



"The Best Waterfront City in Which to Live, Work And Play."

CITY OF RIVIERA BEACH

TO: HON. MAYOR, CHAIRPERSON, AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JONATHAN EVANS, CITY MANAGER, MPA, MBA, ICMA-CM

SUBJECT: 2021 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

DATE: FEBRUARY 3, 2021

CC: GENERAL PUBLIC

Background:

Pursuant to the conversation, city staff has conducted research with regards to legislative philosophies both in Washington DC, and Tallahassee Florida. City staff has assembled a list of items based on discussions with the administration and the elected officials concerning proposed FY 2021 state and federal priorities. With the new administration in Washington DC, at the federal level, plenty of conversations have ensued to bring back federal earmarks. In the past, earmarks have been utilized as a primary mechanism to fund local projects within municipal jurisdictions, as well as major statewide infrastructure-related projects. This direct allocation was very effective yet very controversial as it led to projects that were deemed immaterial or phrased as “pork belly projects,” implying that the project that was funded was a waste of federal resources. Nonetheless, there seems to be bipartisan support in Washington DC for the use of federal earmarks, which is a significant deviation from the current practice that requires grants or allocations directly from federal agencies. The Biden administration is advocating for investments in infrastructure throughout the US, which includes public safety facilities, roadways, and bridges. The President is particularly interested in interests on resiliency and climate change this was provided from the city's lobbyist Maurice Kurland, a Partner with the Firm Alcalde & Fay Government Affairs. Since Pres. Biden was vice president during the Obama administration, and landmark legislation with regards to capital infrastructure investments was allocated porthole shovel ready projects as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, is anticipated that the same approach maybe contemplated with this infrastructure allocation that is anticipated to be over \$1 trillion. It is also important to note that Coronavirus (“COVID-19”) assistance shall be a major priority of this administration, as they are seeking funds for grants associated with workforce development and vocational training in retraining persons for jobs in the 21st century.

In Tallahassee, there has not been much more information articulated or released from the governor's office concerning major priorities or initiatives for Floridians. The principal focus has been associated with COVID -19 the distribution of the vaccine to distribution locations across the state. However, based on the last legislative session, there is still a major push on infrastructure, and water quality to include water, sewer, and storm water. The city, over the last year and a half, has continued to advocate, promote and apply for opportunities that look to address the city's aging infrastructure. Pursuant to the discussions, staff had with elected officials on numerous occasions; it is anticipated that the following items are deemed legislative priorities or areas of focus for FY 2021.

Federal Priorities FY 2021

- Infrastructure (water, sewer, wastewater, storm water, and transportation)
- Public safety (intelligence-led policing, public safety facility construction, personal grants)
- Community/coastal resiliency (climate change)

State of Florida Priorities FY 2021

- Affordable housing
- Workforce development/retraining
- Potable water, wastewater and stormwater
- Transportation – commuter rail, and cargo trains
- Education - vocational education, and trades grants
- Public safety - equipment, personnel, and technology
- Tourism

Major Project(s):

- New Water Treatment Plant
 - Assessments and Rehabilitation of Existing Wells
 - Construction of New Wells – Floridan Aquifer
- Wastewater Force Main
- Parallel Subaqueous Water Main
- Lift Stations Improvements
- Capital Facilities – i.e. Fire Stations – Public Safety Campus

Citywide Goal:

- Achieve A Sustainable Economy
- Build Great Neighborhoods
- Accelerate Operational Excellence
- Enhance Government Stewardship
- Strengthen Community Engagement

Budget/Fiscal Impact:

This particular memorandum does not possess any budgetary impact, as it is only providing legislative priorities for the upcoming legislative sessions. However, the City does have two contractual relationships with lobbying firms that costs approximately \$120,189 per FY. The fund for the City's lobbyist is located on page 292 within the adopted FY 2021 Budget.

Recommendation:

This Item is intended to attain feedback from the Council and to subsequently proceed forward with advocating for the legislative priority for FY 2021 at both federal and state levels - Washington, DC and Tallahassee, Florida.

Attachment(s):

N/A