

CITY OF OPA-LOCKA
"The Great City"

CLERK'S ACTION SUMMARY MINUTES

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT WORKSHOP

Tuesday, February 22, 2022
5:30 p.m.

1. WELCOME/OPENING REMARKS:

Mayor Veronica Williams called the Workshop to order at 5:53 PM on Tuesday, February 22, 2022 and stated that the workshop was scheduled to discuss the American Rescue Plan Act.

2. ROLL CALL:

The following members of the City Commission were present: Commissioner Sherelean Bass, Commissioner Chris Davis, Commissioner Audrey Dominguez, Vice Mayor John H. Taylor Jr., and Mayor Veronica J. Williams. Also, in attendance were: Interim City Manager James B. Wright, City Attorney Burnadette Norris-Weeks, Assistant City Attorney Candice Cobb and City Clerk Joanna Flores.

3. INVOCATION:

The invocation was delivered by Vice Mayor Taylor.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Agenda item(s) only

City Clerk Joanna Flores announced the protocol for public participation at City Commission meetings.

Mayor Williams opened public comments.

There being no members of the public to address the Commission, Mayor Williams closed Public Comments.

6. PRESENTATION:

Blue Sky Emergency Management d/b/a The Integrity Group

Mayor Williams asked the representatives of The Integrity Group to begin their presentation.

Interim City Manager Wright reminded the Commission that The Integrity Group presented to them on October 13th, 2021 and provided an overview of the American Rescue Plan Act funds and their ability to manage those funds for Opa-locka and several municipalities. The Interim Manager stressed the importance of the fact that The Integrity Group has consistently reached out to Opa-locka, as one of the organizations that has been vetted by the State of Florida. He said that he believes it is important for them to come back before the Commission, as they begin to discuss their ability to assist Opa-locka with auditing and compliance issues related to the American Rescue Plan Act funds, using their expertise and experience working with the Treasury Department. Mr. Wright stated that Opa-locka has an April 1st deadline to ensure the City has a spending plan in place. He also said that the City has drawn down its first allocation and he has asked City Staff to come up with a priority list for what those dollars can be spent on, adding that it will be important to present those to the Commission to make a final decision.

Mr. Mark Glover of The Integrity Group made a presentation to the Commission.

Mayor Williams asked if The Integrity Group would take direction from the Commission, as they provide specific strategies and direction.

Mr. Mark Glover of The Integrity Group assured the Commission that they look at this as a collaboration, pointing out that it is not their money and the Members of the Commission have been elected as stewards of the City. He also said that they will basically give the Commission their best advice based on what they say they want to do. Additionally, he stated that they have and intend to continue working with their clients and specifically the leadership in those municipalities, to come up with a plan and options, and pointing out the constraints. He concluded by noting that they are proposing a solution set as opposed to a solution.

Commissioner Davis acknowledged that the City has about \$3 or \$4 million of the \$7.9 million total, currently in an interest-bearing bank account, and he shared his understanding that the funds earned as interest are not limited to the same restrictions outlined in the American Rescue Plan Act grant. The Commissioner went on to share his concern that the interest that was earned wasn't a lot of money, and he thinks the goal would be to get a bigger return. He asked if The Integrity Group knows of any programs, opportunities or specific banking institutions that would yield a higher return than what Opa-locka is currently receiving.

Mr. Mark Glover of The Integrity Group informed the Commission that they have worked with several municipalities to find a few solutions that can yield the highest interest. He also said that Opa-locka might have a list of grants that require matching funds, and they have the ability to identify grants that can increase the American Rescue Plan Act funds from the \$7.9 million so that specific needs can be addressed including food programs, entrepreneur support, infrastructure or broadband.

Commissioner Davis asked if The Integrity Group provides technical assistance or if they just identify opportunities.

Mr. Mark Glover of The Integrity Group assured the Commission that they can go as deep and broad as the Commission would like, and that they would provide technical assistance all along the way.

Vice Mayor Taylor expressed his appreciation for the call center proposed by the Integrity Group, to interact with residents, stating that it was a great aspect of their presentation. The Vice Mayor also asked that the April 1st deadline be explained.

Mr. Mark Glover of The Integrity Group stated that the Treasury Department will provide guidance on whether it's going to be April 1st or 30th, but he said that municipalities must provide a detailed spending plan to the Florida Department of Emergency Management. He added that those who do it well, will get less friction and therefore they want to make sure they are ahead of the game.

Vice Mayor Taylor asked if the penalty for not having the plan by the April 1st deadline would be to lose the funding.

Mr. Mark Glover of The Integrity Group stated that the funds will be reallocated to other municipalities, and he said it has already started happening because larger municipalities had a February 1st deadline. He said he doesn't need to tell the Commission the communities that got the funds that are being reallocated, because they can probably understand which ones they are.

Vice Mayor Taylor shared his understanding that there is urgency.

Mr. Mark Glover of The Integrity Group confirmed that there is urgency.

Vice Mayor Taylor asked Interim City Manager Wright to state for the record, how much interest the City has accumulated on the American Rescue Plan Act funds that had been received.

Interim City Manager Wright stated that when he became a signatory to the City's account, the total interest the City had accumulated on the American Rescue Plan Act funds that had been received was \$24.96

Vice Mayor Taylor shared his understanding that the City had earned a total of \$24.96 in interest from the American Rescue Plan Act funds that had been received since October.

Interim City Manager Wright informed the Commission that there are some challenges with moving the funds in the City's account during the audit process, but he offered assurances that he is meeting with the current banking institution and is trying to find ways to work around that and find other interest-bearing accounts to put the City's money in.

Vice Mayor Taylor expressed concerns about the April 1st deadline because he said that he doesn't want the City to lose out on the American Rescue Plan Act funding, and he asked what the next step is to move forward.

Interim City Manager Wright informed the Commission that The Integrity Group is one of several firms that can provide services to the City. He said that the City will post a request for quotes so that The Integrity Group and the other organizations that can provide the service that the City is looking for, can submit their quotes for their services and the percentage they will charge for their maintenance of the plan, which he said the American Rescue Plan Act specifically states cannot go above 15%. The Interim Manager stated that they can negotiate, and he said that the Integrity Group presented to the Commission only to say that they are a willing participant. Mr. Wright reminded the Commission that he wasn't serving as City Manager the first time The Integrity Group presented to them last year, and he said they noticed the City hasn't engaged anyone and asked if they could refresh them on what they do. He went on to inform the Commission that no decision has been made.

Vice Mayor Taylor noted that April is rapidly approaching and asked how soon the Commission can see the request for quotations on their agenda.

Interim City Manager Wright stated that it would be beneficial to develop a priority list. The Interim Manager said that he and his Staff can suggest those priorities, but he said he believes it's really a collaboration to decide on how to move forward. He added that once that's done, whoever is selected can be placed on the agenda.

Vice Mayor Taylor asked if the Commission could get a timeline based on the deadline.

Interim City Manager Wright stated that City Clerk Flores would have to poll the Commission on how they would like to move forward to identify the priorities. The Interim Manager also suggested that he could send the Commission a memorandum and then they

can discuss it in an open forum, or that each of the Members of the Commission could correspond with the Manager's Office on their priorities and leave it up to Staff to make the decision.

Commissioner Davis asked if any time had been carved out for feedback from the community to weigh in on the nearly \$8 million being anticipated in American Rescue Plan Act funds.

Interim City Manager Wright said that it could be an option.

Commissioner Davis requested a community forum, suggesting that it could be virtual given the status of the COVID-19 pandemic, and he also recommended that they could do some sort of survey, pointing out that the community has the opportunity to weigh in at any workshop or public meeting that is noticed but he asserted that he thinks it is very important that they extend the opportunity outside of any workshops or public meetings.

Commissioner Bass asked what The Integrity Group's goal would be when working with the City of Opa-locka and what drove them this way.

Mr. Mark Glover of The Integrity Group stated that their goal is to make sure that there is 100% compliance to keep Opa-locka out of the press and to maximize the funds. He also said that they want the Commission to be successful, which he said means there's no negative audit findings 2-3 years from now and that the funds are 100% spent right. Additionally, he informed the Commission that when the second drawdown comes, if their plan is in place, even if they modify it after the initial submission, they will be able to get additional funds from other municipalities who are not as diligent as Opa-locka, and their number could go up just on that alone. Addressing Commissioner Bass' question about what drove them this way, he shared his background and informed the Commission that his parents were born and raised in what is now considered to be Overtown, went to Booker T. Washington Senior High School and his grandfather is a survivor of Rosewood, adding that he intimately understands what happens to minority-run municipalities. He also shared that before he started his firm, he ran the state and local practice for PricewaterhouseCoopers, which he said is the largest professional services firm on the planet and he said that he decided to do this because he wanted to choose who he wants to leverage his skills and access for. He concluded by asking Commissioner Bass if that answered her questions.

Commissioner Bass confirmed that he answered her questions and thanked him.

Mayor Williams recalled hearing Interim Manager Wright say that he was going to post a request for quotes for other companies, and she expressed concern that the Commission is having a presentation from The Integrity Group before the bids are submitted. The Mayor

asked if the Commission is going to have a presentation from the other companies that put in a bid.

Interim City Manager Wright said that if the other companies who submit bids for the request for quotations would like the option of making a presentation to the Commission, they will be provided the opportunity to do so.

Mayor Williams stated that it's kind of like putting the cart before the horse and she wants to do stuff in decent order. The Mayor said that she is a little confused because the Commission had a presentation and then there's going to be a request for quotes, and she doesn't want to have a presentation from one bidder and not all.

Interim City Manager Wright stated that The Integrity Group has already been vetted and reminded the Commission that it is not their first time, having presented last year way before he was appointed as Manager.

Mayor Williams stated that she just wants to be able to give everyone equal opportunity.

Interim City Manager assured the Commission that without question, everyone will be given equal opportunity.

Commissioner Davis stated that he thinks the reason why The Integrity Group was chosen to speak in October, was because they had a relationship with other municipalities and expressed interest in doing work with Opa-locka. The Commissioner added that he doesn't think their presentation impedes the rights of any other entities that would want to bid for the contract, and he said that while they may not have had the opportunity to present to the Commission in this workshop setting, they will have the same opportunity in future public forums to have that conversation.

Mayor Williams stated that she understands the process and just wants to make sure that everyone is given the same opportunity. The Mayor said she recalled The Integrity Group's presentation to the Commission in October, and she also acknowledged that it does make sense, but said she just wants to make sure everything is done correctly.

Mr. Mark Glover of The Integrity Group stated that Interim City Manager Wright had appropriately explained that there is language inside the State of Florida's term contract, that their services have already been vetted at the highest levels in the state and an email with a quote is what is required. He also said that some deadlines are coming up as Vice Mayor Taylor had articulated, which he said presents some extra challenges. Assuring the Commission that compliance is at the core of what The Integrity Group does, he said that they're not going to allow Opa-locka to start the process in a way that is not going to be compliant.

Mayor Williams stated that she doesn't want to make any personal decisions based off time because she wants to make sure it's decent and in order. The Mayor said she doesn't want to be spooked into having to hurry up and do something quick without ensuring that the whole process is done, because there's a time frame.

Commissioner Davis acknowledged that they have an opportunity to vet other entities, and he said that a main focal point should be the threshold percentage from the overhead which the American Rescue Plan Act stipulates can't be over 15%.

7. **AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA):**
Presentation by Robert Anathan, Budget Administrator
8. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Mayor Williams asked for a motion to adjourn the workshop.

Commissioner Davis pointed out that there was another item on the agenda and asked if the Commission wanted to table it.

Mayor Williams asked if the Commission wanted to continue or table the item, pointing out that the Charter Review Board Members had arrived for their workshop which was scheduled immediately following the American Rescue Plan Act Workshop.

Commissioner Bass stated she understood but said that they still need to do this and suggested they stick it out and get it done.

Mayor Williams stated she was okay with tabling the item.

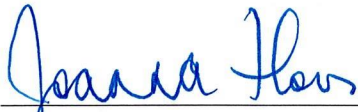
Vice Mayor Taylor explained that the only reason he was suggesting tabling the item is because the Charter Review Board Members were there.

Mayor Williams stated that all the Charter Review Board Members were there and suggested that they can bring up the tabled item during their Commission Meeting.

There being no further business to come before the City Commission, it was moved by Vice Mayor Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Bass to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 p.m.


Veronica J. Williams
Mayor

ATTEST:



Joanna Flores, CMC
City Clerk