

**City Commission Workshop- Mini Budget**  
**February 22, 2022**  
***Video of the meeting and agenda can be found [here](#):***

Commissioners Mike Kolody, Jake Sachs, Randy Hartman, Vice Mayor Jason McGuirk and Mayor Russ Owen were present. Mayor Owen stated that the evening's workshop would be an overview of the 2022-23 FY budgets for Leisure Services and Maintenance Departments.

**Public Participation:**

Five residents spoke.

- There is a need for more pickleball courts and park facilities on the West side.
- Courts should be lighted and covered.
- New developments don't have plans for parks nor courts and they need to.
- Pickleball is a great sport for kids to learn how to play. Courts should be available at our schools.
- Pickleball courts should be built at our Sports Complex.

Vice-Mayor McGuirk responded that as we continue to grow staff and the CC need to look at what we can have the developers do to put that infrastructure in as in part of their PUD. Mayor Owen stated that in reality, the format of the sport dictates there should be between 5-10 courts in each facility if it's to be totally usable.

**Workshop:**

**Leisure Services.** A [PowerPoint presentation](#) by the new Director, Rob Salazar, gave a brief history of the department's previous year and presented budgetary Capital Improvement needs for FY2022- 2023. This department oversees the Alonzo "Babe" James Community Center, City Gym, Brannon Center, Live Oak Cultural Center, Coronado Civic Center, New Smyrna Beach Women's Club, and the Sports Complex.

A few of the department's 2021-22 accomplishments and goals:

- A programming plan for the Babe James Center and Special Events, was completed January 2022
- Continued growth and evolution of the programs and events the department offers including launching a Movies in the Park series.
- Improved and developed marketing strategies at Brannon Center and other facilities with the main goal of having the Brannon Center be self-sufficient.

Two of the more important 2022-23 Capital Budget requests are:

- A 15-passenger van for recreation, summer camp, and Seniors- \$40,000
- RecTrac Software update - \$36,000

Three future projects for ECHO review are:

- Expansion of the Skate Park - \$250,000 ECHO match (in last year's budget.)
- Resurfacing the Sports Complex - \$400,00 ECHO match (in last year's budget.)
- Development of pickleball courts- no costs given

It was noted that staffing would remain the same at 21.5 positions. However, Mr. Salazar showed a snapshot of a phased plan that would add strategic positions that would create opportunities for staff to grow:

- Phase 1 would include adding both a Sports Complex and Special Event Manager
- Phase 2 would add an Athletics Coordinator for the City Gym and a Rec Leader for the City Gym, the Brannon Center and the Live Oak Cultural Center.

There are three part-time vacancies and one full-time that would allow this to happen.

Discussion and comments:

- Commissioner Kolody asked about the LED lighting as it had been discussed in past budgets. Mr. Salazar responded that since it was such a big project, he wanted to research it more and make a report. He also stated that due to our Westward growth, our Parks Master Plan staff needs to step in before these “piecemeal” projects begin, and it is imperative that the Skate Park renovation get moving as it’s been on the waitlist for the budget for years and is both a valuable and overused facility.
- Commissioner Sachs asked to keep an eye on the beachside parks regarding metal erosion on the playground equipment as well as fully supporting more pickleball courts
- Vice Mayor McGuirk asked about the six pickleball courts with lighting to which Mr. Salazar said they are working on that plan. Mr. Salazar will be attending the ECHO workshop on March 2nd to see what grants might be available to the City to help with the construction of Pickleball Courts.
- Commissioner Hartman asked if the proposed new positions would require additional staff. Mr. Salazar responded that he hopes to fill currently vacant positions and reclassify existing positions. There may be more cost.
- Mayor Owen stated that he expects the coming year will be a lean year for the budget, so the focus should target needs that would add value. Skate Park and track are now priorities due to their value to the community. He also suggested that the Director look into working with a promoter to book concerts at the Brannon Center as the Glen Miller event sold out, and more like events might be a way to utilize the Center more.

**Maintenance Operations.** A [PowerPoint presentation](#) by the new Director, David Ray, gave a brief history of the department's previous year and the budgetary needs and capital improvement items for FY2022-2023. The Maintenance Operations oversees Building & Maintenance, the City Marina, Fleet Maintenance, the Golf Course, Parks, Solid Waste, Streets, and Storm water.

A few of the department’s 2021-22 accomplishments and goals were:

- Resurface a total of 6.4 miles of City streets-\$700,000 (completion in September 2022). Note: At the end of the workshop, the City Manager stated that this amount wasn’t enough to finish the project and the total will end up costing \$1.2 million. He asked that they look into the possibility of using some of the American Rescue Plan monies received to cover the additional cost.
- Renewed Waste-Pro contract for five more years.
- Canal St. Improvements: additional crosswalk with ADA ramp, added lights to the Palm trees year-round, added a crosswalk, updated planting under Oak Trees (completion in spring 2022).

A few major Capital Project requests are:

- Replace the roof at the Administration building- \$85,000
- Relocate Building & Maintenance to the Maintenance Operations yard.
- Add security cameras to parks thru-out the city (phased in over 2 years \$75,000 per year).
- Replace fleet Gas tanks - \$750,000
- New Street sweeper w/ storm drain attachments- \$250, 000

Mr. Ray stated that they just received the Marina report so will be working on that and the Parks Master Plan. All storm water project statuses can be found in the PowerPoint Presentation. Staffing will remain the same; there are four vacancies.

Regarding the cost of a pickleball court, a new layered one without lights costs \$30,000.

Discussion and Comments:

- Vice Mayor McGuirk asked about the cost of converting tennis courts to pickleball courts. It varies, depending upon the condition of the courts, but a minimum of several thousand dollars. McGuirk also stated that courts need lighting and a shade structure. Mayor Owen interjected saying they could be built in phases, making sure footers are there for a type of roof.
- Commissioner Kolody stressed more use of solar power and more charging stations for electric vehicles. He thought purchasing a street sweeper was a bad idea due to breakdown costs. He feels pickleball courts should include fencing, parking, roof, lights and restrooms even if they cost more to build.
- Commissioner Sachs felt that "a city is valued by the quality of its parks" and would like to see all of them brought up to par like Esther Park. A big concern is not having nice facilities out west.
- VM McGuirk wanted to know where we are with the changed Marina fee structure. Mr. Ray responded that we are letting current and waiting list tenants know what's going on as we're no longer with the same dock service. VM continued that NSB has the lowest millage rate in the county, but taxpayer expectations are changing and generally higher than in the past. Keeping the millage rate low will be a challenge.
- Commissioner Hartman had hoped the UC was further along with moving from Smith St. as that is valuable property that can be sold. He was adamant that our Western area get parks (13.8 acres are available) as they pay significant recreational impact fees and are getting nothing in return.
- Mayor Owen concluded by saying we are the only city he knows that does this type of detailed review, but the hard part is prioritizing and funding projects. He added that keeping our millage low affects the quality of life that we all want, especially as we grow. He has heard what everyone wants, but his focus is to invest in people and critical systems.