Regular Workshop – June 20, 2016

Agenda Item 11

Agenda Item: Canal Dredging Feasibility Study

Presenter: Town Manager and Staff;  
Clifford Truitt**,** P.E., D.Eng**.,** D.C.E., Taylor Engineering, Inc.

Summary: At the December 13, 2013 and June 15, 2014 Regular Workshop Meetings the Town Commission held discussions on a canal dredging maintenance project and directed staff to review the need for canal dredging, and to develop funding options for a future workshop discussion.

The Taylor Engineering, Inc. presentation will provide information for discussion based on the on-going feasibility study.

Attachments: 6-8-16 Memo, Public Works Director to Manager;

Taylor Engineering Canal Dredging Feasibility Study;

PowerPoint presentation.

Recommended

Action: Pending discussion, provide direction to Manager.

Memorandum

Date: March 04, 2016

TO: Dave Bullock, Town Manager

FROM: Juan Florensa, Public Works Director

SUBJECT: Canal Dredging Feasibility Study

**Background**

At the December 13, 2013 Regular Commission Workshop Meeting, staff provided a Canal Dredging Report summarizing information on the condition of Town canals. The report included historical background, past project costs, a brief overview of available grants and funding options. The report also included information on the shoaling/silting of canals based on staff measurements in the

Fall of 2013. The report concluded that shoaling of canals at that time was minimal and that there was no immediate need for a comprehensive dredging project.

The Town Commission directed staff to further review canal funding options and prepare recommendations for a future workshop discussion.

Consistent with this directive, staff presented a Canal Dredging Funding Options Report at the June 2014 Regular Commission Workshop. Staff identified three main funding options.

1. Funding through Ad Valorem revenue. Ad Valorem revenues, grants, WCIND and Infrastructure Surtax Funds were used to fund the 2003 project.
2. Special Taxing District within which only property owners of the district are assessed a non-Ad Valorem assessment for costs associated with the canal project.
3. A hybrid of the first two.

Town Commission directed staff to investigate a hybrid approach and authorized staff to utilize the existing canal dredging fund for the associated expenses.

In 2015, staff put out a Request for Proposals for a Canal Dredging Feasibility Study that would among other things:

1. Adopt a Level of Service,
2. Provide a legally defensible basis for any proposed assessments,
3. Determine preliminary cost and timing of project, and
4. Recommend a preferred funding method.

The Town selected Taylor Engineering, Inc. of Jacksonville, Florida (through their Sarasota office) to perform the work. The work is comprised of the following six tasks:

Task 1. Data Collection/Review of Existing Plans

Task 2. Develop a GIS Database

Task 3. Reconnaissance Level Field Investigation

Task 4. Evaluation of Dredging Volumes, Disposal Options and Identification of Level of Service

Task 5. Develop Conceptual Funding Scenarios

Task 6. Canal Working Group (stakeholders) –Funding Alternatives/Assessment Mechanisms

Taylor Engineering has completed Tasks 1 through 3 and is working on Task 4.

**Next Steps**

In order to move forward with the remaining tasks, Town staff and Taylor Engineering seek policy direction from the Town Commission. Specific to Tasks 5 and 6, we recommend that the Town Commission appoint a group of interested citizens to provide public input regarding funding scenarios and assessment mechanisms and sources. This Canal Work Group (CWG) would meet over the next several months and in collaboration with Taylor Engineering and Town staff to identify and evaluate potential funding sources such as:

* Municipal Service Taxing Units (MSTU)
* Municipal Service Benefit Units (MSBU)
* Existing Town Funds (Canal Fund)
* Florida Boaters Improvement Fund
* Waterfront Assessment Programs
* Federal Cost-share Opportunities
* State Cost-share Opportunities
* West Coast Inland Navigation District (WCIND)

The goal of these meetings will be to engage the public to obtain project input and buy-in from residents. Six stakeholder meetings are proposed. Three of these meetings would be held in three “regional” meetings (North, Central, and South areas of the Key).

The other three meetings would provide more information to the CWG to gain perspective from citizens and provide updates on the project. CWG recommendations would be presented to the Commission.

Taylor Engineering will also attend one Town Commission meeting to present project findings and provide a recommended approach for implementing a successful maintenance program.

Taylor Engineering will identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges associated with the use of each funding source, identify the extent to which each funding source can meet the objectives and expectations as expressed by the Town and CWG, and identify and describe examples of how other communities provide ongoing funding for such program maintenance operations.

In collaboration with Town staff and CWG, Taylor Engineering will identify up to three (3) funding strategies/approaches (potentially including combinations of individual funding sources) for which they will identify more specifically:

1. The order of magnitude cost impact for individual properties
2. A summary of the process, timeframe, and any necessary information that would be required to implement each funding scenario, in coordination with the Town’s attorney and Town staff.

Taylor Engineering will prepare a summary report identifying funding scenarios and develop poster board and visual presentation materials for use in facilitating CWG and public meetings.

**Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Town Commission appoint a Canal Working Group (CWG) consisting of residents and other interested parties to provide the Commission public input on funding options. The Town Commission may ask for letters of interest from the public and appoint this group at their July 5, 2016 Regular Meeting. The CWG could start meeting this summer or early fall. The Public Works Department assisted by Taylor Engineering can help manage and provide support to this group.

Should you have any questions or need more information, please let me know.