

**City of Dunnellon  
City Council Workshop**

Zoom

<https://dunnellon.zoom.us/j/89114915048?pwd=bllkcU5peHkxWINYd0RTdCtwWFZsQT09>

Webinar ID: 891 1491 5048

Date: March 09, 2022

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Place: City Hall

20750 River Dr., Dunnellon, FL34431

**Public Comment**

Anyone who wished to provide public comment was able to do so by participating in the City Council meeting in person, or via the Zoom "AUDIO ONLY" platform and/or telephone, by speaking during public comment portions of the meeting when recognized or by submitting written comments, evidence and/or written testimony in advance of the meeting via email to the City Clerk at [modom@dunnellon.org](mailto:modom@dunnellon.org)

Members of the public who wished to participate were encouraged to register in advance by Noon on Wednesday, March 09, 2022

**Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance:**

Mayor White called the meeting to order at approximately 5:37 p.m. and led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance. He asked if any invitee or volunteer was present to open with prayer. Pastor Tom Welch provided the invocation.

**Roll Call**

Bill White, Mayor, Seat 1

Louise Kenny, Councilwoman, Seat 2

Anita Williams, Councilwoman, Seat 3

Valerie Hanchar, Vice-Mayor, Seat 4

Jan Cabbage, Councilwoman, Seat 5

**Staff Present**

Mandy Odom, City Clerk

Michelle Leonard, Assistant City Clerk

Jan Smith, Finance Officer

Troy Slattery, Public Works Manager

Georgina Cid, Community Development Manager

Julie Danowski, Records Clerk

Chief McQuaig, Police Department

Lt. Yox, Police Department

**Legal Counsel**

Andrew Hand,  
Shepard, Smith, Kohlmyer & Hand, P.A.

**Proof of Publication**

Mrs. Odom announced for the record the agenda for this meeting was posted on the City's website and City Hall bulletin board on Wednesday, March 02, 2022.

Mayor White welcomed everyone and covered public and Council meeting etiquette.

**Agenda Item No. 1 – Public Comments**

Susan Jones, 9129 SW 129<sup>th</sup> Terrace Rd., provided an update for the Rainbow Springs Art Gallery. She stated the Art Festival will have 30 to 35 artists in the streets with fine crafts and art. She explained every artist's work is reviewed before they are allowed to participate. She said there will be food vendors and invited everyone to attend. She shared this festival has been extremely good for local businesses in the past and there are a number of those businesses financially supporting them. She reminded everyone there is a classroom in the back of the gallery which is available for group rental. Councilwoman Cabbage asked if there would be musical entertainment at the festival and Ms. Jones replied there would.

Bill Vibbert, 9552 SW 192<sup>nd</sup> Ct. Rd., stated the Management Plan states signs are to be posted at Blue Run Park and he and Mrs. Odom have been working on it. He said there will be three signs posted and they will have a couple spares in the event of vandalism. He stated he provided the new sign verbiage to the Council and he is hoping they will approve it. He suggested providing printed copies of the rules for people to take with them.

Kathy Dunn, 11386 SW Hendrix Dr., said there should be citizens involved with the CRA Board and more than 30 minutes devoted to the meeting. She stated she would also like to see a simplified treasurer's report at each meeting. She referred to a conversation from a previous meeting and asserted the grant of \$100,000 is not a gift. She stated the money is intended to clean up blight. She said landlords and commercial businesses have not been held accountable and now they need help cleaning up. She suggested we attempt to simplify the grant process and three bids are too many hoops to jump through. She also suggested it is the City staff's responsibility to pick up old signs that are stuck in the easements.

Tom Welch, PO Box 143, stated in October he was asked to serve as Chaplain on the Dunnellon Police Department. He said he has had the honor and privilege of riding along with the Officers. He shared with Council how they provide impeccable service to the community as well as building relationships with the citizens. He commented he wanted to come forward because we seem to be in a culture which is trying to paint the Police as the enemy. Pastor Welch pointed out there is a tree in the middle of the grassy area at Ernie Mills Park. He said

the tree creates quite an obstacle when attempting to have a large gathering there. He asked if the tree could be moved off to the side so the whole area could be utilized.

Juliane Mendonca, 11894 E. Blue Cove Dr., reminded Council of the PowerPoint she brought during a previous meeting regarding signage. She stated she is seeking feedback on it and is asking when the City can begin to take action on picking up the signs. She said she is aware Community Development has taken a hit and she stated she would be interested in updates on what the City is doing to support Ms. Cid in her role. She commented she is also curious about Main Street and is interested in what the barriers are for forward movement. She suggested a moratorium on purchasing new buildings and encouraged the Council to develop a priority list. She reported she went door to door with grant applications and said some of the citizens are really excited about it.

Mayor White explained how the sign-in sheets work because each person who signed up to speak seemed to misunderstand the sign in process.

### **Agenda Item No. 2 – Dunnellon Chamber & Business Association Report**

Judy Terwilliger read the monthly report into the record:

#### ***“New Members***

*Studio 118, Decca Realty, Shari's Scentsy Wax and Warmers*

#### ***Upcoming Events***

- *March 16<sup>th</sup>, Business After Hours at Barbers & Beers starting at 5:30. Please RSVP by March 14<sup>th</sup>.*
- *March 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, Rainbow Springs Art Festival*
- *March 22<sup>nd</sup>, Monthly Networking Dinner Mixer at Rainbow Springs Village Church Catered by Bubba Ques Starting at 5:30. Please Rsvp by March 18<sup>th</sup>.*
- *April 2<sup>nd</sup> is our last First Saturday Market in the Park for the Season. They will resume in November.*
- *April 9<sup>th</sup> is Our Boomtown Days in the historic downtown, from 9-5”*

### **Agenda Item No. 3 – Board Reports**

Brenda D'Arville presented a Planning Commission update. She stated there seems to be some confusion regarding the Mission Statement and when she spoke with Ms. Cid today, it had been discovered 17 years ago there was an Ordinance written about it. She said the Planning Commission will address this at their next meeting and then it will be brought to the Council.

Mayor White asked about the proposed RV park. Mrs. D'Arville stated there has been nothing new that has come before them. Ms. Cid confirmed nothing has been brought forward.

**Agenda Item No. 4 – Agreement #AGR2022-08, Dunnellon Little League**

Mrs. Odom stated the use Agreement expired and this is a proposed renewal through September 2026. She said it is the same Agreement as before and it would be renewed for another 5 year period. Mayor White explained the Agreement details and discussion followed regarding issues if the State chose not to renew.

Councilwoman Williams asked how long we have had a lease with the ballfield. Mrs. Odom stated since the late 90's. Councilwoman Williams commented it looked nice and did her heart good to see the little kids enjoy it, but she said she can see why people complain about the road to the field because it is awful. Mayor White stated when people come from out of town to watch their child play ball, it leaves a bad impression. Council agreed to add this topic to the consent agenda.

**Agenda Item No. 5 – Mockingbird Drive And West Blue Cove Drive Roadway Project**

Mr. Slattery stated this is a project they have been working on and it is now ready to go out for bid. He explained there are three intersections along Mockingbird Drive, but it includes a short segment of roadway on West Blue Cove Drive. He said the estimated cost should be approximately \$151,000 with a 20% contingency. Vice-Mayor Hanchar asked when the bid request will go out and if the project would start in this fiscal year. Mr. Slattery stated the bid request will go out immediately and the project should begin this year. Council agreed to add this topic to the consent agenda.

**Agenda Item No. 6 – Ordinance #ORD2022-04, Business Tax Receipt**

Mrs. Odom stated according to the statute we are allowed to increase our Business Tax Receipt fees every two years. She commented we have not done this since 2017 and missed an opportunity in 2019. She shared the current fee is \$57.42 and the increase would bring the fee to \$60.29 for all businesses effective October 1, 2022. She brought up the topic of short term vacation rentals and explained the Ordinance states in order to qualify as a business you would have to have two or more rental properties. She said due to the rise in these rentals, Council may wish to amend the language to one vacation rental for qualification thus requiring all of them to have a Business Tax Receipt. She shared short term rentals should be registering with the County and is where they could begin to locate those who need to be added to the list.

Councilwoman Williams asked if the Airbnb's are allowed to have signs out identifying themselves. Mrs. Odom wasn't aware of a regulation against this and stated if it is on private property and not in violation of our sign code, she isn't sure how this would be prevented. Councilwoman Kenny commented this is a new area we are not educated in and research needs to be done. She suggested the Planning Commission along with Ms. Cid and Attorney Hand research further. Council agreed further discussion would be needed regarding the signage.

Councilwoman Cabbage asked if we could gather information about which properties are not homestead because that information could indicate they are something other than a vacation home. Mrs. Odom stated they could be found if they are registered.

Mrs. Odom recommended to move the Ordinance ahead to first reading at the Monday meeting. Council consented to add this topic to the regular agenda for a first reading.

**Agenda Item No. 7 – Request for Proposal #RFP2022-01, Wood Pavilion Shade Shelters**

Mr. Slattery stated we have received only one proposal for this RFP and the price was double what we had budgeted. He said the proposal was also non-responsive as requested items were not submitted. He suggested rejecting the proposal due to the high amount.

Mayor White asked if Mr. Slattery was seeking alternatives and he said he was. Mr. Slattery stated he has \$30,000 in the budget for two shade shelters and if a future agenda item is approved, it would allow him to collect quotes rather than go out for another RFP.

**Agenda Item No. 8 – Resolution #RES2022-03, Amending The March 2008 Blue Run Park Management Plan**

Attorney Hand provided a brief history for this Resolution. He stated it is coming forward now to simply amend the Management Plan. He said it has gone out to the State agencies for review and now it has come back before Council. He explained the next step is to approve the Resolution.

Council agreed to add this topic to the regular agenda.

**Agenda Item No. 9 – Ordinance #ORD2022-02, Blue Run Park Commercial Use Exceptions**

Attorney Hand provided a brief history for this Ordinance. He stated this addresses the common sense exceptions and it has also gone before FCT and they have approved. He briefly shared some of the changes within this Ordinance. Mayor White asked what the next step would be and Attorney Hand said the first reading could be Monday and a special meeting be set up for the second reading, to stay in line with the April 1<sup>st</sup> effective date. Mrs. Odom proposed a special meeting date of March 21<sup>st</sup>. Council agreed to add this topic to regular agenda.

**Agenda Item No. 10 – Discussion, Florida Minimum Wage Increase**

Mayor White gave a brief overview of the State of Florida minimum wage increase.

Mrs. Odom stated this topic was on the 2020 ballot and passed with a State minimum wage increase spread over several years. She shared the details of the current minimum wage and consecutive increases mandated each year thereafter. She stated the City needs to be prepared to deal with this before the maximum increase is reached, to avoid financial difficulties all at once. She said the City should address this incrementally to minimize the

burden on the City's finances. She stated there are some cities that have already jumped to the \$15.00 per hour, but she is aware the City of Dunnellon can't afford to do that at this time. Mrs. Odom provided a spreadsheet with details of several proposed salary range adjustments. Mrs. Odom stated she reviewed the compensation study from several years ago and she explained how she came to the increase amounts utilizing years of service and job title while avoiding compression issues. She stated if Council agrees to her proposed option, it would be a \$17,700 impact to the current fiscal year.

Councilwoman Cabbage agreed with the first option because of the budget but stated she hopes in the future we can pay the staff more.

Councilwoman Kenny asked how the minimum wage increase affects a salaried position and Mrs. Odom answered a lower compensated salaried position could be affected.

Vice-Mayor Hanchar stated there are options but we need to be concerned about the finances and Council would want to think about this when future projects come up. She commented raising the millage rate may need to be considered and how the County just gave a dollar raise to their staff.

Mayor White stated the worry is new people being hired are now closing the gap to those who have been here longer and provided examples of the compression issue as he understood it. Mrs. Odom further explained the options and the number of employees effected for each. She stated the department heads are currently where they need to be based on their years of service. Mayor White stated everyone is in compliance with the State, at this time, and pointed out we don't have to adjust wages until we are out of compliance. Mrs. Odom agreed but said if we wait Council would have to deal with a larger adjustment later.

Mrs. Smith pointed out the rising cost of living and employee retention. She stated if an employee is living week to week and they know someplace else is paying more they might leave for a better paying job. She explained it would cost the City more to hire and train a replacement. She agreed with avoiding compression issues with the seasoned employees and added since compensation is based on skill, compression erodes their value. Mrs. Smith suggested a plan to add the September 2022 State increase to the 2023 fiscal budget.

Mrs. Odom stated we would need to amend the salary plan by Resolution and she could have one ready for Monday. She shared these adjustments would take place on March 21<sup>st</sup>. She offered to send the analysis to Council for their review. Council consented to add this topic to the regular agenda.

**Agenda Item No. 11 – Discussion, Boat Launch Fees**

Mrs. Odom stated she, Mrs. Smith and Lieutenant Yox went to Citrus County to view their boat launch fee system and said it is working well for them. She shared staff has already started working on a draft page for the City's website mirroring what they have done. She reviewed Citrus County's fee rates, registration details, locations they visited and explained how the system works. Mrs. Odom stated there are manned cameras watching vehicle plates and if a boater doesn't register to use the service they are mailed a violation.

Mrs. Odom said the company owns and installs the cameras and the only expense to the City would be the installation of the power pole which powers the box and cameras. She provided further details regarding signage, QR code usage and enforcement.

Mrs. Smith stated the only thing Citrus County needs to do is take in the revenue. She said the company keeps 80% of the violation fees, but this is strictly for boat launching and doesn't work with parking fees.

Mayor White asked if someone from the company could come and provide a presentation to Council. He said he would be interested in having them attend the special meeting on March 21<sup>st</sup>. Mrs. Odom stated she would reach out to them.

Attorney Hand commented staff has obtained evidence that this is the only company that provides this service and he doesn't see why contracting with them wouldn't meet the requirements of the purchasing policy.

Lieutenant Yox stated there is no maintenance, its \$250.00 for the first violation and \$500.00 for the second. He said he thinks it's a good idea.

Councilwoman Kenny suggested to present it to the people too as we need their support. She said we could advertise for a special Council meeting and try to get the word out. Mrs. Odom responded she would need to move the presentation to the April 6<sup>th</sup> meeting because there is not enough time to advertise for the March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. Council agreed to the change.

**Agenda Item No. 12 – Council Comments**

Mayor White reminded everyone April 1<sup>st</sup> is the beginning of tuber season and the date the new Ordinance takes effect. He stated March 24<sup>th</sup> is an FGUA meeting at the Boys and Girls Club regarding the conversion of the septic tanks to sewer in the Chatmire area. He said it would be a good time to discuss other topics with them, including waste water outside the City heading to our plant next year. Mayor White stated he met with the County Commissioners twice about reigniting interest in the Blue Run Park restroom project and they have it back under discussion. He shared they admit there has been agreements and they know we have new money to add. He said they are insistent the State should be a partner

because the park is being connected to the Withlacoochee Trail. He stated we made progress, but nothing will happen this year.

Councilwoman Cabbage commented on the Northern Turnpike Extension and said there was an article in the Ocala Star Banner and Citrus Chronicle showing SWFWMD is opposed to the project and supports the No Build initiative. She stated that is huge. Mayor White added the Suncoast Parkway is meandering its way north and will eventually connect with SR19. He stated when this happens CR 488 will be a way for people to get to the Suncoast Parkway. He asserted these little County roads are feeders to the toll roads which will turn Dunnellon into a drive-through City.

#### **Agenda Item No. 13 – Department Head Comments**

Mr. Slattery said he is removing the tree from the center of Ernie Mills Park. He said he will try to transplant it but it likely would not survive. He commented it was supposed to be the City's Christmas tree but it didn't grow how it was needed. He shared the Ocala Marion County TPO has put together a Commitment to Zero project and their April workshop details are posted on our website. Vice-Mayor Hanchar added the TPO project is a State directive and one woman created the task force in an effort to teach each of us what to do when driving to prevent casualties. She explained the idea is to engage schools, police and other cities. Mr. Slattery stated the grant project for the road assessment is approved and the kick-off meeting was held a couple days ago. He said the engineering department will be in the City next week with strange looking vehicles to survey the roads.

Mayor White attended the last Dunnellon Chamber and Business Association meeting and they asked him a few questions. He said he was asked if the City knew the reason for the major land clearing north of town. Mr. Slattery answered he doesn't know.

#### **Walk On – Signs for Blue Run Park.**

Mrs. Odom stated Attorney Hand has reviewed the rules for the Blue Run Park sign and provided minor edits. She asked Council to review before they go forward. Attorney Hand shared the details of the changes and Council agreed staff should go forward with the project and work with Mr. Vibbert.

#### **Agenda Item No. 14 –City Attorney Comments**

Attorney Hand shared information related to ethics education and said there was an arrest of two Sumter County Commissioners for Sunshine violations. He stated they do appear to be premeditated and coordinated but with that in mind this year's presentation on ethics was very comprehensive. He reminded them at meetings they need to be mindful of data coming through on a cell phone and notes passed that could become public record. Discussion followed regarding the possible penalties, personal note keeping and items to be shared with the Clerk's office.



Ms. Cid thanked the residents who offered positive comments about our departments. She said she has received a lot of support from Council, staff, contractors and other firms. She reported she has temporary help now and a new hire is starting on Monday. She shared Teresa Malmberg has been their trainer and she will also be training the new staff member next week.

Chief McQuaig stated during February the Police made 145 vehicle stops, 68 marine vessel stops, 518 business checks (one of which resulted in a prevented burglary in process) and they arrested 11 people.

Mr. Slattery said he made contact with the traffic light people and in the future they will put batteries at four of our traffic lights in the event of a power outage. Chief McQuaig stated he will notify Council when large traffic is diverted from SR200 to CR484 and he is trying to get the speed trailer up and operational for this weekend. Mayor White complained the light at the SR41 and Williams intersection isn't long enough causing backups in traffic. Mr. Slattery said he has been working with Marion County on the issue and they will be able to monitor that light daily and change it based on the traffic conditions.

Mrs. Smith provided a budget calendar to Council. She stated it will be the script for the next few months. She stated the only thing that has changed from last year are the dates. She explained the calendar details and what needs to happen. She stated the dates are adjustable except for the budget workshop on July 6<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Smith talked about the electric vehicle charging stations and said the federal funds won't be available for some time; however, there will be a meeting in the near future with Duke Energy regarding their charging system.

#### **Agenda Item No. 15 –Public Comments**

Brenda D'Arville, 11661 Camp Dr., spoke to Agenda Item #6 and said if a person has rentals, whether one or fifteen, they are considered investment properties rather than a business. She said if it is a business, then the IRS changes what tax is paid. She suggested Council may need to look at this again and perhaps change the verbiage. Attorney Hand said BTR's can be assessed on individuals not just business entities.

Kathy Dunn, 11386 SW Hendrix Dr., stated she was concerned by a feeling that Council wants positive comments only. She stated negative comments or suggestions are not meant to be personal but constructive. She said she doesn't want staff to feel like they are being attacked because of a suggestion. She asserted the citizens here are giving up their time as well to make Dunnellon better. She suggested the City take on the vacation rental issue as a task force because our neighborhoods are becoming hotels.

Mary Ann Hilton, 12078 Palmetto Court, thanked Mrs. Dunn for her comments because the rentals are devaluing properties. She said she doesn't want to see it fall further in decline.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:37 p.m.

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Penned signature of:  
Amanda Odom, CMC  
City Clerk

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Penned signature of:  
William P. White, Mayor