is an expense with no guarantee of return.

Mr. Hewitt stated that the double taxation is not the issue it is the taxation without benefit. The City worked well with the County with the road around the hospital however the County does not build any roads in the City but 20% that goes into the County coffers comes from the City. That is an issue - taxation without benefits. Mrs. Judy Schaefer offered to build that road but it was a necessity that they fix that road anyway. Any benefit that the City received by court rule is a benefit and that's all the County has to prove - That the City is receiving some kind of benefit. Dr. Land returned back to the Public Relations Officer which every community typically has and asked about the local Chamber of Commerce and asked why they are not present. The Chamber needs to step up to the plate and support the City as that is their job.

5. Gateways to City

Dr. Land asked how does the City gateways look when you drive into town. He explained the changes on the North side but not much going on the East side. Mr. Smith stated that it makes a big difference when you go into different cities and you see the appearance of streets, sidewalks, plants, well kept, neat clean then you come home and it brings you down. We need to work on the appearance of the City because we have beautiful parks but you are thrown off by the entrances. Deputy Mayor Frierson stated that it all comes to civic pride and a lot of community groups do the work. Councilman Allen stated that he was recently stopped by a friend interested in beautification that took him out to the West side of town and asked if the flowerbed

could be cleaned. A City employee was mowing that area and he asked her to clean the flower bed. Dr. Land stated that first impressions are lasting impressions. Councilman Fink inputted that in Venice the back of the entrance signs say "Thank you for visiting".

6. Promoting Investments and Grants

Dr. Land stated that you get people to invest by selling bonds. We could offer bonds to improve the infrastructure of the City. He asked if that was a possibility and would people invest in the future of Arcadia. Mr. Smith stated that bonds would be a good idea but not a lot of people will invest if they think the City is going bankrupt in a couple of years. We have to think outside the box. Mayor Keene stated that he was going to mention bonds earlier and that is an option to consider. Throughout the discussion we talked about not having money and how do we make ourselves more attractive, advertise, getting the Chamber to act. He believes there is an opportunity and civic pride because there are families that have been here for generations that have made their future and fortune in this community - they may be willing to give back and invest in a bond for their community. Deputy Mayor Frierson replied that bonds are a viable option to move forward however we need to be positive that we will be a City in tact, not going bankrupt and not a dysfunctional Council and we are working on the problems. If the public sees that they are more apt to invest. Dr. Dixon stated that it is good to know that when we see something is happening and denial is a very dangerous thing. Let's be proactive and pull out of the rut and make Arcadia what it has been a rural City. Councilman Fink stated that we did talk about the bond issue several budget meetings ago and it was at that time it was met with snickers but it is a possibility that needs to be looked at. Those people that think we are dysfunctional are the ones that are not going to deal with the issues and did not come back with real thoughts, this gets back to finance. We were given cold hard facts about the feasibility of being in operation after a year and a half and if we don't address the facts we may keep the status quo until a year or year and a half and after that time we won't exist unless we do something. Councilman Fink stated that it's important, if not what he suggests, suggest something else, don't just sit and ignore that we are not doing it. We all agree the problem exists, if we don't then we are in denial. He asked tell him what to do, give him an option that he hasn't suggested himself and he will look at it and if it works he will take it as his own. But just to express that a problem exists, but no solutions, is not viable. Mrs. Jankosky responded that she didn't want to be negative, but realistically when you issue bonds they have to be paid back and how do we pay back the bonds. For many years we did not meet our bond covenants and the water and sewer rates were too low. Our water and sewer operating is \$2.2 million in the hole. Before we jump in we need a complete financial analysis. She asked Mr. Santana to look for new revenue streams and we can also ask Mr. Ken Small, FLC, to speak on revenues, fees and assessments. We are looking however it takes time, thinking, planning and analyzing to make sure we can afford.

Deputy Mayor Frierson stated that Mr. Ken Small is a budget expert who wrote a lot of the Florida Statutes and they wanted him to come in when the budget process started but that was met with negativity. We could have used his help months ago.

Mayor Keene replied that we are still in budget season and let's ask him to be here with us. He stated that in speaking about bonds and analysis, when he first got on the City Council, professionals conducted a rate study analysis. We paid them to tell us what we needed to do and the City Council still resisted doing what they asked, but we compromised. When we have professionals do these analyses we need to take their advice and act on it. We might have people on fixed incomes but just like gasoline seen all over the place, now we are high at \$3.35 again it's just coming to reality not to be negative it is just the cost of business and what level of service do we expect and it comes with a cost. If we are going to hire folks to do analysis we need to take it seriously.

5 Minute Break

Dr. Land stated he spoke with some people who had concerns about the Golf Course. He told them if they wanted their voices heard they needed to be at the meetings or write it down. The Golf Course was talked about at the initial meeting and it's either a money maker or money loser and it's been a topic discussed in the media. He stated following the Golf Course they could discuss youth activities and Law Enforcement.

Councilman Fink stated that when they went through the budget and looked at recreational services, \$488,000 was the amount to make a Golf Course run however when the revenues are at \$410,000 there is no way that everyone else that doesn't play golf should subsidize those that do play golf.

Mayor Keene stated that when he came on the City Council he brought items that he thought might get discussed. As a citizen who grew up here he wondered why are we in the Mobile Home Park, Golf Course, Airport, Utilities business but when you tie it back together it's because of the economic impact those items have on our community. In the past there was a 9-hole course which eventually expanded to 18 holes. It's not the best course but has come light years from when he was younger but there is an economic advantage to the course. We have housing for the economic disadvantaged but we don't have housing like condos on the Golf Course. He has friends on the Coast that come to Arcadia in the winter time and they love our course and they spend their money in the City and Desoto County so we shouldn't discount the Golf Course but look for ways to enhance it.

Mr. Chase suggested that they look at the Arcadia Village Golf Course that is in immaculate condition and there is no reason the City course can't look that way. The City course is pretty rough and management needs more understanding on how to improve the situation without spending a whole lot of money. Mr. Smith questioned why we were in this business also but there are little things we can do that makes a big difference, for example when Deputy Mayor Frierson said "if you play you pay" but then

it reverted back to free golf for volunteers. He didn't think it was profitable to give away to everyone under the sun because everybody needs to pay a little bit. Deputy Mayor Frierson confirmed she did say that and she had such input like the people that play for free are not a lot maybe less than 5 and it is a benefit for them serving the City. She was also told it doesn't cost the City anything to play on the course. Mrs. Jankosky inputted that there is wear and tear on the course. Dr. Land stated that the starters and rangers are important volunteers and they play for free. Deputy Mayor Frierson replied that the Council was voting on the retired personnel. Councilman Fink clarified that it was two motions. One that dealt with employees not compensated but allowed free golf and then others who were given golf over a course of time. He thought the dollar amount was \$13,000. Mr. Hewitt stated as far as oversight management at the Golf Course, the cost of volunteers necessary to maintain control of the course would be at least double that cost so they provide a vital service. He continued that if you go back about four years when he and Mr. Strube were setting the rates, they were trying to set a rate that no matter what membership and compared with others, the rates were all on the same playing field. In 2008 the economy was tanking and the rate increase wouldn't support more than 5% but the Council said that the elite rich group can afford to pay 15% more and the memberships tanked, and again the next year and the Golf Course went almost into a loss. He stated that Mrs. Jankosky came aboard and re-evaluated the rates. Mrs. Jankosky dropped the rates to a competitive rate, but that still showed a loss, as he predicted, because of the rate structure. He questioned is the Golf Course a profit center or a recreational expense, it does have economic return but you have to pay to play and you have to pay the volunteers. Councilman Fink stated that they need to look at this as whether we can afford the Golf Course. He said that he would love to see high end homes around the perimeter of the Golf Course which would afford half acre or three quarter acre lots with panoramic views of the Golf Course. Further where is any one from the Coast going to find a house that they can get for half a million over here for a quarter of a million? The City could market that very easily, or whether we might need to sell it off and let someone else market it. Those are the options the Council needs to look into. Or maybe if this is not the right time because we can't afford to spend \$80,000 on something everybody doesn't use. He said that water, garbage, trash, fire hydrants do it but we are telling people we are going bust and we're taking \$80,000 and giving it to the Golf Course. He stated that an elected officer of the County says we are paying way too much for fertilizer and he sells product up to Valdosta, Georgia. Dr. Dixon stated that Mrs. Jankosky's recommendation of a competitive rate didn't cause the Golf Course to occur such a deficit. He served the last few years on the Council and we saw some losses and \$10,000 to \$20,000 in thefts. We need to come to some decision or resolution even if it is a profit maker or not but he has seen nothing but a loss. In past years the auditors suggested that we need to look at that and the utilities because we were so in the red. Those were the two red flags. We voted to have the Central Florida Regional Planning Council (CFRPC) come in and do a study and they advised they never in the history of their firm saw a Golf Course be a profit, only cost money, so they see City's getting out of that business.

Mr. Smith stated in talking about the waste water situation, he asked if anyone had seen the Cemetery after they run water and everything is real green. There are times when

they don't water the Cemetery which is same problem with the Golf Course because the orange groves are taking it all. We need to say when we have access we give to the orange groves but if you use that at the Golf Course you could cut back on fertilizer. Dr. Land replied that there is no fertilizer value in that and is technically pure enough to drink. Mrs. Jankosky stated that in years prior the Golf Course was losing money and her husband who works golf courses says that \$480,000 to maintain a 18-hole course is nothing, however if you want that pristine look then you are talking close to 1 million. In the past few years we have seen the numbers go up but it takes time. It is getting close to maintaining itself but the quality you get is what you put into it. She explained that they do get three quotes for all chemicals purchased, but they can certainly review that. We are tourist based and this winter it was warm up north so those tourists went home early and we lost some revenues.

Mr. Chase stated that we could lower the rates where we can cover the costs, it's a community enhancement.

Dr. Land stated that he heard some good ideas and he promised if you build condos by the Golf Course his wife would probably live there. He reviewed some of the ideas like changing the fee structure, volunteers, sponsor holes, beautification and landscaping.

Youth Activities:

Captain Matt Anderson spoke about girls' softball and the softball fields on Arcadia Avenue. He stated that the entity currently taking care of the fields now told DCYA you can't use the fields. Little league DCYA built those fields and they are City fields. Girls' softball and tournaments will bring in many people that can spend money in Arcadia and DeSoto County. He asked shouldn't DCYA be allowed to use them during the week and the tournaments on the weekend.

Mr. Clinton Burton, Arcadia resident, stated that there is nothing for the youth to do. If a private entity wants to come in and make something for the kids to do then let them do it but it's not something the City should spend money on.

Councilman Fink asked if the softball fields were the same size and lineage as the other fields and why can't we use the fields. Captain Anderson replied that about three years ago the City Council allowed DCYA to use the fields, now a new round has come in and we can't use our own fields. Councilman Fink stated that we need to take action on that and put it on the agenda for the next meeting and see if it needs to be changed. Deputy Mayor Frierson stated that we may need to contact Mr. Johnson, that's who the City Council gave it to. Councilman Fink stated that Wauchula has a bowling alley and we don't, we don't have a movie theatre and there are not a whole lot of things for kids to do. There are 67 Houses of Worship in the City and if you go by the people's houses on Sunday morning their cars are in the yard so we can't suggest that the Churches take on the whole responsibility. Deputy Mayor Frierson replied that the City has had bowling alleys and movie theatres in the past and they have gone out of business, this is a different era. When she was growing up the Churches had the youth activities and

there was a Saturday night party held by volunteers at the youth center and it didn't cost the City anything.

Mayor Keene stated that the community tells him at meetings there is an expectation from the City that we have parks and citizens often ask him why the City closed Story Book Park and Jim Space. Story Book Park is clearly open and so is Jim Space however there are some needed repairs. Through collaboration with First State Bank there are opportunities for improvement at Jim Space. He wondered why we don't have more park space available for youth activities. He gave an example of the land at the corner of Polk and Whidden where they used to have parties. He received a suggestion at a Rotary meeting to have a partnership with the City to enhance the uses of parks. He gave another example of a park down from his house on Effie Street where he used to play football. He stated that there are opportunities for the low hanging fruit and partnership with others. Mayor Keene clarified that Councilman Fink in no way was thinking that the City of Wauchula owns a bowling alley that is a private partnership. Here in the City we had people running the theatre and the lady came into the Health Department and her biggest complaint was that the City wouldn't let them re-erect a sign on the highway. She felt that was an inhibition in order for her to promote the theatre. Mayor Keene said youth activities are an expectation of the community and perhaps through partnerships we can get there without it costing a lot of money. Mr. Hewitt replied to Mayor Keene that the sign the theatre wanted to use in the parking lot did not meet code.

Dr. Dixon clarified that when Councilman Fink mentioned Wauchula that yes we have had all those things but none were owned or operated by a City. He knew of no City that owns a bowling alley. We see the need and he had a vision for Hickson Square on Orange where they were going to open up a place for the kids. The question is what we can do to attract business owners or industries to come and open up movies, bowling lanes, etc. The City would not think of opening anything like that and you cannot stay in businesses if you are not covering your expenses.

Mr. Smith stated we've had a bowling alley and the people didn't go. The movie theatre may only have 15 people in it. We used to have skating rink here and it was operated because the owner liked the kids having something to do. When the original owner passed someone bought it to run it as a business. Yes, there is a lot of need for things for kids to do but the money is not out there right now other than sporting events which requires a lot of volunteer work. Councilman Fink clarified that he never suggested that the City should buy a bowling alley or theatre for its citizens.

Law Enforcement:

Captain Anderson gave a summary of the crime rates which are down tremendously and overall the Police Department is doing a pretty good job compared to when he started 23 years ago. Crime rates and statistics show that. City council has helped by allowing the Police Department to have input on the Ordinances.

Deputy Mayor Frierson stated that the elephant is in the room to dissolve the Police Department and there are consequences to that. The input from the public is they are not for dissolving the Police Department at all, it is worrisome and we enjoy a very low crime rate and the public is appreciative. She spoke recently to a resident who said that she can walk her dog in the evenings and she is not worried and if she dials 911 the City Police will be there in five minutes. It's bothering the public that it's out there. Captain Anderson responded to Dr. Land that the average time is less than a minute and a half. Deputy Mayor Frierson continued that there are many senior citizens that live alone, homebound, disabled and they feel secure and comfortable with local Police enforcement. Dr. Land asked would they be willing to pay increased taxes in order to keep a City Police Department. Deputy Mayor Frierson asked that question and the reply was to dissolve the Police Department to solve the budget problems is the easy way out.

Dr. Dixon stated that he has heard both sides, some good and some that felt that it's not good to hold onto. We hear the crime rate has dropped all around not just Arcadia. He stated that the City lost a lot of residents after Charlie so it may sound like an easy way out but we have a reality check and if you go back during my term on Council he had a conversation with the Mayor of Avon Park and they consolidated police services. He said that he is not suggesting consolidation but asking if we can we afford it or can we not. He asked if that person who made the statements was willing to pay higher taxes to keep what they want. He added that many residents request the Sheriff's Office when they call and on Friday in less than 3 or 4 minutes they were there. He said to look at the business part of it, there's a reason those Cities consolidated. Dr. Land stated that he believed the Avon Park consolidation had not occurred yet but is in process of discussion.

Councilman Fink stated that this gets back to the question that he originally asked. He stated that he doesn't want us not to have a Police Department but would they take the tax increase. We cannot raise the taxes to the point that it will get rid of \$800,000 in potential debt next year. We don't have that kind of cushion between now and the maximum millage cap that the State sets. We would be over what we are allowed. The question then is: come up with an alternative if you don't like the suggestion then come up with the alternative because according to what we've been told it's not going to be 26 employees that may have to be let go this year it will be the entire workforce of the City if that occurs, it seems we are the actuary for the pension. Captain Anderson replied that the City subsidizes the plan. Councilman Fink replied that we secure it through actuarial soundness. He proposed that if the City went bankrupt what would occur if we could not keep the pension funds up? Wants are a wonderful thing and he doesn't see any other logical solution at this time, if you have one share it and he will embrace it. If you don't say anything then we can't do anything about it. Ignoring the elephant in the room is not going to fix the problem. Deputy Mayor Frierson replied that is what the Council is doing through the budget workshops.

Mr. Chase stated that the Police Department is a substantial portion of the financial situation and maybe it may be possible supported by a MSBU - one fee taken off the tax

rolls. Mr. Smith added that maybe you could go at it in a different avenue and different source where everyone pays for it. Deputy Mayor Frierson stated that the Council is trying with all the workshops and personal time Mrs. Jankosky has spent working on the budget. We haven't got to that point but we are working towards that.

Dr. Dixon stated that hearing the crime rate has dropped why not consider possibly cutting the budget to \$1.1 million like when we had 18 officers in 1993. Captain Anderson clarified there were 16 Officers. Dr. Dixon agreed and said ok, 16 Officers and the department definitely has to be cut but everyone is afraid to defend the department. Either we cut or we get out completely.

Dr. Land stated that hopefully we have we spent our time or invested in the future of the community. He is personally a big fan of the Police Department and has received excellent service and his family served in law enforcement. He finalized with a question if the Council voted to raise the millage to the top how much would that impact the taxpayer and what it would cost you besides getting voted off the Council.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ADJOURN

Having no further business, the workshop was adjourned at 12:40 PM.

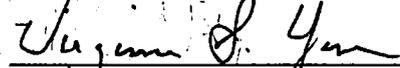
APPROVED THIS 16th DAY OF OCTOBER, 2012

By:



Keith Keene, Mayor

ATTEST:



Virginia S. Haas, CMC
City Recorder