

State of the City Address

**Delivered by Mayor Catherine D. Robinson
January 11, 2010**

The state of the City was enacted by the current Charter, passed in March, 2009. The purpose of this report is to convey information, recommendations, and comments on the welfare of the City.

The City of Bunnell uses two fundamental structures authorized by the Florida Legislature and adopted by the City Commission to fund the city. They are the General Fund and the Enterprise Fund.

The General fund is supported by your tax dollars (Ad Valorem Taxes), shared tax dollars from the State (State Revenues Sharing) and Fees charged by the City for services, through our Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste bills. Up until this past year, the Enterprise Fund has reimbursed the General fund for administrative cost such as utility billing and management functions. That practice put the City in a deficient state and has stopped.

The city operates through a budget process, which is approved by the City commission. The budget is a working document that maps out the spending plan for operating the city. The milage rate was set at the roll-forward at the first hearing (6.65), but the commission voted to hold the milage at the same rate as last year (6.06) by the second public hearing.

At the end of September, 2009, the city fund balances were:

General fund:	\$ 782,266
BMS:	\$1,119,103
Capital projects:	\$ 935,883
CRA:	\$ 27,481
Total Gov. Funds:	\$2,864,733

The City also has a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). This plan is developed from the individual departments, projecting cost of future capital expenditure items during the years these items will be in service. These items are expensive and are not part of the operational budget. The CIP projects allow the Commission to plan, develop funding, and budget for large scale expenditures that may exceed the entire operational budgets. The city applies for grants and low cost loans to help with these expenditures.

Administration Department

The Administration Department for the City of Bunnell consists of the Office of the City Manager, the City Clerk and the Finance Department. The City Manager is responsible for overseeing all functions of the City. He is responsible for the "day to day" operations. Our city manager has been with us almost 1 ½ years in this position. He has done an outstanding job; is a quick learner; and has brought the City to its rightful place within the county. Mr. Martinez is a "can do" person and likes to see goals accomplished. He likes to challenge his staff, yet he is compassionate and fair. He has set the tone in the city for professionalism, increased productivity, and cost containment. He could not accomplish all the goals set without his "right arm", his administrative assistant. She keeps him straight.

Finance Department

The Finance Department has responsibility for billing services for the City and administering the budget. This is a huge job. The Finance department was reorganized this year. Accomplishments include:

- Created a positive and efficient foundation within Finance by assimilating a competent and professional staff.
- Successfully completed the RFP process and transferring of funds to begin a relationship with a new banking institution. This was a grueling process and took many months to accomplish.
- Implementation of new utility rates. This department, along with others, spent tireless hours working/reworking the numbers numerous times to help the commission make the final decision for the new utility rates. The commission had two town hall meetings and several public hearings, which generated new ideas and potential changes in the figures.
- Completing bank reconciliations within a timely manner. This involves the timely processing of payables, receivables and payroll.
- Presented a balance budget (layoff-free) to the Commission after tremendous financial challenges and revenue shortfall predictions. This department did not complain when the commission decided not to increase the mileage rate after the first public hearing, which necessitated reworking of the numbers with a one-day notice.

All this was done with a staff of 3.5 employees.

City Clerk

The Clerk's Office is responsible for maintaining the City records. The current City Clerk was hired last year. He comes to us with experience that enabled him to accomplish the following in a little over five months:

- Sent over 3 years of adopted ordinances (27) to Municipal Code Corporation for codification. Our Land Development Code and Code of Ordinances are up-to-date (as of August 2009) and are available on our website.
- Drafted an ordinance that was adopted by the Commission that copyrights our City Seal and City Logo.
- Made election candidates aware of the petition process, saving candidates over \$200 in qualifying fees.
- Setup Bunnell Commissioners with standardized City email addresses and issued them laptops to access.
- Tailored agenda submission timelines for more efficiency.
- Set up Contract Management to ensure all contracts are monitored for terms of expiration and extension.
- Set up Forms Management so all employees know what forms are valid, obsolete, etc.
- Created first-ever public shared drive on computer network for all employees to have access to common records such as Ordinances, Resolutions, Agendas, Photographs, and Forms.
- Worked with Sherriff department on updating our City website.

All this was done with one employee in his department. That employee has been a wonderful resource and help in the transition to the new city clerk. She "stood in the gap" when we didn't have a city clerk, got the agendas out as well as all the other tasks that was asked of her.

Grants and Special Projects (CRA)

This is a new department that was developed in November of 2009. Our Grant Writer was hired in January, 2009, under the Finance Department — additional tasks and responsibilities including the (CRA) Community Redevelopment Area have

redefined the position into the creation of a separate department. Accomplishments for the year:

- Completed detailed analysis of each department
- Identified and organized all City Projects that the Commission had dollars attached
- Commission education: created and presented 12 different PowerPoint presentations on various Departments' issues, goals and concerns within the City
- Coordinated information as the City contact for the May Flood Event FEMA 1840
- DR Had a Concept Design completed for JB King Park — Art to Park Project
- Organized three FRDAP Grants and supporting information
- Administered the Edward Johnson FRDAP Grant
- Coordinated/organized information and correspondences with numerous State and Federal Officials of Bunnell issues
- Increased Professional presence of Bunnell to Local, State and Federal Agencies

Dollars to the City/Approved Funding

Center for Business Excellence (CBE) - on the job staff training match program

\$22,712.21

Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) - ARRA Funds American Response & Recovery Act Funding for IT Upgrades and equipment, \$26,015.00

May Flood Event FEMA 1840-DR, \$ 99,252.66

USDA/NRCS - Natural Resource Conservation Service: Stormwater Drainage various identified canals, \$38,555.00

Department of Community Affairs / CDBG- Community Development Block Grant S. Anderson Lift Station and Road Project, \$ 650,000.00

Dollars supporting the City through other entities

South East Rural Community Assistance Program — Professional Utility Rate Study valued, \$12,000.00

Leigh Rail Trail Segment 3 — Bell Terre to US 1, \$2,000,000.00

USDA/NRCS — Natural Resource Conservation Service: Stormwater Drainage Bimini/Bunnell, \$510,000.00

CRA – Community Redevelopment Agency. In 2006, Bunnell created a CRA. The recently adopted CRA Plan requires roadway, sidewalk and streetscape improvements to begin with the downtown most affected core and extend in future phases to the rest of the CRA. We have applied for a \$1.6 million grant and are hopeful to be funded. By creating a safe pedestrian atmosphere, clearly marked crosswalks, ADA compliant access to business and merchants, the Streetscape Project will not only improve the economic viability of the city but will also allow the City to preserve its internal transportation corridors. The responsibility for administering the CRA was transferred to this department on November 1, 2009.

Community Development

This department includes Comprehensive planning, Zoning, Building Permits, Business Tax Receipts, Code Enforcement, Economic Development. The Community Development

department went through major changes this past year. No, the department head did not change; but where the department does business certainly did. Accomplishments:

- Completed visioning for the comprehensive plan
- Project Sprint Economic development/job creation and retention incentive package
- Re write of the city comprehensive plan underway to be forwarded for state review by year end
- Hired the second full time city planner
- Converted city maps from paper to electronic format and added maps to the city website
- Applications for permits etc added to city website
- Adopted state mandated Public Schools element, Water supply plan and Capital Improvements Element amendment
- Amended the following sections of the land development code: parking, light industrial zoning regulations, B-1 Business zoning regulations
- Completed federally mandated 2010 census reporting
- Increased presence/collaboration with Enterprise Flagler
- Increased presence/collaboration with Cornerstone Regional Development (the economic development agency for Northeast Florida)
- Established and negotiated new professional Class A office space

Challenges Facing the Department:

- Current Economy
- Need to formulate a Comprehensive Plan re-write
- Must complete negotiations with DCA over land use amendment
- There is a lack/inadequacy of software for building permits and code enforcement.

Employees in Department: 6 full time, 1 part time

Public Works Department

Public Works Division

- Maintenance of roadway, roadside, traffic services, drainage and vegetation/aesthetics within City limits
- Maintenance of the Bunnell City Hall, Police Department, Community Development, Community Center, Joann King Park and Edward Johnson Park
- Maintenance of all City vehicles and equipment
- Provide positive customer service to all City of Bunnell citizens
- Assist City Departments as well as citizens with scheduled special events

Bunnell Maintenance Service Division

- Maintenance of all areas within Florida Department of Transportation's right-a-way in Flagler County and part of Volusia County under Contract #A0217
- Oversee the maintenance conducted by City of Palm Coast, City of Flagler Beach and Flagler County in areas within Florida Department of Transportation's right-a-way
- Provide positive customer service to all citizens resided on state roads maintained by BMS as well as nonresidents

Department's Current Challenges:

Public Works Division

Properly systematize all records into an accessible and organized system

The purchase of new computers to facilitate the process of imputing daily data in an

efficient an professional way
Replace and/or repair signage within City limits
Bunnell Maintenance Service Division
Must ensure to submit complete and accurate monthly documentation pertaining to Contract #A0217 on a professional and timely matter
Properly systematize all records into an accessible and organized system
The purchase of new computers to facilitate the process of imputing daily data in an efficient and professional matter

Department's Accomplishments:

Public Works Division

Most age concerns within the City limits pertaining to signage, storm water drainage and thermoplastic have been addressed
Rework of numerous ditches within the City
Remodel of the Bunnell City Hall
The built-out of the Atlantis Business Park for the Community Development Department's office
The renaming of the Community Center
The relocation of the City Hall, Water Department and Community Center
The completion of the tricycle trail at the Edward Johnson Park for the FRDAP grant
The parking lot for the Joann King Park is currently under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance
Assessing the department's current needs to insure proper purchase of vehicles and equipment for future utilization
A new Maintenance Technician Scheduling system for productivity

Bunnell Maintenance System Division

Maintenance Rating Program (MRP) scores rated over 90% for the past two periods
Major maintenance on all Storm Water Retainage ponds
Rework of numerous ditches
Assessing the department's current needs to insure proper purchase of vehicles and equipment for future utilization
A new Maintenance Technician Scheduling system for productivity
Most aged concerns within FDOT's right-away pertaining to signage; storm water drainage and thermoplastic have been addressed
Addressed previous erosions concerns on SR AIA in Flagler Beach
Numerous gallons of herbicide have been spread throughout FDOT's right-a-way to eliminate unwanted plants and weeds

Utility Department

The water and wastewater department function is to provide the citizens of Bunnell with a safe drinking water and to ensure that the wastewater is collected and processed within the guide lines set forth by the operational permits issued by the Department of Environmental Protection.

Water:

Operations and maintenance of the Water Treatment Plant
Operations and maintenance of the distribution system
Program goals and Objectives

Program: Operations and maintenance of the Water Treatment Plant and distribution system, to improve the quality of the water and to provide safe drinking water for the citizens of Bunnell.

Goal: Improve the aesthetics of the City's drinking water

Objective: Continue to improve our equipment reliability and the quality control of the city's most valuable resource "our water". To maintain compliance and enhance the desirability of our drinking water.

Goal: Improve safety and reliability of the distribution system.

Objective: To establish a flushing control plan and maintenance program to help identify potential problems within the system and correct these problems.

Objective: Continue to improve our cross connection program and to heighten awareness of the potential safety hazards of cross connections within the distribution system.

Wastewater plant:

To achieve maximum operational life from the equipment that is at the wastewater treatment plant. S. Anderson St. Lift Station has been funded (\$650,000) through stimulus money.

Goal: To identify and correct wasteful or unnecessary spending within the utility department.

Objective: To identify areas where programs or systems are not working properly. Formulate best possible solutions at the best possible cost.

Goal: To employ the best employees possible who are committed to the city and their department's goals and values.

Objective: To ensure that all employees are trained and understand their role within the utility department. That we work for the citizens of Bunnell and that we are accountable to them.

BUNNELL POLICE DEPARTMENT

Introduction:

The Bunnell Police Department will work in partnership with the Community and local agencies to effectively deal with criminal activity within the City of Bunnell by prevention, investigation and arrest. We will respond to the needs of the entire community by providing professional and effective delivery of services. We will treat each citizen and each other with fairness and honesty. In turn, the Department will support and develop all employees to the fullest of their potential to create a positive environment for employee job satisfaction. Our goal is to accomplish our mission while following the values established by our department and the City of Bunnell.

To strive for excellence in the attempt to provide professional law enforcement services to the citizens of Bunnell through community policing initiatives and pro-active law enforcement

Challenges:

Find alternative funding to hire additional personnel to facilitate effective prevention and investigation of criminal activity within the City of Bunnell.

Find alternative funding to rotate aged department vehicles.

Find alternative funding to secure a permanent centralized location for the Police Department, Records and Evidence Storage to better serve the citizens of the City of Bunnell.

Accomplishments:

- Continuing to facilitate inter-agency cooperation with participation in special operations, local events and attendance at meetings. Latest special operation "Clause and Affect" which included the Bunnell Police Department, FCSO and the FBI.
- Awarded JAG Grant funding to update the Bunnell Police Department IT capabilities to include: Server, Scene PD Software, 2007 Microsoft Office Software, Commercial Shredder, Networkable Copier/Printer/Fax.
- Developing Chain of Command with newly appointed Lieutenant, Sergeant and Corporal positions with graduating responsibilities and work assignments.
- Facilitated partnerships with local schools to educate students of dangers they may be

exposed to thru the development of a "Stranger Danger" program.
Working with at risk youth with an "Anti-gang/violence" educational program
Security Coverage for City meetings at both the GSB and Community Center
Partner with local community groups working on projects and educating the public on crime prevention, awareness, and safety tips.
Participation in County Drug Court Programs
Member of the Flagler County Sexual Assault Task Force participating in "Sexual Assault Response Education and Training program. Created educational video for county school administrators as to their responsibilities as a mandated reporter.
Participant in the Annual "Holiday Gift Drive".

Employees: (15)

Fire Department

Station & Equipment

- Finished remodeling of the kitchen.
- Constructed new console for Battalion 62
- Constructed boxes for spare chainsaws
- Established Knox Box Policy
- Purchased tables and chairs for training room

Training

- 4 members certified in CPR
- 3 members certified through VFIS as Emergency Vehicle Driver Training Instructors
- 3 members completed firefighter minimum standards and passed state board
- 3 members passed EMT state board
- 10 members completed Fireflight LZ training
- 15 members completed Hazardous Materials Training
- 10 members completed S-130 (Wildland Firefighter Training)
- 9 members completed S- 190 (Intro to Wildland Fire Behavior)
- 12 members completed L- 180 (Human Factors on Fireline)
- 6 members completed S-215 (Rural Urban Interface)
- 1 member completed S-330 (Strike Team Leader)
- 1 members completed Hydraulics — Part 1 — 40 hours
- 1 members completed Hydraulics — Part 2-40 hours

Miscellaneous

- Assisted Flagler Beach with July 4 festivities
- Attended Halloween in Colony Park
- Presented a Fire Prevention program to over 500 students at the local schools
- Prepared and administered a Lieutenants exam
- Assisted St Johns Park with Christmas Party
- Participated in Martin Luther King Day Parade

- Participated in Muscular Dystrophy Boot Drive
- Established an incentive program for the volunteers
- Replace some condemned structural gear
- Replaced some condemned Wildland gear

Bunnell Volunteer Firefighters Association

- Sold popcorn at the Flagler County Fair
- Purchased flatware, dishware, and vacuum for station.
- Distributed candy for Halloween at Colony Park.
- Hosted Breakfast with Santa at Fire Department
- Hosted Breakfast with the Easter bunny at City Hall.
- Sold and distributed calendars throughout the city.
- Purchased microwave for newly remodeled kitchen.

Challenges Facing the Department: The biggest challenges within the fire department are the recruitment and retention of volunteers and bringing the training levels of the volunteers up to a higher level with the time constraints on the volunteers and budget constraints on the department.

Employees in Department: 1 part time chief and 18 volunteers.

Overall Comments

Reduced revenues required a continual monitoring of monies spent throughout the year. The budget a living document based on potential revenues that did not materialize at the end of the year to support it. This was due to reduced property values, reduced sales tax, and greater demand from federal and state mandates. The general operating fund had been sustained through the years with transfers from the Enterprise fund to balance the budget. 2009 was the year that this process stopped as the Enterprise fund was operating in the "red". After much agonizing, the unpopular decision was made to raise the water rates to balance the Enterprise fund.

Looking at last year's ad valorem we collected 99.51% of our estimated revenues. Currently this year looks good, the City has collected 39.16% (\$530,959) of its estimated ad valorem, (last FY at this time the City had collected 40.52%) if we stay on track and continue with last year's trend we will collect approximately \$1,349,337 a shortfall of \$6,644 for this year's projection and down over \$173,000 from last year's revenues. Next year, however, will be another great challenge. According to the finance director, she is estimating an additional 10% decrease in values (I think this is a conservative number) which, at our current millage, would put us at a decrease in revenues of approx. \$136,000.

This past year was a busy year with many exciting accomplishments mixed with a few disappointments. It was a time of reorganization of departments, including department heads and staff. The staff reflects a high level of professionalism and competency. With new staff comes the surfacing of problems that were not priorities or had not been addressed. We have dealt with unresolved issues and critical concerns. This will continue into this next fiscal year.

Several of the highlights for the year were the move for Community Development into a new facility; the dedication of the Versie Mitchell Community Center, the FPL home makeover in

Bunnell, the opening of "Project Sprint" and delivery of a new fire truck. One of the memorable events was the 30 inches of rain and the dedication of City staff to work through that event. This led to the move of City staff to the Governmental building. We have discussed and are hopeful to have space in the "Old Courthouse" when renovations are completed. The County has been gracious in allowing us temporary space. Realizing that the chances were slim to acquire a historical grant to repair the city hall, city staff has moved forward to repair the building so that it can be used by our citizens once again.

I was very touched by the generosity and outpouring of gifts and donations for the Annual Holiday Drive. City hall was full of gifts, clothes and bikes. It was overwhelming and represented the true spirit of Christmas. It was fun to spend time with Santa and the Easter Bunny as part of fund raising efforts by the fire department.

We have exhausted all means to gain favor to settle our debt with the FDOT promissory note as a result of moving water lines on State Road 100. At this point, we have requested that the county settle this debt out of the county's impact fee fund. Without a doubt, the heartbreaker of the year, and in fact, the sum of all my years serving on this board, was the need to raise water rates. Many hours were spent in trying to find other ways to prevent an increase during this critical economic time, but we had to balance the budget and not continue to operate that fund in the "red". We were able to hold the property taxes to the same mileage as last year, froze vacant positions, and tightened our belts to hold the line. This was done without layoffs, but the employees did not get a raise. We continue to economize and streamline essential services and re-evaluate those functions that may not be essential. We don't take anything for granted in this economic climate.

Several visioning sessions were conducted by the planning dept as part of the comprehensive plan re-write. Strengths that were outlined included our historic buildings, such as city hall, the old courthouse, the old bank building, the Holden house and the Little Red School House. Other strengths included our location, open space, small town atmosphere, our work ethic, transportation (arterial roads and railroad access), agriculture, access to the river and ocean so close. By the same token, weaknesses that were identified include utility infrastructure, small tax base, unique geographic constraints, and visual clutter on US1. Opportunities identified include ways to maximize the railroad, our historical district, industrial development potential (second largest city in the state in property), potential tourism, and potential development at major intersections. Potential threats include where to put density, development location and potential environmental impacts, as well as how to keep the small town atmosphere.

In summary, the city of Bunnell is unique because it is a traditional small town with the possibility to attract modern industry. It has the ability to attract environmental and alternative energy resource solutions. It has the potential for industrial development, as well as, being able to maintain its ambiance. It wants economic development, with the ability to maintain the agrarian lifestyle.

I would like to thank all City employees who work tirelessly to make living and working in Bunnell a better place. Lastly, my personal thanks to my commission, who work hard to do the right thing, including the times when we agree and the times when we passionately disagree, all in the name of "getting it right". Challenges will be fierce in next several years dealing with water, development, economic shortfalls, unfunded mandates, and reduced property values. Together, we will continue to work toward the greater goals and through moving in the same direction, we will get there. God Bless you and thank you for listening.