

# CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES

March 4, 2014

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Mayor Joe LaCascia called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Present:** Mayor Joe LaCascia, Councilor Trudy Block, Councilor Don Kimsey, Councilor Keith Prestage, City Attorney Thomas Cloud and City Manager Patricia Jackson

**Absent:** Vice Mayor Mike Blethen

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM** - Yes

## **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

### **Discussion Regarding Request for Investigation**

City Attorney Cloud provided a brief explanation as to the reason for this workshop. Workshops generally have not had public comment. The new rules which basically say we can have public comment at any city meetings. It would be best if we allow public comment. That would be appropriate. An anonymous letter (unsigned) was sent to the City Attorney's office postmarked Tampa/St. Petersburg. In a normal circumstance this letter would have gotten discarded. But, in this case and in the City Attorney capacity, this letter has to be disclosed. This letter was forwarded to City Manager Jackson to share with each Council member. Attorney Cloud advised the comments regarding the Mayor are untrue; Council governs themselves. If there are Ethics problems, the Ethics Commission or the State Attorney deal with such issues. Any citizen can bring an official complaint to the Ethics Commission. This is not in the job description of the Mayor or the City Attorney. After thorough review, no further action needs to be taken.

Mayor LaCascia responded with his recollection of events regarding the Florida Trend magazine subscription. *As we come in to the mailboxes, I see the Florida Trend in Councilor Block's mailbox which she normally does not receive because the Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Manager and City Attorney are the only individuals that receive a free subscription.* This was mentioned to City Manager Jackson, and she was not aware of this issue. Several weeks later he inquired with City Manager Jackson, who learned from Florida Trend officials that her (Patricia Jackson) free subscription had been changed to Trudy Block.

Councilor Block provided her account of what happened. She looked at the Florida Trend website subscription area to determine how this happened. She was notified on April 3, 2013 by City Manager Jackson. This may have happened as she held two positions for the free subscriptions at one time. This issue was corrected after being discovered within one hour with a few phone calls and/or emails. No further follow-up,

which led her to believe this issue was resolved. Councilor Block read the email received from City Manager Jackson regarding reactivation of her (Councilor Block's) subscription. Councilor Block's concern and disappointment is if this matter is an election conspiracy with the election being four weeks away or City Manager Jackson acting in a non-professional manner using poor judgment in sharing this issue with an employee.

Councilor Block continued reading from a prepared statement discussing the projects she's completed as City Council member and former Acting City Manager and events leading to her involvement in City Government.

City Manager Jackson responded with her recollection of the magazine mishap. Expressed as City Manager she is not in a conspiracy because it is election time and does not appreciate being accused of such. Councilor Block expressed that she would like to get the Florida Trend Magazine. City Manager Jackson agreed to share her copy once she finished reading it. At some point, City Manager Jackson noticed that she was not receiving her monthly subscription, at which time she made contact with the Florida Trend officials. City Manager Jackson shared email correspondence in chronological order between herself and the Florida Trend official regarding the name change on the subscription. Made contact with Councilor Block regarding the subscription being reinstated to City Manager Jackson. Florida Trend Officials found another complimentary subscription. Florida Trend officials indicated that someone logged into the City Manager's account and changed the information from Patricia Jackson to Trudy Block. City Manager Jackson stated that Councilor Block was not authorized to do so. Original account was changed back to Patricia Jackson. A three year subscription for \$20.00 could be done, but City Manager Jackson could not make this transaction on behalf of Councilor Block.

Councilor Block expressed her complete disagreement that she hacked into City Manager Jackson's Florida Trend account.

Councilor Prestage stated after listening to Councilor Block and City Manager Jackson, he did not see any wrongdoing. *If the author of the anonymous letter is in the audience and wants to come forth and accuse Councilor Block or Mayor LaCascia of something, you are more than welcome to do so.* He is satisfied with the explanations and the Council needs to move forward and work together on behalf of the City. As far as he is concerned, this meeting is over.

Councilor Kimsey inquired about the postmark location on the letter versus the postmark on Councilor Block's campaign literature that he is aware of.

City Manager Jackson explained that Polk City's mail goes to the Tampa/St. Petersburg area Post Office for processing.



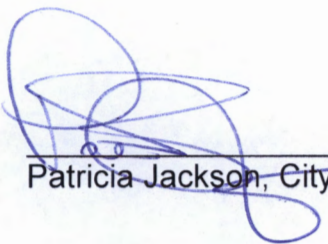
**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Bill Block (218 Bayberry Drive) in agreement with Councilor Prestage, this meeting was much to do about nothing. I think having a meeting based on an anonymous letter is bad. This is setting a bad precedence in the city. If the person is not man/woman enough to sign their name to correspondence....ignore it....throw it in the garbage.

Mayor LaCascia responded that he did not want to be accused of backroom dealings, and wanted to be completely transparent.

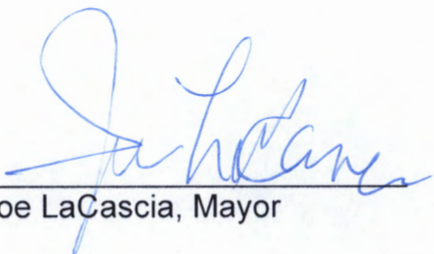
Discussion ensued.

**ADJOURNMENT**- 6:34 pm



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Patricia Jackson, City Manager



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Joe LaCascia, Mayor