

To: JIC Residents
From: Chip Block
Re: Mayor Report #3
August 14, 2023

We have made considerable progress in seven key areas:

New Police Chief to replace Chief Pruitt: The Selection Committee completed its work at the July 27 open meeting, nominating former Jupiter Chief **Dan Kerr** to become Chief of Police in JIC. On August 2, at a special Commission meeting, Kerr was selected by a vote of 4-0.

Chief Kerr will come aboard full time as soon as all legally required paperwork is completed. He will work with **Acting Chief Bob Schultz** and me to recommend to the Commission a restructuring of the Police Department to ensure greater economies, efficiency, and safety. My fellow Commissioners and I thank and salute Acting Chief Schultz for stepping up as Acting Chief with rigor and devotion to our Town.

I also thank fellow Selection Committee Members **Dick Busto**, Tequesta Chief **Gus Medina**, **Tony Prosser**, **Pam Rauch** for their diligence and time on this important task.

Town Charter Referendum: Resident **Janet Saura** and Town Attorney **Bill Doney**, with input from several residents, are drafting a new Charter to be presented via referendum to town voters to present the proposed Charter to residents for review and comment. There will be a town workshop in the next few weeks when the proposed charter will be presented for public comment. We hope to have the Charter ready for adoption by the Commission at the September 11 meeting.

Town Finances:

- 2024 Budget: Commissioner Dick Busto, with the invaluable assistance of former Commissioner **Lisa Hines**, has prepared the 2024 Budget. It will be discussed at the August 14, 2023 Commission meeting. You can find it at the Town's website here: <https://www.jupiterinletcolony.org/budgets-financial/page/budgets> under "Supporting Documents."
- 2023 Budget: I have taken several steps to rectify the current town finances to conform with the budget the Commission passed last fall.

These steps include:

- 1) Sent collection letters to contractors demanding past due payments on renewal permit fees. The Town had \$431,000 in fees past due. We have received or have commitments to receive \$297,000 by August 31. The remaining permit fees, billed at \$134,000, are due by August 31. If not paid by then the work sites will be subject to stop work orders. We are implementing procedures to ensure that collection will be timely in the future.

- 2) To cover unauthorized spending in 2023, I asked the Commission for approval to use the ARPA funds from the Federal Government, which the Commission granted, and our auditors approved. Use of those funds covered \$235,000 expenses, including a new generator, replacement A/C and other expenses incurred in the spring of 2023 that were not in the budget.
- 3) The collection of building fees together with the ARPA funds will put the town FY 2023 operations in surplus as was budgeted. However, the “run rate” of monthly expenses is not sustainable going into FY 2024. Therefore, we must reduce monthly expenses as indicated in the FY 24 Budget.

Building and Zoning: Under the able and thoughtful leadership of Chairman **Earl Fischer**, the B and Z Committee is reviewing our permit fee schedule to provide recommendations to the Commission to better align with current and future economics. Those recommendations will be discussed in a future Commission meeting.

Operating Audit: With the approval of the Commission at the July meeting, I retained the services of **Michelle Lee Berger**, former City Manager of Sewell Point. Her consultative role is to ensure that we are complying with state and federal law on records and reports and that we are following best practices on all town procedures including HR policies, internal controls, procurement and contracting and many other areas of administration. She began work on August 1 and her recommendations have already proven to be invaluable.

Financial Audit: **Kevin Lucas** and I met with our auditors on August 3. They will begin our stub audit shortly. In addition, I asked for a proposal from them to audit our technology system and our cybersecurity to protect us from hackers.

Legal: The Town is dealing with several legal procedures, including a request for town records, a claim of a hostile work environment and potential lawsuits. The details of these procedures are confidential. They are time consuming and expensive for the Town. Fortunately, we are ably represented by our attorneys.

I believe we have made progress in the last 12 weeks, but we have a long way to go. My goal is to turn the government over to the new mayor and commission in the best condition possible on January 1, 2024. I will outline procedures to take the town government forward in a separate report.

Thank you for your continued suggestions and support.