

**City of Dunnellon**  
**Special City Council Meeting**  
Zoom

<https://dunnellon.zoom.us/j/88452118193?pwd=b05ZMlcyZXRxbmlldXdWeS9Ud1dpQT09>

Webinar ID: 884 5211 8193

Date: June 22, 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, June 22, 2022

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

Mayor White called the meeting to order at approximately 5:33 p.m. and led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance. He asked if any invitee or volunteer was present to open with prayer. Anita Williams provided the invocation.

**Roll Call**

Bill White, Mayor, Seat 1

Valerie Hanchar, Vice-Mayor, Seat 4

Louise Kenny, Councilwoman, Seat 2

Anita Williams, Councilwoman, Seat 3

Jan Cabbage, Councilwoman, Seat 5 - Absent

**Staff Present**

Mandy Odom, City Clerk

Jan Smith, Finance Officer

Troy Slattery, Public Works Manager

Georgina Cid, Community Development Manager

Julie Danowski, Records Clerk

Chief McQuaig, Police Department – via Zoom

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, June 15, 2022.

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

### **Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items**

There were no comments.

### **Agenda Item No. 1 – Dangerous Condition at Blue Run Park**

Lt. Yox presented information regarding the dangers of alligators in Blue Run Park. He stated alligator complaints began on June 7<sup>th</sup> with a lady walking the path who spotted a 12' alligator. He shared there were other complaints reported by Mr. Slattery and there have been reports as recent as today. Lt. Yox shared a history of alligator attacks throughout Florida. He explained five alligators were caught in the area ranging in size from 5' to 9' with an 8.5' alligator caught near the swimming area at KP Hole. He provided alligator facts, he explained it is their mating season right now and the grunting heard throughout the park is an alligator mating call. He shared they are naturally more aggressive during mating season and when they run they can reach speeds of 35 mph on land.

Lt. Yox provided the following safety tips:

- Leave the gators alone
- Keep an eye on your surroundings
- Don't throw fish scraps in the water
- Don't swim outside the posted swimming areas
- Swim during the day time only
- Stay with your children and keep an eye on your pets

Vice-Mayor Hanchar suggested putting more signs up during the months of June and July. She commented one is needed in the retention pond because people are letting their little kids feed the fish.

Lt. Yox stated signs were posted throughout Blue Run Park advising people not to carry tubes, kayaks or other large equipment on the trails. He explained this will help people to be more aware of their surroundings.

Discussion followed regarding the Council members recent experiences with alligators.

Mayor White stated this information is verifiable and is being handled by the FWC. He shared KP Hole was closed once for 4 to 5 days due to an alligator sighting. He also shared the Disney incident in 2016 in which a 2-year old was killed by an alligator at the Grand Hotel. He explained Disney said it was a fluke, but since that time they have caught 250 alligators. Mayor White said if you are under 18 and on the Blue Run Park nature trail, you must be with an adult. He added carrying a load of equipment through the trail is counter intuitive to what the intended use of the trail is. He reminded everyone the park and trail are not closed, but safety precautions have been taken.

Attorney Hand stated he had discussions with staff about some of the trails and their uses. He explained there has been some degradation to some of the trails and there are wildlife issues that will continue into the future. He said the signs are out there to help people become aware, but the wildlife is not going away. He reminded everyone these trails were intended to be nature trails and not for high pedestrian traffic. Attorney Hand advised he was instructed to create a resolution to amend the Management Plan restricting what could be brought onto the trails to protect the people from the wildlife and to protect nature on the trails from people. Attorney Hand said it will be drafted and sent to FCT before it will come to Council. He asked Council for consent to move forward and Council provided consent.

**Public Comment:**

There were no public comments.

**Agenda Item No. 2 – Agreement #AGR2022-19 Contract to Purchase Vacant Lot on Powell Road, Parcel #3350-071-000**

Ms. Cid showed the GIS rendering of the Powell Road property while describing the setbacks, parking, DRA, building and layout. She stated the image is very conceptual but shows two entrances, the building and the layout of the property. Mrs. Odom added this conceptual image is to help determine if the size of the property is appropriate for what the Police needs.

Vice-Mayor Hanchar asked for confirmation the picture shows the lot size will work for the size Police building needed.

Mayor White asked about the parking and retention area. Ms. Cid stated there is room for about 20 parking spots and the retention area doesn't pose a concern. Mayor White commented the design of the building will need to have a historic Dunnellon façade.

Further discussion followed regarding the location of the Police building, a conceptual design for the current police location, the Powell Road contract being time sensitive and the need for community support.

**Public comment**

Brenda D'Arville, 11661 Camp Dr., stated she still thinks it is the wrong location and it is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. She reminded Council it would require a zoning change. She remembered Chief McQuaig's comments during a prior meeting where he stated he would prefer to stay in his current location. She said there was an issue with making the current space wider but they found a way to resolve it which is why she is perplexed about the purchase of this property.

Mary Ann Hilton, 12078 Palmetto Ct, stated she thinks it needs a little more discussion and attention from the general public.

Ms. Cid asked Council for permission to speak as a citizen and stated she has been here for 7 to 8 months listening to the issues pertaining to the Police building. She said the Police station should have more importance and the thoughts of Chief McQuaig should be respected. She asserted the current station has issues which can become a liability to the City and this debate has been going on for years and years. She emphasized as leaders of this town Council needs to say enough is enough and stand by their decision. She explained the Powell Road property is a great property. She said it's right in the center of everything, is big enough for a great building and from what she can see there aren't any better options.

Mrs. Odom read the following public comment into the record:

*"I would like to voice my opinion regarding the purchase of the Powell Road Property for a police station. I am in complete disagreement with the potential use of this property for a police station. The property is ideal for residential development, as it is within walking distance of the grocery stores, post office, library, and restaurants. We need to look forward for the future growth of Dunnellon by preserving sites for residential development. Ocala has developed the area around Tuscowilla Park for small townhomes and we should be emulating use of prime areas such as this for residential use. Powell Road has many historic homes that have recently been restored, and this will continue only if we stop commercial and municipal use of those properties. One of our citizens proposed that the current police station located on highway 41 should be used for construction of an updated facility. This location is ideal, fiscally prudent and would be widely accepted by the citizens. We are living in a time of high inflation, leading to vastly increased cost of running the city and citizens are struggling to pay for gas to go to work, and put food on the table. Construction materials and labor in short supply, leading to skyrocketing cost for building. The public will not be pleased when they discover that the City of Dunnellon can afford to use taxpayer money to purchase more land. When we abandon the current police station on highway 41, we will just have one more abandoned and blighted building to go along with the rest of the blight. A survey of the voters of Dunnellon was taken in November of 2021. Voters indicated that construction of a new police station was far down on their list of priorities. I urge the city council to look to the future and preserve the integrity*

*of our residential areas. We do not need to purchase new property for a police station in the historic district. We need to use what we already own.*

*Sincerely,*

*Kathy Dunn, concerned taxpayer, member of  
Dunnellon's Planning Board and Beautify Dunnellon Volunteers"*

Vice-Mayor Hanchar motioned staff inform the sellers that the City of Dunnellon has met its due diligence and is removing the contingency. Councilwoman Williams seconded the motion.

Discussion followed regarding adding a date into the motion.

Vice-Mayor Hanchar amended her motion to inform the sellers that on July 5<sup>th</sup> we will go forward with the purchase.

Attorney Hand explained a vote isn't necessary because of the way the contract is written. He explained the contract states they have until the 5<sup>th</sup> to notify them and if we do not, then the contract goes forward as written. Vice-Mayor Hanchar withdrew her motion.

Mayor White stated Chief McQuaig likes the location of his Police station, but not the actual lot. He explained the Gary's Carpet building and the current Police station are not functional together. He said he feels confident they are making the best decision possible.

Councilwoman Kenny said she thought Chief McQuaig meant his current location was feasible, affordable and where he wanted to stay but admitted she may have misinterpreted what he said. She talked about the people who don't participate in government but are still concerned about the City and where their tax money goes. She said she wanted to make it clear that we need the community behind us and they need to be informed. She stressed the best way is through their utility bill. Councilwoman Kenny stated everyone on the Planning Commission, including the Chair, does not believe this is an appropriate location and Council should take that into consideration.

Councilwoman Williams excused herself from the meeting.

Vice-Mayor Hanchar stated she received good news from Rob Balmes with the TPO who texted her at 5:05 p.m. and said there will be a meeting next Tuesday about the Multi-Modal Trail because the trail has been funded.

Mrs. Odom stated there was a misunderstanding about who acquired the legislative appropriation for the trail. She explained Dunnellon wrote a letter of support, but it was actually Marion County who did the leg work and applied for it.

Attorney Hand provided a report regarding Senate Bill #620 and reminded Council they received a memo from his office sharing how we can handle this Bill if it is signed. He stated the Governor has signed a Bill flushing out some information regarding trees which substantially clarifies the definition of “documentation” regarding whether a tree poses an unacceptable risk. Lastly, he said he has completed the Ordinance for vacation rentals and it has been sent to staff for review. He added it includes a range of enforcement options to be considered.

### **Agenda Item No. 3 – FY 2022-2023 Proposed Budgets**

#### **General Fund -**

Mrs. Smith stated this review will be the first high level look and is far from complete because there are a number of things she is waiting on. She said, as always, she has attempted to create a balanced budget without increasing the millage rate.

Mrs. Smith started with the General Fund and read through the highlights. She spoke about new items in operations including a part-time Police Officer, a new full-time Public Works service worker, the elimination of a seasonal mowing crew, backflow devices, archiving for social media and other notable items such as sanitation and merit increases. She stated it currently looks like we will be able to add \$72,000 to our capital reserves with the police impact fees, 5th cent gas tax and general fund capital replacement reserve. She explained the additional items pending which will have an impact are state revenue estimates, insurance, workers compensation and minimum wage increases.

Mrs. Smith stated she has carried forward the funds for the Police building and the proceeds from the sale of the former Souls Harbor Church. She said these funds will remain in reserve. She added she will be bringing a Resolution forward restricting those funds for the Police facility only. She explained the Police Department is asking for a new vehicle as they do every year and she estimates there should be about \$300,000 left in the 1 cent sales tax reserve.

Mayor White asked questions regarding the Police funds in reserve stating by the time we buy the property and erect the building we are looking at a \$1,200,000 with \$700,000 in reserve to go toward it. He stated that kind of money can get attention and we are in a strong position to obtain some help. He indicated the need to cap the \$700,000 and anything above it has to come from grants or other allocations outside of the City budget.

Mrs. Smith moved on to Roads and Streets stating we haven’t received all the ARPA funds yet but when we receive it we should have \$900,000 in the bank. She said the rest of the projects will be funded by the 1 cent sales tax reserve. She explained Mr. Slattery is asking for a couple vehicles, garage doors and lawn mowers. She added he doesn’t have anything budgeted for Parks and Recreation, but he would like to replace playground equipment in 2024. She stated building repair and maintenance includes replacement of worn original flooring, which was

carried forward from last year. Mayor White asked how Council can know what is carried over and what is new. Mrs. Smith stated all capital funds are comingled and she identifies new funds anywhere it appears in the line item budget which she will show in the next workshop. Mrs. Smith continued and described the needs of City Council, Building Inspector, Comprehensive Planning and Development and Finance.

Mrs. Smith stated the next budget workshop is scheduled for July 6<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. She said we can keep our millage rate the same but property values have increased so the property owners will see a 5% increase anyway. Mayor White stated people must realize the expenses of the City are going up. Vice-Mayor Hanchar suggested preparing an analysis to share with the public showing them what it actually will look like on a monthly basis. Discussion followed regarding the increase in expenses for everything.

**TIFD (CRA) –**

Mrs. Smith stated CRA is balanced at \$691,000 and new items are the Main Street program support, solar lighting and Code Enforcement software. She said projects carried forward are wayfinding signage, Blue Run Park restroom and City Hall digital sign. She shared items pending which will have an impact on the budget are Marion County millage rate and minimum wage increases.

Mrs. Smith stated new money for CRA equates to about \$300,000 which makes her comfortable that everything Ms. Cid has requested can be funded and won't likely change much in the next budget. She reviewed the items in the capital buildings budget including Blue Run Park restrooms and a parking garage study. She said improvements include W. Pennsylvania Ave. streetscape, FDOT multi-modal grant, digital City Hall sign, wayfinding signage, parking enhancements, digital permit software and solar lighting on Cedar St, E. Pennsylvania and City Hall.

**Agenda Item No. 4 – Council Comments**

Vice-Mayor Hanchar wished Mrs. Odom a happy belated birthday.

Mayor White gave accolades to Mr. Slattery because he saw his team already out at 7:15 in the morning weeding and cutting.

**Agenda Item No. 5 – City Attorney Comments**

Provided before the budget meeting.

**Agenda Item No. 6 – Public Comments**

There were none.

Vice-Mayor Hanchar moved the Special City Council meeting be adjourned at 7:30 p.m. and Councilwoman Kenny seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed 3-0.

Attest:

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Penned signature of:  
Amanda Odom, CMC  
City Clerk

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Penned signature of:  
William P. White, Mayor

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