The Council Briefing began at 5:15 P.M.

The following City Council Members attended:

Mayor Charlie Latham
Lee Buck
Keith Doherty
Chris Hoffman
Bruce Thomason
Phil Vogelsang (absent)
Jeanell Wilson

Also present were City Manager George Forbes, City Clerk Laurie Scott, and City Department Directors.

**Purpose of Briefing**

The purpose of the briefing is to update the Council Members on projects, and discuss criteria the Board of Adjustment uses to grant variances.

**City Manager**

Mr. Forbes announced the Ribbon Cutting for the new Skate Park at South Beach Park would be held on Thursday, March 16, 2017, at 10:00 A.M.

Mr. Forbes announced the availability of grant funding through the State of Florida. The deadline to submit an application [as required by the House of Representatives] to the State is February 7, 2017. Funding would be requested for the following projects:

- Purchase of Taylor Property [Near Beach Marine]
- Electrical Relocation [Near Kings Road Bridge]
- Outfalls and walkovers (at the beach)
- Improve dune walkovers and extend stormwater outfalls [oceanfront]

**Police Department**

In the year 2016, Police Chief Pat Dooley explained there had been a significant increase in auto burglaries and auto thefts. In 90 to 95 percent of the cases, the vehicles were left unlocked, or keys and valuables were left in the vehicles. He discussed the Jacksonville Beach Police Department’s Public Service campaign “Lock It or Lose It.”

Mr. Forbes informed the Council he would bring before the Planning Commission the Low Volume Noise Ordinance. Police Chief Dooley explained his intent is to work with the Planning Commission members in providing more clarity and direction with the ordinance.
Public Works

Mr. Forbes announced the new solid waste collection service started on Monday, February 6, 2017. He distributed a copy of the Advance Disposal’s postcard notice to the Council Members. The notice, mailed to their customers, covers scheduling and vendor contact information as well as the map for the new bulky item pick-up collection throughout the city. He shared that if you were to go online to www.AdvanceDisposal.com/JaxBch, you would find similar customer information that was on their notice. Also, Mr. Forbes advised customers may now contact the vendor directly, as opposed to contacting the Public Works Department, with any concerns or complaints.

Mr. Forbes explained the Water Main Extension project in the area of Beach Boulevard to Hopson Road. The project would build a water main through the city easement to service the Church of Our Savior and to meet city loop needs for Hopson Road with upsizing the water main line from six inches to eight inches. The City would pay for the water main upsize above the Church’s needs due to the line running throughout the neighborhood.

Mr. Forbes reported on the 96-parking space construction project at the parking lot at 2nd Street North between 3rd and 4th Avenue. [Downtown] He advised the contractor is awaiting delivery of materials to begin the project. He stated that he hopes to have the job substantially completed by July 4, 2017.

Mr. Forbes said he is working in conjunction with the Fire Chief and Fire Marshal to look into the possibility of the fireworks for the Fourth of July, to be fired from the Jacksonville Beach Pier. He believes that with very little cost, they may be able to get an area of the pier, not severely damaged by Hurricane Matthew, to shoot off the fireworks.

Mr. Forbes announced that half of the street in the area of the 1st Avenue South street end, would be closed to allow for a two-building, four-unit, condominium construction project. The City will issue a permit and the contractor will pay a monthly fee for the permit allowing the street closure.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Director, Ann Meuse, explained the City’s recently acquired NEOGOV software. She stated NEOGOV is an application and recruitment tracking software program utilized by over 100 cities in Florida. The software allows the applicant to apply online, on their cell phones and I-Pads. All jobs are advertised on govjobs.com. They went live with the software on February 1st, 2017. She reported they have already seen a dramatic increase in the number of applications received by Human Resources. A benefit of the program would be once an applicant applies, they can see how their application is processing – if it is in the review stage, or testing state, for example. The applicant can also set their own time for testing.

Parks and Recreation

Pontem Cemetery Management Software, went live online as reported by Parks and Recreation Director, Mary Ellen Donner, on February 1, 2017. Pontem allows users to track information about gravesites, owners, and occupants for the H. Warren Smith Cemetery. You can access the program through the City’s website. It also includes an “App” that you can download to your cell phone.
Upcoming Projects

Mr. Forbes reported on the RD Rezoning Application to rezone a 1.31-acre parcel of oceanfront land located at the Northeast corner of 1st Street North and 6th Avenue North from Commercial, Limited: C-1 to Redevelopment District to allow a mixed use hotel/commercial/residential project. The property is located at 715 1st Street North. [Atlantis – Ocean View] The application is scheduled to go before the Planning Commission on Monday, February 13, 2017, at 7:00 PM.

Mr. Forbes reported the City is obtaining quotes for Live Streaming video equipment for the Council Chambers. The purpose of the video equipment would be to live stream, through the Internet, the City Council and various board meetings for public viewing. Estimated costs for the equipment is plus or minus $20,000 with an annual service fee of $6,000. Also, the countdown timer for the Council Chamber was purchased. The countdown timer would assist in the management of speaker’s time during the meetings.

Board of Adjustment

At the suggestion of City Council Members, the City Attorney presented information and guidance on the determination of a hardship relative to variance applications and other Board of Adjustment matters.

“City of Jacksonville Beach Variance Procedures” was prepared and discussed by the City Attorney, Susan Erdelyi. [attached]. Topics covered by Mr. Forbes and Ms. Erdelyi and Planning and Development Director, Bill Mann:

- What is the function of the Board of Adjustment?
- What authority does the Board of Adjustment have?
- What is a variance?
- What is a hardship?
- What types of variances may be granted under the City’s codes?
- What is the process for obtaining a variance?
- What requirements apply to the decision makers in connection with granting/denying applications for variances?
- What Board of Adjustment concerns are unique to the City of Jacksonville Beach?
- How does “grandfathering” or non-conforming structures impact variance applications?

A “Citizen’s Guide to Variances” and a “Citizen’s Guide to Quasi-Judicial Process” has been drafted to educate citizens about the law and procedures for variance applications and quasi-judicial proceedings. Educational training will be conducted at a Board of Adjustment meeting for members and Council Members (if they wish to attend) on a meeting night which has a “light agenda.”

Planning and Development Director, Bill Mann, also discussed potential options for consideration relative to existing zoning regulations. They are:

- Adding single-family as a permissible use in RM-1 and RM-2 (Multi-family) zoning districts
- Reducing side yard setbacks for two-family dwellings (10 feet on each side), to make them consistent with setbacks for single-family dwellings in RS-3 zoning districts (minimum 5 feet on each side, with 15 feet minimum, total)
Minutes of City Council Briefing
held on Monday, February 6, 2017, at 5:15 P.M.

- Increasing lot coverage for two-family dwellings in RS-3, RM-1, and RM-2 zoning districts. (Past approvals range anywhere from 45 percent to 65 percent that is currently allowed for multiple family dwellings in RM-1 and RM-2 districts)

Council Member Projects and Suggestions

- Mr. Forbes reported Council Member Vogelsang would like to discuss adding an area for toddlers to the Splash Pad at South Beach Park and Sunshine Playground. Mr. Vogelsang will provide more details on his plans at the next scheduled Council Briefing.

  Council Member Doherty –

  Mr. Doherty stated that residents have reached out to him to discuss the need for additional tennis courts. He asked Council to consider adding an eighth tennis court at the Huguenot Facility and repositioning the basketball court. Mr. Forbes estimated the project might cost plus or minus $100,000, and this project could be considered as part of the budget process.

  Council Member Hoffman –

  Ms. Hoffman recommended looking at replacing a bike rack located at Sunshine Park. She stated the bike rack does not reflect the aesthetics of the park.

  Ms. Hoffman asked if the Council would take into consideration reviewing the regulations on the hours dogs are permitted on the beach during the winter months. Mr. Forbes stated that it would be a good idea if all three Beaches had the same regulations and it would make it easier to enforce. Mr. Doherty suggested posting a sign with the City of Jacksonville Beach’s rules for dog owners at the city limit.

  Also, Ms. Hoffman asked Council to consider supporting a resolution, which would be largely symbolic, supporting state legislation allowing coastal communities to look at banning plastic bags. Mayor Latham stated he is not for the intent but would support the initiative. The key, he believes, would be to educate the public on how to recycle plastic bags correctly.

  Council Member Buck –

  Mr. Buck requested a review on removing the barrier at 16th Avenue North and 17th Avenue North along 1st Street and replacing them with stop signs. Mr. Forbes explained they previously held a public meeting on this matter, and the public overwhelming opposed the removal of the barrier.

  Council Member Wilson –

  Ms. Wilson asked to consider starting a discussion on the sport of Pickleball and a location within the City in which participants would be able to play.

  Mr. Forbes ended the briefing by stating that the City needs to be financially conservative with future projects with the understanding that we must maintain the current projects we have built.
Minutes of City Council Briefing
held on Monday, February 6, 2017, at 5:15 P.M.

The briefing adjourned at 6:45 P.M.

Submitted by:  Laurie Scott
City Clerk

Approved:

William C. Latham, Mayor

Date:  February 20, 2017