

## Regular Council Meeting

May 7, 2024

Meeting called to order by Mayor Harley at 6:00pm.

Invocation given Councilman Evans.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Harley.

Welcome extended to all by Mayor Harley.

Present were Mayor John R. Harley, Councilman Robert D. Bird, Jr., Councilman Justin Wright, Councilman J. Micheal Evans, and Councilman Edward Armijo. City Attorney Rebecca Tydings absent, out of town attending GMA Board of Trustees-GIRMA meeting.

Adoption of Minutes: Blanket motion made by Councilman Wright to adopt minutes as written; seconded by Councilman Armijo. Motion carried.

- April 2, 2024
- April 16, 2024 Council Work Session

### Old Business

None

### New Business

FY 2025 Proposed Budget submitted to Governing Authority: Councilman Bird, Councilman Evans and City Accountant Harrison submitted FY 2025 Budget. Copies are available to citizens for review outside the window of the City Clerk's Office and available on website [www.centervillega.org](http://www.centervillega.org).

The proposed FY 2025 Budget is \$17,017,827 vs the FY 24 Amended budget of \$15,015,793 which reflects a \$2,002,034 increase or 13.33%.

The increase of \$2,002,034 is made up of an extra Payment of \$680,163 on the Loan payable for construction of the fire station. This will be the last payment extinguishing early the original loan of \$4,350,000 and reducing the loan term from 8 to 4 1/2 years as well as reducing the interest expense on the loan from \$398,493 to \$197,972.

Increase in Infrastructure and Capital purchases in the Enterprise Fund by \$1,027,610. FY 2025 Enterprise Fund Infrastructure and Capital Purchases are \$4,773,610 vs FY 24 amended budget of \$3,746,000.

The balance of the increase of \$294,261 is for the increase in operating costs; contracts, software, agreements, retirement, wages, insurance, etc., as well as 2 new police officer positions.

There will be a public hearing on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at the 6pm Council meeting in the council chambers at City Hall with adoption of the budget on June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

Detail of Enterprise Infrastructure & Capital Purchases of \$4,773,610; see below.

### Water & Sewer Fund

- \$598,015 - W&S line relocation for widening Wilson/Elberta Rd
- \$3,286,280 - Construction Bay Gall Sanitary Sewer Line
- \$10,000 - Purchase right of ways- Const. Sanitary sewer line
- \$60,000 - Vacuum Truck
- \$50,000 - Machinery & Equipment

### Storm Water Fund

- \$300,00 - Infrastructure-piped Pond by the humane society
- \$110,000 - Purchase 2 new trucks

### Sanitation Fund

- Relocation of Recycle Center- Total project \$354,315
- \$30,000 cash match for Site Preparation
- \$250,000 26' roll off truck trailer
- \$40,000 plastic containers
- \$10,000 aluminum can crusher
- \$15,000 3 compressors & electrical panels on equipment
- \$9,315 3 metal awnings
- \$5,000 Machinery & Equipment

Councilman Bird thanked Mrs. Harrison for her hard work, stating the information provided was well laid out for review. The sub- committee trimmed the budget, being diligent and made changes where we could to help to get a budget that is reasonable and responsible to the tax payers.

Councilman Evans confirmed the budget was trimmed from what was originally requested from Department Heads. We have submitted a budget for review to Mayor, Council and citizens that will continue to meet citizen's needs.

Mayor Harley stated that we are not recommending a COLA for employees.

Councilman Bird stated there is not a COLA in the budget; however, there is a merit increase up to 3% on the anniversary date for well performing employees recommended in the FY 25 budget. Also, included in the FY 25 budget, bring the minimum hourly rate for employees to \$15.00 an hour.

Mayor Harley pointed out tax payers support the senior exemption, millage rate \$ 369,000 of revenue that is not collected if it was collected would be decreased by 1 or 2 mills; keep this in mind. Last year we did not do a merit but a COLA was given. This year only a merit, this is alarming, wonder why we can't keep our people, do know that we are going to have department head changes. These are observations that I am expressing.

Point of Information-Payroll Committee: Councilman Wright stated the goal of the second meeting was flesh out the potential options for recruitment and retention. Raising the lowest threshold for starting pay to \$15.00 an hour, a comparatively low-cost increase for the amount of impact it creates. This makes us more competitive for new hires and helps retain those currently under that threshold, as they will be brought up to that amount.

Discussed potential of a four- day work week 4-10hr shifts. This was a popular idea, however; the implementation proved too difficult to pursue.

Police Department-Restructuring of Command Structures: Chief Duncan recommended a new command structure to create the possibility for upward movement as a retention tool. he also recommends making the Lieutenant over patrol hourly instead of salary. This would provide some benefit for the amount of shifts the Lieutenant over patrol has to cover.

Fire Department-Specific Solutions: Chief Jones has already implemented a change to the 24hr vs. 18hr pay policy. He wants to allow some time to see what kind of difference this makes. Another challenge for the Fire Department is that relatively low number of calls. We will soon be signing an automatic aid agreement with Houston County Fire Department to cover calls for fire and traffic accidents with entrapment for a large part of the north end of the county. Chief Jones recommends offering part-time employees step raises at 5-year intervals. We have a number of long-term part timers and we want to keep them.

Employee Educational Rewards: continue to tie educational achievement to promotion and not directly to salary increases.

Councilman Evans thanked City Accountant Harrison, Department Heads, and Councilman Bird for participation efforts and sound thinking. Councilman Bird echoed comments and thanked Councilman Evans. Budget was well laid out and stressed that he appreciated it very much.

Contract Approval for Sky Elements Independence Day Celebration: Council man Bird and Director of Economics Bryant. Mrs. Bryant provided the contract for review. Looks like the drone show will be a lot better logistically, the drone show will set up in the park. This is a customary contract. City Attorney Tydings has reviewed and approved version that is submitted tonight.

Motion made by Councilman Bird to approve in the amount of \$ 37,500 and designate Event Coordinator Tess Chambers as signatory; seconded by Councilman Wright. Councilman Wright recommended the event committee be reinstated asked the Director of Operations Mike Brumfield to steer it up.

#### Comments from Council

Post 1 Councilman Bird, unfortunately wasn't here for the food truck Friday and splash pad, love to hear about it if anyone has comments.

Post 2 Councilman Wright, no comment.

Post 3 Councilman Evans, no comment.

Post 4 Councilman Armijo, mentioned National Day of Prayer hosted by Centerville Baptist Church Don Freezor, turned out very nice, small but nice, wanted to thank those who were able to attend and pastor for coming out. Budget Committee knows what it's like planning, department head are well prepared makes it successful, extended thanks to all. Thanked Councilman Wright for providing update and information, had personal business. Stressed that this is important to mention, the city takes care of their seniors, thanks for the comments.

Mayor Harley, reminder to all that early voting is going on, Houston County Sheriff's Office, very critical. Appreciate everyone.

Mayor Harley adjourned meeting at 6:37pm.

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Mayor John R. Harley

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Attest by City Clerk Krista Bedingfield

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Date