

## **CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**DECEMBER 8, 2009**

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Mayor Penton called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Gene Kniffin, City Planner, gave the invocation.

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Mayor Donald Penton.

### **ROLL CALL**

Mayor Donald Penton, Vice Mayor Nancy Adorno, Councilor Kristi Eilertsen, Councilor Joe LaCascia, Councilor Paula Roddenberry, City Manager Cory Carrier, City Attorney Jeff Sullivan and City Clerk Patricia Jackson. Also present were Assistant City Manager Pam Peterson, City Planner Gene Kniffin, Code Enforcement Officer Kathy Delp, and staff member Kelly Downing.

A quorum was established and the Mayor turned the meeting over to City Manager Cory Carrier.

### **APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**

Vice Mayor Adorno made a motion to approve the consent agenda; the motion was seconded by Councilor LaCascia.

Roll Call: Councilor Eilertsen-aye, Councilor Roddenberry-aye, Vice Mayor Adorno-aye, Mayor Penton-aye, Councilor LaCascia-aye.

5-ayes

0-nays

### **PRESENTATIONS AND/OR RECOGNITIONS**

#### **Appointments to the Citizens Advisory Committee**

Mayor Penton and City Manager Carrier asked how many members were on the Board at this time; City Clerk Jackson advised there are currently four members on the Board. When asked how many appointments were for tonight, City Clerk Jackson advised there are four applications for tonight, and that will leave two seats remaining to be filled.

Mayor Penton made a motion to appoint Cathy Gabany, David Prins, Martin G. Young and Ronald Ham to the Citizens Advisory Committee; the motion was seconded by Councilor LaCascia. Before roll call vote, those present were asked to stand as they were introduced.

Roll Call: Councilor LaCascia-aye, Mayor Penton-aye, Vice Mayor Adorno-aye, Councilor Eilertsen-aye, Councilor Roddenberry-aye.

5-ayes  
0-nays

At this time City Manager Carrier asked Lieutenant Dan Cone to come forward. City Manager Carrier advised Lt. Cone had received a promotion and is leaving Polk City; the City thanked him for his service and wished him well. Lt. Cone thanked the City; it has been a successful three years. Lt. Cone then introduced Sergeant Conover, who will be his replacement. Mayor Penton commended Lt. Cone; he as been an asset to the community.

At this time City Manager Carrier turned the meeting over to City Attorney Sullivan, who then presented the remainder of the agenda items.

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

#### **ORDINANCE 1259, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FINAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008 – 2009 AND PROVIDING AND EFFECTIVE DATE**

Attorney Sullivan read Ordinance 1259 in short title. Mayor Penton opened the Public Hearing, at which time City Manager Carrier gave a brief explanation of why the FY 2008-2009 Budget needed to be amended .

Mr. Mike Blethen asked if the same numbers would be carried over to this year's budget; City Manager Carrier advised it was for Fiscal Year 2008-2009 only; it had to be adjusted because of grants and corresponding expenditures in the Sewer Fund for last year only, There being no additional questions from the public, Mayor Penton closed the Public Hearing.

Councilor Eilertsen made a motion to accept Ordinance 1259 in its entirety; the motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Adorno.

Roll Call: Councilor Eilertsen-aye, Vice Mayor Adorno-aye, Councilor LaCascia-aye, Mayor Penton-aye, Councilor Roddenberry-aye.

5-ayes  
0-nays

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **RESOLUTION 2009-09 – A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF POLK CITY, FLORIDA APPROVING THE FORM OF A FIRST AMENDED AND RESTATED INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT AS A CONDITION OF MEMBERSHIP WITHIN THE FLORIDA**

## **GOVERNMENTAL UTILITY AUTHORITY; AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF THE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

Attorney Sullivan read Resolution 2009-09 in short title. Mayor Penton asked the City Manager to give an explanation of what this entails.

City Manager Carrier advised to accompany Resolution 2009-09 she prepared a lengthy memo to Council, along with the financial statement in regard to utilities. We have recognized (staff and Council) at this particular moment and time there is "certainly no stomach for moving forward with the utilities." She advised there are consequences to that action, of which the City could not feasibly maintain or run the system on the existing rates or without expansion. What the Utility Local Agreement does is it is the first step in the complete divestiture of the City's utility departments. This is just the first step, which enters the City into membership in the Utility Authority. If this Resolution is passed, the Authority will come in, do its due diligence and completely acquire the Polk City Utilities and Polk City will no longer be in the utility business.

Councilor LaCascia gave some historical perspective; this is a Municipal Governmental Authority that was empowered as of December 1, 2000, and it allows them to be available to take over the infrastructure (sewer and water) of any municipality that would like to come in under their umbrella. There are various reasons for doing that; one tonight as the City Manager explained, if the City is not going to expand the sewer system any more, and we have already voted to reduce the water rates, we are not going to generate enough revenue to pay the debt service. Councilor LaCascia feels this is a win/win situation as he reads it; the City Manager has given Council a lot of documents to read over, and had individual meetings with her as well to satisfy any questions because it poses more questions than what can be answered in the document before Council. It is a win/win in that we can go in, they will take over all of the debt, and they will manage it; that is if they accept it. What we are voting on tonight is to allow them to do their due diligence and look at what we have in terms of hard infrastructure and what funding we have for them to basically say we qualify for this, and the City can come in under their umbrella. They would acquire everything and manage it; the good part about this is at some point in time when it is on a footing where it can pay for itself, the City can take it back. One of the things you don't want to happen is to have private operators come in and take it over. We are only saying we wish to become a member of the Authority. He then listed everyone who was members when it was first established, those that have withdrawn, and the additional members who have joined. It is a remediation to go into when we can't pay the water bills because this present Council has voted not to go further with expansion of the system. We have not voted on it yet, but it appears as if that is the direction it is heading; so to head that off at the pass, and if we're not going to increase the rates, which Council already voted their not going to do, we simply don't have the money to keep the water and sewer functioning.

Councilor Eilertsen is sure a concern the citizens are wondering is by doing this where will we stand on the sewers; if we are going to turn over the utilities to another source. Councilor Eilertsen knows we have gone out for bids, but if we are turning it over....City Manager Carrier advised that would stop.

Councilor Roddenberry asked if the Authority would be doing the billing and the rate adjustments for water and sewer. City Manager Carrier advised they would be, and the City would do nothing; the bills would be generated from a different County. When Councilor Roddenberry asked if payments would be made here, City Manager Carrier advised she had asked them about making this a collection center, but she doesn't know if they would do that. The City would not have any authority over rates, bills or any of that. Councilor Roddenberry commented the City would have no control over cost. City Manager Carrier advised that is not exactly true in the fact that once the City becomes a member, the Board of the Utility Authority is made up of the City Managers or the Deputy City Managers, or County Managers of the actual member cities or counties (she gave an example). There is some control over what happens, but it would be a utility-wide decision; however, if it turned out overall they need to raise the rates and it was justified, then yes, they would do that.

Mayor Penton advised there are no elected officials on this Board; they are appointed by someone through this office, or a member of this community. City Manager Carrier explained the point behind no elected officials was that they wanted to depoliticize the Board as much as possible. In many cities elected officials are extremely political, and would use their vote in that manner versus what was actually best for the Utility as a whole. One of the benefits to the Utility Authority would be they have the bonding capability to refinance the City's debt and get it restructured so that it would not be as erroneous as it is on the City. The benefit of that is they may find out that upon restructuring, the rates could actually go down; we don't know that, it would be part of the negotiation.

Councilor Eilertsen commented the City is partially in this because a couple of them (Council members) were not moving forward with the additional utilities, and we also did not want to impact the city increasing cost of utilities. We are now in a situation where we are going to have to outsource the utilities to another company to take on our debt. City Manager Carrier advised it's not outsourcing, we are divesting the city of utilities. Councilor Eilertsen remarked that in the end, they (Authority) can raise the rates to whatever they need to in order to get themselves out of debt.

Councilor LaCascia commented it is reasonable to assume when you go into a consortium of this size and because of their scales of economy of doing business, there is a possibility that rates would not go up in a short period of time; that is what he is hoping for. He would like to find out what the experience is from some of those other Counties that have been in it. It was obviously successful in that they have opted out on a reasonable basis, and they're taking back their destiny. It's important to know this Council would have nothing to do with any of the Enterprise (sewer or water) Fund if and when this is taken over. This is only an application to allow them to begin their due diligence; this could take anywhere from five to eight months or longer. City Manager Carrier advised this is correct; however, we have requested that if Council does approve the Interlocal Agreement, that they expedite the process so as not to put the City into any further financial jeopardy than what we are at this point.

Vice Mayor Adorno advised she is a little confused; at the last meeting we voted and decided we were going to wait until we got bids to see what the true numbers are. Making reference to something that is a done deal, but isn't, she doesn't understand

that. She also understands this could be something to look at if those numbers come back and it's not advantageous for us; this is something we need to seriously consider. The fact that you have expressed that you would like for this to be done quickly so that, if that were the case, we wouldn't get into more debt, but it sounded like we're looking at this. We do need to consider, but we haven't gotten information, and we're not going to get that information until the end of the month; we can't really know if this is even something to consider until we have the other information. She then asked if she was incorrect on how she is interpreting this.

Councilor Eilertsen asked if we have advertised for bids; City Manager responded we have. Councilor Eilertsen can see where Vice Mayor Adorno is coming from; why at this point would 30 days make that grave of a difference to see where those numbers fit since we have gone out to bid; it would almost seem pointless to do the advertising. City Manager Carrier advised we would still need that information; all this is this evening is to become a member so they can start their due diligence. They can't even come in and start their due diligence without us being a member. Truthfully, 30 days does make a difference. If the vote is no that we're not going to move forward with that (wastewater collection system expansion), we have to move as quickly as possible to divest the City of the utility companies so that we do not jeopardize the City's financials any further than they already are. "We are hemorrhaging" money to the sewer department and one month (30 days) makes a difference. Councilor Eilertsen asked what the next step would be if we say "okay, lets become a member", would they come in and do an audit. City Manager Carrier advised it's not just an audit; they do an audit of the financials, but they also do an evaluation of the system to see where they are. City Manager Carrier advised one of the reasons we are "in the problem we are" is from day one when we took over Mt. Olive it was always part of the plan to decommission and deconstruct that plant. We wanted to be able to take an aging plant off line and get it out of a residential neighborhood; in addition to that, the County found that to be advantageous to them and to Polk City. That is why it was turned over to us at no cost; the County realized there were things that needed to be done, and so did we. That was supposed to be a very short term thing before the decommission and deconstruction of that plant; however, it has now turned into more than a year and the expenses are mounting – we have had a lift station to go down, we've had major damage to a residential property because of sewage backup (we had to redo the whole interior of a house) and we have lines that are constantly being plugged because of what is being flushed down the system. The repair and maintenance of that system is extremely costly; that was supposed to have never entered into the picture. Now that it has, it is literally cannibalizing the whole utility system; all of the programs in that system have been eaten up just in the maintenance of that system.

Mayor Penton stated in the last couple of meetings when we were doing our budget there were two line items for generators that would have to be purchased in the amount of \$60,000; that would relieve us of those, and we can't afford the way we are going now. The only other solution is to expand the system or raise the rates, and as you all know the citizens don't want any of that, and if that's the case, this is the best situation we can get into.

Councilor Roddenberry asked the City Manager if we turn the utilities over to the Authority (using Sandy Point, Edgewater and Trailview as an example), could the

Authority determine at some point there is a need and they can do the those projects without us as a Council or City saying that is not the way we want to do it. City Manager Carrier advised they could. Vice Mayor Adorno asked if they would qualify for State Funds; City Manager Carrier replied they would because it is a Government. Brief discussion took place regarding obtaining possible grants, and if the Authority should borrow money, they would have to look at paying that back in some way.

Councilor Eilertsen then questioned what would happen once we join and the Authority does the audit and evaluation of the system; would they at that time deem they want to do this, or do they just say they're not willing to take this on, or what are the options at that level. City Manager Carrier advised at this moment and time she doesn't know because it depends on what they find in their reviews. Councilor Roddenberry asked if we do this tonight, we only are approving to pursue it not yes, we're going to do it; City Manager Carrier advised that was correct. Councilor Eilertsen questioned once they come back with all of the information, do we move forward at that point saying yes, we need to start the process of turning over – At this point City Manager Carrier explained what will happen once they do their due diligence. They will at that point come back to the City and start negotiations. The Authority in the past has absorbed the personnel of the entities they took over, they take over the equipment (this will also save the City money because of the lease we are in), as far as specifics on what they will or won't do and the City will or won't do is all worked out in the negotiations and set forth in an agreement that Council as a whole will have to approve.

Councilor LaCascia commented this Council's, when and if this is completed, only function would be basically to administer the Government Fund which is what provides the necessary services to the people and oversees only one single source of revenue from the AdValorem Taxes; that would be our (Council) only function from this point forward. City Manager Carrier advised the function would be correct and proper, but it would not be a single source of revenue; the General Fund has many sources of revenue. Councilor LaCascia commented Council would only be administering the necessary services to the community such as Fire, EMS, Code Enforcement, Roads/Streets; City Manager Carrier advised that was correct.

Councilor Roddenberry asked how many current employees the City has that is involved in the water and sewer department, which includes office staff and laborers. Gene advised he has five, and the City Manager responded there would be two from the finance department; the City will not need the additional person in there. Councilor Roddenberry wanted to know if the Utility Authority is going to guarantee those people employment; Gene advised they would guarantee those positions and guarantee to take those employees in those positions. Vice Mayor Adorno commented those positions would come off our books and go onto theirs. Councilor LaCascia asked if they were paid out of the Enterprise Fund; City Manager Carrier advised it is currently split because their duties are split. Vice Mayor Adorno asked if it cost anything to join; City Manager Carrier advised it does not.

Mayor Penton advised the bids that were sent out will be returned and opened by the City; however it's written in there we can accept or reject any or all bids for any reason. Councilor LaCascia commented he would have to believe if prospective bidders were reading the newspapers, at this point it would probably reduce the number of bids we

can expect on December 23. Councilor Roddenberry thinks as a courtesy, if we decide tonight to go ahead and pursue the Utility Authority option, anyone who picked up a bid packet and paid \$200 she would think in consideration of the cost that they're going to pay for the bid packet, and the work it's going to take for them to figure up a bid, that we would have enough consideration for those people that we would contact them and probably refund their money, if we have pretty much decided this is a no go. City Manager Carrier advised we will know tomorrow how many people are interested in bidding; we are having a pre-bid conference tomorrow so we will know at that point who, if anyone, is interested in bidding. Mayor Penton asked how many, if any, have picked up packets. Gene advised he spoke with Jones Edmunds in Tampa; they advised there have been seven or eight contractors who have contacted them and there should be more at the pre-bid. City Manager Carrier advised that money does not come to the City; that money goes to the Engineers who reproduce the bid package and she is pretty confident that money will not be refunded by Jones Edmunds. Councilor Roddenberry asked if we could stop the companies from picking up and starting additional work to try to finish the bid packets, or have they completed them. City Manager Carrier advised she doesn't think after tomorrow there will be any more picking up of packets because it is a mandatory pre-bid conference. Councilor Roddenberry then commented so what they've done, they've done.

Vice Mayor Adorno commented, if she understands this correctly, our schedule is pre-bid conference tomorrow (which will give us an idea of how many companies are interested), by the 23<sup>rd</sup> we should have bids in, and that will give us about a week to look at the companies and by the 15<sup>th</sup> we have to decide. If not convenient and the numbers are too high and this is not going to be something profitable for the City, we have already applied for this and it is already on its way and we have to make a decision that this is the way to go; we have already started the wheels on this. If these numbers come back really good and it seems it would be beneficial for the City to get into this and we're getting money out of it, being a member is no problem; we can continue to be a member because it doesn't cost us anything. City Manager Carrier advised that is correct.

Mayor Penton asked Council if they had anything additional to add. There being no additional comments, Vice Mayor Adorno made a motion to move forward with the application and accept Resolution 2009-09; the motion was seconded by Councilor LaCascia.

Roll Call: Vice Mayor Adorno-aye, Councilor LaCascia-aye, Councilor Roddenberry-nay, Councilor Eilertsen-aye (she stated because it is just an application process she is willing to go with it, but she is extremely dismayed that we didn't consider these concerns before we went out to bids. She thinks it is extremely unfair to the companies that are making the bids and paying the cost), Mayor Penton-aye.

4-ayes

1-nay

**ORDINANCE 1260 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF POLK CITY AMENDING CHAPTER 74 UTILITIES, SECTION 204. DRILLING AND DIGGING OF WELLS PROHIBITED; EXCEPTIONS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

Attorney Sullivan read Ordinance 1260 in short title. City Manager Carrier advised in March Council passed an Ordinance in regard to the digging of wells in the city and prohibitions thereto. Upon doing that, the City has met with Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) staff and they expressed some concerns in regard to the language and transmitted new language to us they would like to see; that is what is before you this evening. It doesn't change the purpose or intent of the original Ordinance; it doesn't change any of the prohibitions or exceptions. It is changing the language, and it certainly complies with the intergovernmental cooperation, which is why this has come before you this evening. It is simply a language change that the representatives from SWFWMD would like to see.

Mayor Penton advised there is a representative present at tonight's meeting if there are any questions. Vice Mayor Adorno asked if it really doesn't make that much difference, then why the change. Danny Kushmer, who is the Community Affairs Coordinator for SWFWMD, addressed Council. Mr. Kushmer advised there are three communities within the Southwest Florida Management's District that had the same Ordinance; it was brought to the District's attention the Ordinance was there so the legal department upon hearing from the Governing Board explored the validity and legalese of this Ordinance. Under Chapter 373 the Water Management District has, by State Statue and through the Department of Environmental Protection Agency, the sole authority to regulate water use and its resources within the State of Florida. The way the Ordinance was written, and is currently written, it states that the City has embarked on banning the use of wells for supply of good quality and preventive diminishment of the water supply. As stated, it is stating the City is actually taking on the protection of the water resources, whereas that is the sole responsibility of the Water Management District. We met with the three municipalities, including Polk City, and have requested this change. Councilor LaCascia commented they (Water Management District) is in charge of conservation and we're not, right? Mr. Kushmer responded when it comes to the State's resource of water, yes, that is correct.

Councilor Eilertsen made a motion to make the changes of Ordinance 1260; the motion was seconded by Councilor LaCascia.

Roll Call: Councilor Roddenberry-aye, Mayor Penton-aye, Councilor LaCascia-aye, Councilor Eilertsen-aye, Vice Mayor Adorno-aye

5-ayes  
0-nays

At the request of someone from the audience, Mayor Penton read what was removed and replaced in Ordinance 1260.



## **Stipulated Settlement Agreement with DCA (Department of Community Affairs)**

Attorney Sullivan advised Council when the City sent in the Comprehensive Plan Amendment to Department of Community Affairs, they found it to be in non-compliance and filed a “lawsuit”; the City and DCA met and agreed to fix the problem. Since that time the City has made the necessary corrections and sent them to DCA; however, the Stipulated Settlement Agreement was never executed. City Manager Carrier advised the City readopted the Capital Improvement Plan Ordinance and at the same time was supposed to have adopted the Stipulated Settlement Agreement, but didn’t. Some discussion took place regarding the Stipulated Settlement Agreement and what purpose it serves, as well as what had to be corrected with the Capital Improvement Plan (City Manager Carrier went into detail as to what the Stipulated Settlement Agreement was and how it works).

Vice Mayor Adorno made a motion to accept the Stipulated Settlement Agreement with DCA; the motion was seconded by Councilor LaCascia.

Roll Call: Councilor LaCascia-aye, Vice Mayor Adorno-aye, Mayor Penton-aye, Councilor Roddenberry-aye, Councilor Eilertsen-aye

5-ayes

0-nays

### **CITY MANAGER ITEMS**

City Manager Carrier advised she appreciated Council and staff for her time off during the Thanksgiving Holiday to spend time with her family after losing her older sister.

### **CITY CLERK ITEMS**

The City Clerk had nothing.

### **CITY ATTORNEY ITEMS**

The City Attorney had nothing.

### **COUNCIL MEMBER ITEMS**

**Councilor Eilertsen** – Councilor Eilertsen thanked Gene Kniffin for moving the jail workers to another time; it is greatly appreciated.

Councilor Eilertsen then asked how Living Hope was doing and asked about their status; City Manager Carrier advised they have reduced their hours because of funding; they are there one day a week until 1:00 p.m., and we have a current phone number for anyone who needs assistance. Councilor Eilertsen asked if they were still housed in the building, and if people were coming in. City Manager Carrier advised they are still in the building; however, she will have to check with them regarding people coming in and get back with her.

Councilor Eilertsen asked the City Manager about the Polk Transit Authority; City Manager Carrier advised they are still playing phone tag.

Councilor Eilertsen then asked about the water overage situation. Gene Kniffin advised they are still working on that; both instrument people and programmers have been working to resolve this, as well as the employees doing an inventory of all the meters, serial numbers and readings. They are about twenty percent complete. City Manager Carrier advised the readings were estimated the first month and this month they would be manually read; these are being double checked.

Councilor Eilertsen asked about the grand opening of the trail; City Manager Carrier advised it would be the first week of January. She then asked about the status of the skate park. She was advised the City is waiting on a couple of pieces to be replaced; once those are received it will be set up. Gene advised we would like the skate board enthusiast to help with the set up; Councilor Eilertsen suggested putting it on the water bills.

Councilor Eilertsen thanked everyone for coming. City Manager Carrier advised the grand opening of the Trail and Skate Park would be at the same time.

**Councilor LaCascia** – Councilor LaCascia commented that while he understood the necessity of the vote, he is disappointed we could not reconcile the situation on our own (FGUA); because of the economic feasibility we have become a victim. He looks forward to “hunkering down” in the next couple of years with the monkey off our back in terms of water and sewer, and looking into repairing some of the financial problems and financial integrity in going forward; he feels it is a win/win in that if we are successful in making the financial picture better that at some point in the future we will be able to take this all back and run it the way we would all like for it to be and running it as a City and having control of our own destiny, which we want.

He thanked everyone for getting involved in the democratic process; he thinks it was done in a respectful way in terms of moving forward and making your feelings and thoughts known to the Council. He thinks the Council has listened, and more importantly, he thinks the City Manager and staff have listened to what’s been going on. He “basically commends us all” for making what he thinks is an appropriate decision tonight.

**Councilor Roddenberry** – Councilor Roddenberry thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. On behalf of Council she wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

### **VICE MAYOR ITEMS**

Vice Mayor Adorno advised since she has been here this is the first time the parade had to be postponed, but thinks it was for the best; she is looking forward to the coming weekend and would like to see everyone there. This will be the first year to include homes that are decorated for Christmas; she has been going around the City and it is really nice to homes well lit, and that people took the time and effort (she mentioned an area behind the Library). She will go around the city and to check the lights; there will be a first runners up and a winner announced after the parade, and the cut-off date is tomorrow (December 9).

## **MAYOR ITEMS**

Mayor Penton thanked everyone for coming and explained part of his vote from the last meeting -- he has been in the city almost 40 years, and 25 years ago the city could have had sewer, but it received the same opposition then. There are consequences, -- say if we did go with the sewer 25 years ago, Lakeland would not be as close as they are today and the spray field from Auburndale would not be in our area, the big attraction down here would be in the city, and we would probably be across I-4 to the Williams area where the new school is; there are consequences on some of the things that we do and don't do. Mayor Penton advised he respects everyone's positions, and he is just dissatisfied with them. When he makes a decision he looks at the entire city, not just one area that is affected because this area that was affected now affects the city as a whole; this is what is causing the sewer system to be failing and not substantiating the monies that we need to run it. Again, he respects everyone's positions.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS/REQUEST**

Mayor Penton advised he noticed that Trudy Block and Alice Tisdell are speaking on the same subject; he asked that just one of them speak on that subject at this time.

Trudy Block, 218 Bayberry Drive, addressed the Council regarding the Polk City Sewer Project. The Council has to make tough decisions and Council has been elected, or appointed, to serve the people of Polk City. That was the idea behind their effort to provide the Councilors information pertaining to the Polk City Sewer Project, and to present over 339 names that were collected. Ms. Block read from a prepared statement regarding the Sewer Project. She advised a group was organized of city residents who were concerned about the cost of the proposed Sewer Project; however, negative signs were discouraged as it was not a personal attack. Discussion took place between Ms. Block and City Council regarding the proposed project:

- Shovel Ready Projects
- Cost of Project – will not know until bids come back
- Septic System Inspection Program – Kathy Delp advised Health Department are the only ones who can issue permits and do inspections
- Stimulus Dollars
- Polk City has received millions of dollars in grant money because of City Manager Carrier
- Grant money has to be looked at on an individual basis

In conclusion, Ms. Block advised they are asking Council to look at what is in the best interest of Polk City. Councilor LaCascia advised he thinks Council does that; before a decision is made they have to collectively look at the city as a whole. Ms. Block gave the City Clerk a copy of the list of names that were collected in opposition to this project.

Al Schneider, 775 Teaberry Trail, addressed the Council regarding the FGUA. He understands they would pay for everything, which includes debut service. Mr. Schneider asked about the bids for the construction of sewer service; City Manager Advised that information will be relevant. He was advised the City reserves the right to reject and/or accept and or all bids. Discussion took place regarding the FGUA:

- FGUA absorbs the service area
- FGUA will have authority over the utilities
- City Ordinances should FGUA take over
- Utility Tax
- Would there be a fee should we take utilities back—Gene responded no
- FGUA has ability to refinance existing bonds and possibly get better terms and rates than what City currently has
- Currently City pays \$174,000 on one bond per year and \$281,000 on another bond per year. If the City had ability to go out and refinance, it would make a significant difference
- Raising of rates – City Attorney advised before rates can be raised, it has to be advertised for a public meeting whereby the public can speak

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Christmas Parade this Saturday (December 12) at 2:00 p.m.

Councilor Eilertsen made a motion to adjourn; the motion was seconded by Councilor LaCascia and unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

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Patricia R. Jackson, City Clerk

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Donald L. Penton, Sr. Mayor