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Gamblers buy Chiefland a new police dog



(from left) Vice Mayor Tim West, City Commission Rollin Hudson, Mayor Chris Jones (empty seat where Commissioner Donald Lawrence would be sitting if he was present) and City Commissioner Norman Weaver look at papers as they make decisions Monday night.

Story and Photos

By Jeff M. Hardison © July 24, 2019 at

CHIEFLAND – Mayor Chris Jones helped bring into focus Monday night (July 22) that \$8,500 being spent by the city for a new police dog was generated from activity that appears to be unlawful.

When the Chiefland Police Department raided “Internet cafés, with help from the Levy County Sheriff’s Office, the Gilchrist County Sheriff’s Office and other law enforcement agencies, the CPD seized thousands of dollars as well as illegal gambling machines, some of which were sold and some which were returned to companies from whence they had been leased.

Monday night, Chiefland Police Chief Scott Anderson asked the City Commission to authorize his purchase of a new canine partner for CPD K-9 Sgt. Pete Barnes. K-9 Riddle will be given to Chiefland Fire Rescue as a dog to conduct search and rescue, or recovery, of humans from those tragic events where the CFR might need that kind of dog.

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Police Chief Scott Anderson

Meanwhile, Chief Anderson was authorized by a 4-0 vote to use \$8,500 of the CPD Law Enforcement Trust Fund to purchase a new dog that will arrive at the CPD doorsteps trained to detect illegal drugs, and to behave in a manner to tell the handler that the dog smells illegal drugs.

The police chief is buying the dog from Southern Coast K9 Inc., located in New Smyrna Beach. This police dog will be trained to detect the odors of marijuana, cocaine, crack cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine.

Voting in favor of allowing Chief Anderson to use trust fund money for a purpose for which the funds are allocated were Mayor Chris Jones, Vice Mayor Tim West and city commissioners Rollin Hudson and Norman Weaver. City Commissioner Donald Lawrence was absent from the regular City Commission meeting on Monday night.

The four elected municipal leaders of Chiefland also voted together in favor of granting Chief Anderson's request to apply for a grant to fund the purchase of new "stop sticks," which are something that police can throw in front of a fleeing vehicle to flatten its tires.

In other action from that night, on a matter not on the agenda, the four men present voted to reduce the annual review of City Manager Mary Ellzey, Police Chief Anderson and Fire Chief James Harris to once every two years.

This came on the heels of a special meeting where they gave the city manager another glowing evaluation for her success in managing the city's business.

Commissioner Hudson said he felt the annual review of Ellzey, Anderson and Harris, who are all extremely qualified employees, is not needed but once every two years – rather than every year.

City Manager Ellzey joked that the City Commission may not like her next year. There was a mention by a commissioner, too, that there may be a time when a future City

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Commission would want an annual review of a city manager.

The three top city workers, however, will still have their employment contracts annually renewed or not renewed by the City Commission.

City Attorney Norm D. Fugate said the municipal leaders can revise this biannual review policy back to an annual status, rather than a biannual event if a majority of those future leaders deemed that to be a better public policy.

Vice Mayor West, moved, and it was adopted into the sole motion, to reduce the scale of grades from five to three.

West recommended and the other three present agreed to take off the two ends of the evaluation scale. Therefore, “Unacceptable (1)” and “Excellent (5)” were removed.

Therefore, each two years those three people hired annually by the City Commission will be evaluated on a scale that shows “Needs Improvement (1),” “Meets Expectations (2),” or “Exceeds Expectations (3).”

Also at the meeting Monday, the four men voted to accept on first reading the voluntary annexation into the city limits of two sets of adjacent property in the area of Long Pond Landing Subdivision, with one piece being on Northwest 50th Avenue, according to a map provided as part of the annexation package for City Commission members to review.

If both pieces are annexed through the second reading of the voluntary annexation petition, then those pieces of property become part of the whole of the city, according to city annexation laws.

Glenn Bryan seeking to add a 6.35 parcel of land said he is not seeking city water service.

Kathleen McFadden, Diane Moll, Helen Moll and Johan Moll, seeking to voluntarily annex a 1.68-acre parcel in the city limits, are seeking city water service and are willing to cover the expense of the 200- to 300 feet of water line that would need to be added, according to records and according to what was said at the meeting on Monday night.

Neither piece of property is currently in an area served by city wastewater collection and treatment, according to records and according to what was said at the meeting on Monday night.