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**Town Commission • Workshop Minutes**

**Fire Station Renovation**

**Tuesday • June 18, 2019 • 6:30 PM**

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1. Call to Order
2. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance to Flag
3. Roll Call
* Joseph Aufmuth, Mayor Present
* Timothy Parker, Mayor Pro Tem Present
* Mike Roberts Present
* Troy Blakely Present
* Ed Burnett Present
* Debbie Gonano, Town Administrator Present
* Chief Jesse Modican Arriving at 6:35

1. Agenda Approval

 ***Motion made and seconded (Roberts/Parker) to approve the agenda as submitted; passed 5-0***

 **5.** Fire Station Renovation

 A) Architect Building Renovation Draft

 B) Architect *Opinion of Probable Cost*

 C) Procedure for Obtaining Professional Services and the Building Process

 1) Consultants’ Competitive Negotiation Act (CCNA)

 2) Piggy-Back on Existing Municipal Contract

 D) Allocation of Funds and Other Upcoming Financial Obligations

 E) Addressing Immediate Needs

 F) Other

Mayor Aufmuth acknowledged receipt of the *Opinion of Probable Cost* for the fire station renovation in the amount of $441,750 (including a metal seam roof and covered porch enhancements). Comparatively, a dissected estimate prepared in 2013 by Jones Edmunds totaled $486,160 for the same scope of work. (The original 2013 scope of work included expansion of the bay area, generator pad, pavement improvements, stormwater management upgrades, landscaping, and other enhancements at an additional cost of $393,840.) Mayor Pro Tem Parker clarified that the draft drawing and estimate prepared by Paul Stresing had been prepared under Chief Modican’s direction and that the plan which had been prepared by Jones Edmunds had not benefited from the Chief’s input. Commissioner Burnett asked Chief Modican if the floor plan prepared by Paul Stresing met the fire department’s needs. Chief Modican answered that two extra dorm rooms were added to accommodate extra staffing when required; however, only two bunk rooms are currently required. Additionally, there were some minor changes to Mr. Stresing’s plan that Chief would recommend. Mayor Aufmuth felt that we are building for the future, and we should do it right; and Chief Modican agreed that the plan meets the fire department’s future needs.

Commissioner Burnett thought the Town could use Mr. Stresing’s draft plan, build on that idea, and hire a general contractor for a design-build contract. Additionally, Burnett thought that the current roof design was a problem, allowing for water intrusion; and he recommended that the design should be corrected with renovations. Mayor Aufmuth summarized that the time has come for the Town to make decisions about renovation, including the roof, septic system, and immediate mold remediation. Town Administrator Gonano corrected Mayor Pro Tem Parker’s assumption that the fire station’s septic system is located in the bunkhouse expansion area; as the fire station and Town Hall share an 1,800-gallon septic tank (located near the parking lot fire hydrant) and drain field (located in the raised area near the garage). The Commission estimated a new septic system to cost between $15,000-$20,000, but exact costs would need to be clarified.

Mayor Aufmuth stated that we need to address and obtain good cost estimates associated with the project, identify funding sources, and review procedures for bidding and hiring. The Mayor thought that the cost estimate could very easily balloon from $350,000 to $500,000, and that we need a better handle on expected costs. The Mayor theorized that the project cost estimates would likely require the Town to follow the *Consultants’ Competitive Negotiation Act (CCNA)* procedure, for which Gonano had provided procedural information. The Mayor related that the Town had previously accepted responses to our *Request for Qualifications (RFQ)* from engineers and that the list of responding engineers could now be ranked, per procedure. The Mayor listed our choices as follows: 1) submit a request for bids and enter into a

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design-build contract; or 2) produce a design-criteria package, enter into a professional contract for design, and subsequently hire a firm to

build. The later process would produce several designs and costs from which to choose. Mayor Pro Tem Parker added that a third option would be to piggy-back off an existing municipal contract and offered to speak to other local municipalities to obtain information and the process used. Mayor Aufmuth, although not opposed to the idea, thought that the enormity of the proposed fire station project might warrant the Town getting more than one estimate instead of sole-sourcing.

As for mold remediation, the Mayor summarized the process could cost $100,000 once started, and then we’re “*in for penny, in for pound,”* and that we could legally be pushed in unforeseen directions. If mold is detected, fire personnel might have to be relocated on a temporary basis while the issue is remediated. Answering the Mayor, Gonano stated that reserves are just under $2 million *($1.9 million)*. The Mayor felt confident in spending a half million dollars with a $2 million cushion in the bank; however, if the project escalates to $1.2 million, he wouldn’t be too comfortable with that scenario. Town Administrator Gonano reminded the Commission about other funding commitments that the Town had made, such as the ballpark recreation building, other ballpark improvements, water plant obligations, and completion of Town Hall. The Town Administrator thought that water issues should be the top priority, and the Mayor agreed that water issues need to be resolved. Additionally, the Mayor expressed his opinion that the fire station renovation should be ranked in importance above a new recreational building, and Commissioner Roberts agreed that the recreational building is not a priority at this time. The $85,000 WSPP matching funds, despite a Commission vote to be used for such building, could be used for another recreational project and other ballpark needs would generously be met by WSPP funds.

The Mayor summarized that a bond issue could be a possible revenue source (a prior bond issue for water improvements had been paid off early in the year 2000); a millage rate increase would not work, as a hike in millage produces about $50,000/year (taking 10 years to produce $500,000); the Town could consider a loan; or the Town could file for a USDA or other grant application. Commissioner Roberts worried about the future of the fire department and what would become of the building and funds expended on renovation if Alachua County took over the district. Chief Modican responded that Alachua County Chief Theus has expressed no interest in moving south to acquire the Micanopy district and that the district served would be the same for at least five years. Mayor Aufmuth determined that something must be done in the immediate future to correct problems at the fire station, and he thought that if the building were ever to be vacated, it will present other opportunities for the Town. Commissioner Roberts reported that the fire department hasn’t improved their level of service from Basic Life Support (BLS) since 1973, and he wanted the Chief to give a 5-10 year plan. Chief Modican responded that he could upgrade to Advanced Life Support (ALS) in two months, but there is no funding available to implement that program, for which the initial cost would be $50,000 in equipment and additional costs to hire the professionals needed. Town Administrator Gonano explained to the Commission that all fire department personnel are part-time, minimum-wage employees receiving no benefits. Most of the fire department personnel have other full-time jobs paying benefits and are working here as a side gig, or they’ve had issues with past employers and are here while seeking employment elsewhere. Although the funds received from the County Interlocal Agreement (ILA) offsets a portion of the annual expense of the fire department, it currently costs the Town about $100,000/year to fund the fire department. Commissioner Burnett suggested that the Chief work with Town Administrator Gonano to come up with a basic general statement of work to be performed.

 **6.** Adjourn 7:38pm

**MINUTES APPROVED:**

**As submitted \_\_\_\_\_\_ as amended \_\_\_\_\_\_ at Town Commission Meeting \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Joseph L. Aufmuth, Mayor Debbie Gonano, Recorder**

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