

TOWN OF WINDERMERE

Town Council Workshop Chaine DuLac and Mid-Year Budget Report

May 28, 2024

PRESENT:

Present were Mayor Jim O'Brien, Council Members Andy Williams, Mandy David, Tony Davit, and Brandi Haines. Also present were Town Manager Robert Smith, Attorney Heather Ramos, Chief Dave Ogden, Public Works Director Tonya Elliott-Moore, And Town Clerk Dorothy Burkhalter. Member Tom Stroup was absent.

1. WORKSHOP CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor O'Brien opened the workshop at 6:04pm and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:

a. Chaine Du Lac Annexation Report Presentation

Mayor O'Brien introduced this item and turned the floor over to Manager Smith and Mr. Brad Corelius. Manager Smith commented briefly on the proposed annexation. He then turned the floor over to Mr. Cornelius. Mr. Cornelius gave a presentation regarding the proposed annexation area, lot sizes, parcels, zoning, population, Florida State Statute requirements, existing Orange County water, septic systems, solid waste, financials, referendums, and finalizing annexation. Manager Smith commented on the tax differences between being annexed and not. He then commented on administration responsibility, previous meetings, HOA responsibilities, solid waste/recycling, response time for disaster clean-ups, fire, EMS, police, elections, and financial impacts. Chief Ogden commented on the minimal effect the annexation would have on his department. After some discussion followed, Mayor O'Brien opened the floor to the Town Council. Member David questioned if the referendum would go only to Chaine Du Lac residents, and/or town wide and the possible results. Mr. Cornelius explained that if both residents and the proposed area to be annexed vote, both sides must pass. If not, the annexation would not be. Discussion followed regarding newly annexed residents running for election and sitting on committee's/boards. Member Haines questioned what areas/HOA's that have been annexed which were not part of the original town limits. Manager Smith stated that the original plat would need to be reviewed. Member Haines questioned if the current resident's town millage rates would be reduced if the annexation occurs. Manager Smith stated that there is a possibly but not a guarantee. Mayor O'Brien commented that with some annexations, it gives the power to protect your borders. Member Haines questioned if projected sewer project costs will be increase if annexed. Manager Smith commented on possible funding. Member Haines commented on an email she received regarding the "old-original Windermere" having 578 homes, and the remaining area, considered as the outskirt areas, there are 585. Manager Smith commented on "the old core" possibly being the dirt roads. Mayor O'Brien stated that for the record that "there is no such thing, we are one. Everyone is represented the same". Member Haines stated that she remembers a past meeting where a resident had concerns with "dilution". She then stated that she is not stating that the Manors, The Willows, or any of them are not part of the Town because they are. Member Haines stated that the residents on dirt roads are more impacted than the outskirts. She then commented that the Town has made communication more transparent and by not including the town residents in the referendum would be "taking a step backwards". Member Davit stated that he was appalled at Member Haines' comments that since he lives on the outskirts, he can't take into account residents on the dirt roads feelings and desires. He then stated that he and other Council members that don't live on dirt roads represented the entire population fairly. He then questioned utility costs and the HOA responsibilities. Mr. Cornelius stated it is the responsibility of the HOA. Member Davit questioned if the gates preclude any law enforcement or fire response. Mr. Cornelius stated no. Mayor

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O'Brien commented on the clear economics and smart moves for the annexation. Member Haines clarified the comment that she made regarding the diluting and not being a personal attack. Mayor O'Brien then opened the floor to the public. Mr. Frank Krens of 727 Forest Street introduced himself. He commented on past discussions regarding annexation of larger area, Isleworth. Mr. Krens stated that he would be more objective to that instead of Chain Du Lac. Mr. Krens stated that he feels there would be "zero risk and it would be a benefit" for the annexation. He then stated he would advise against a town wide election. Mr. Bill Martini of 627 Ridgewood also agrees with the proposed annexation. There were no further public comments. Mayor O'Brien stated that the Council needs to decide to move forward or not and with a town wide referendum or not. Comments would be as follows: Davit, David, and Williams – move forward without a Town referendum; Haines and Stroup – move forward with annexation with a town wide referendum. Attorney Ramos commented on the procedure that would take place per Florida Statutes. Mayor O'Brien questioned if staff had what was needed to move forward. Manager Smith said yes. Mayor O'Brien thanked all for their input.

A three-minute break was taken.

b. Fiscal Year (F/Y) 2023/2024 Mid-Year Budget Report

Mayor O'Brien turned the floor over to Manager Smith. Manager Smith gave a mid-year financial report regarding revenues, expenditures, and then revenues vs expenditures. There were a few questions. Member Davit questioned the Healthy West Orange pay back. Manager Smith commented on meetings he has had relative to the item. He then stated that once he has more information, he will provide it to the Town Council.

3. ADJOURN:

Mayor O'Brien adjourned the meeting at 8:12pm.

Dorothy Burkhalter, Town Clerk

Jim O'Brien, Mayor