

City of Port St. Lucie

Special City Council

Meeting Minutes - Final

121 SW Port St. Lucie
Blvd.
Port St. Lucie, Florida
34984

Tuesday, November 4, 2025

5:15 PM

Council Chambers, City Hall

Immediately Following the 5:00 PM Special CRA Meeting

1. Meeting Called to Order

A Special Meeting of the CITY COUNCIL of the City of Port St. Lucie was called to order by Mayor Martin on November 4, 2025, at 5:07 p.m., at Port St. Lucie City Hall, 121 SW Port St. Lucie Boulevard, Port St. Lucie, Florida.

2. Roll Call

Council Members Present:

Mayor Shannon Martin

Vice Mayor Jolien Caraballo

Councilwoman Stephanie Morgan

Councilman Dave Pickett

Councilman Anthony Bonna, Sr.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

(Clerk's Note: The Pledge of Allegiance and Statement of Decorum were initiated at the previous CRA meeting.)

4. Public to be Heard

Resident Dodi Spence spoke to the Council on transparency, term limits, and tax incentives.

Resident Anthony Pizzarelli inquired about the quorum of the City.

Vice Mayor Caraballo addressed the transparency of the Stadium project, noting that project names were utilized to allow the private sector to do business with the municipality and ensure that their trade secrets are protected until such time that the municipality will move forward, per State Statute.

5. Second Reading of Ordinances, Public Hearing

5.a Ordinance 25-65, Public Hearing, Authorizing the Mayor, or Her Designee, to Execute and Enter into a Development and Funding Agreement with the City of Port St. Lucie's Community Redevelopment Agency and Ebenezer Stadium

[2025-1026](#)

Construction, LLC, for the Construction of a Stadium on a Portion of Real Property Located within Walton & One.

Mr. Papadakis spoke to the Council about breaking out of the Major & Minor League construct and bringing top level teams to cities, as well as this project not only being an investment but a community development tool.

Dr. John Prince, St. Lucie County Public Schools Superintendent, spoke to the Council on topics including being a 'destination' school district, careers for students, pre-apprenticeships, and opportunities for schools to have synergy. He also stated that the School District would like to create a partnership for this item.

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Pete Tesch, Economic Development Council (EDC), discussed the economic impact and he read a letter on behalf of the EDC. Vice Mayor Caraballo thanked Mr. Tesch and spoke on the development of the City.

Ms. Davis explained that they had created Fact Sheets for the Stadium that were available on the City's website, and she discussed the differences between past projects vs. the USL Stadium project. She then discussed the Development & Funding Agreement, including the use, deposit, inspection period, permit approval period, and bond. She also discussed the Tax Increment Revenue (TIF) funding.

Mayor Martin requested a recap and upon her questioning, Ms. Davis clarified the following:

- The City of Port St. Lucie is not building a stadium.
- The City is not involved in a bond issuance of the stadium.
- A Performance Bond was being issued by the developer at 120% of the value if the stadium was not completed.
- Walton & One was selected as the stadium site location because it was identified as an economic development project, and the proximity of the site within a mixed-use development made it desirable to the developer, which was also located in a CRA area.
- There is an analysis completed for an area to be established as a CRA, and TIF revenue gets reinvested back into that area.
- The residents and businesses located within the CRA boundary do not pay a higher tax rate than anyone else located outside of the CRA.
- The CRA currently generates revenue. The Finance Department composed an estimate of current revenues and forecasted them out for 20 years (not considering any future development). They determined that there was enough TIF revenue to fund this project.

- CRA funds cannot be used for projects outside of the CRA area.
- The CRA will refund the developer once they meet certain criteria and only over a certain period of time that they continue to meet those obligations.
- The refund is not General Fund revenue.
- City taxpayers will not see an increase in their taxes due to the stadium.
- The Operating Agreement has an agreement within for the obligation of the operator to work with the Port St. Lucie Police Department on a Traffic Plan & Parking Plan. The Police Department will be reimbursed for working on these plans.
- Florida Statute 288.075 allows for projects to be brought to a municipality under a confidentiality provision, which allows for the developer and municipality to have an opportunity to review the project without it coming out to the public to see if it was a good fit for both parties.
- Other projects have been handled the same way such as Amazon, Cheney Brothers, Tamco, and FedEx.

City Attorney Berrios addressed a lawsuit against USL that was brought up by a resident, and he informed that the case was dismissed in February 2025. Vice Mayor Caraballo asked to clarify the location, to which Ms. Davis replied that this was the option of the developer, not the City, and the locations suggested by the public were not located within the CRA. Vice Mayor Caraballo inquired if a prior economic deal had ever been presented where the developer did not wish to use the statute and wanted to put their information out to the public, to which Ms. Davis responded in the negative.

Mayor Martin opened the Public Hearing.

Agostina Galmberti spoke on behalf of the developing team, explaining that the responsibility is theirs and that if they do not succeed, the vicinity was free to use as the City pleases.

Lee Dobbins, EDC, provided further context, explaining the need for entertainment options, a downtown, purchase of this property, and meeting goals.

EDC member Ken Krasnow expressed support of the project and stated the opportunity is unique.

Resident Staci Storms expressed support of the project and thanked City staff.

Rick Hatcher, Treasure Coast Sports Commission, expressed support for

this project and excitement for a new venue.

Resident Brian Jaelk, expressed opposition to the project and spoke on noise levels, parking locations, having multiple events on the same night, and traffic.

Resident Maureen Saltzer expressed support for the project.

Resident Vincent Rowan expressed opposition to the project and spoke on noise levels and traffic and recommended a science museum.

Resident Mark Bryant expressed support of the project and spoke on possible NCAA tournaments, large scale events, and opportunities for the youth.

Resident Alex Rodriguez-Torres expressed support of the project and spoke on job opportunities and increased demographics.

Resident Jennifer Harris expressed opposition to the project, spoke on noise levels, and stated that the neighborhood was not asked whether they wanted this project. She inquired about other sites that were considered, impact of safety & response times, sales for the teams, and facility maintenance.

Resident Dan Schofer stated that he was not opposed to the stadium, but expressed concerns for the location, TIF criteria, staffing, infrastructure and sound studies. He suggested making this an emergency shelter as an alternate requirement.

Resident Michael Moses expressed opposition and spoke on the lack of a public meeting, the stadium not being a benefit to the hotel, crime studies, and impact studies.

Christopher Corey, World Cup Liaison, expressed support for the project and spoke on what he has learned over time from similar projects.

Resident Katherine Kong expressed support for the project and spoke on opportunities for the children.

Resident Peter Overhuls expressed opposition of the project and spoke on the Master Plan.

Resident Kym Stengel expressed opposition to the project and spoke on location, traffic, safety, Special Olympics & sponsorship.

Resident Beate Hunton expressed opposition to the project and spoke on maintaining the green space for the neighborhood and noise levels.

Resident Armando Soto expressed support for the project and spoke on the opportunities for youth and the community.

Resident Steve Harrington expressed opposition to the project and spoke on the lack of a hearing, impacts on the current Event Center and financial responsibility for police presence.

Resident Steven Russo expressed opposition to the project.

Resident Robert Ecker requested that the Council think about this project a little bit more.

Resident and Mako Soccer Club President Iain Sanderson expressed support of the project.

Resident Trent Ackleson expressed opposition of the project and spoke on failed business models, the Development Agreement, Master Plan, and public safety threats.

Mayor Martin closed the Public Hearing.

Councilman Bonna discussed transparency and explained the process for Public Hearings. He also explained that this would create positive opportunities for the economy, and that if the stadium got naming rights, the City would get half of the revenue. He then discussed the location being located within the CRA, and he also stated that the risks of past projects are removed because they have learned from their mistakes. He expressed that he was in support of the project.

Councilman Pickett stated that current events at the Event Center attract more than the 6,000 people of the stadium, that those hosting the events must pay for the police, and that games would only be held on Saturdays. Ms. Davis confirmed that games are only held on Saturday evenings. Councilman Pickett informed that he recently attended Fall Fest and studied the traffic, of which he did not see an issue. He expressed support for the project.

Councilwoman Morgan stated that the City had been as transparent as it could be and that education was needed on topics. She expressed support for the project and stated that if anyone had questions, they could contact

the Council Members.

Vice Mayor Caraballo stated that she has seen all the City's growth and downfalls as she has lived here for over 30 years, and that the site was always meant to have something big. She stated that US1 was dying and that many had questioned why all the development was going to the west rather than the east. She stated that her goal was to make sure that the east side was just as prosperous as the west side. She also advised that there had already been feasibility studies. She expressed support for the project.

Mayor Martin expressed support for the project and read lines aloud from the agreement regarding traffic. She stated that all traffic issues will be addressed and that they were adequately staffed to ensure all public safety measures will be addressed. She also stated that they will work to address noise issues. She then reiterated that the City was not subsidizing this stadium, and that this deal was completely different than what was done in the past and no tax dollars were on the line if this project failed. She also reiterated that CRA funds could only be used for CRA projects, and she described the CRA process. Mayor Martin advised residents of the fact sheets located on the new Walton & One website for education. She also stated that this was the attractor/anchor, and without this, the revitalization of Walton & One would not have happened.

There being no further discussion, Councilwoman Morgan moved to approve Ordinance 25-65. Vice Mayor Caraballo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

- 5.b** Ordinance 25-67, Public Hearing, Authorizing the Mayor to Execute and Enter into a Stadium Operating Agreement with the City of Port St. Lucie's Community Redevelopment Agency and Ebenezer Stadium Operations, LLC, for the Operation of a Stadium on a Portion of Real Property Located within Walton & One.

[2025-1019](#)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Jennifer Davis, CRA, presented the Stadium Operating Agreement and discussed topics such as taxes, purchase options, and criteria for the operator. Vice Mayor Caraballo discussed the utilization of the City Suite and City Manager Merejo confirmed that there would be a policy created for how the suite could be used. Vice Mayor Caraballo stated that she would like to have a policy discussion in the future. Mayor Martin echoed the sentiments and stated that she wanted this to be used in the right way. Ms. Davis then continued discussing the operating criteria.

Mayor Martin opened the Public Hearing.

(Clerk's Note: Mayor Martin read the names on the speaker cards aloud, and no residents were present.)

There being no public to be heard, Mayor Martin closed the Public Hearing.

There being no further discussion, Vice Mayor Caraballo moved to approve Ordinance 25-67. Councilwoman Morgan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

6. Resolutions

- 6.a** Resolution 25-R74, a Resolution of the City of Port St. Lucie, Florida, Authorizing the Mayor, or Her Designee, to Execute and Enter into a Non-Relocation Agreement with the City of Port St. Lucie's Community Redevelopment Agency and Ebenezer Partnership, LLC, for the Continued Team Operations at a Stadium in Port St. Lucie.

[2025-1038](#)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Jennifer Davis, CRA, presented the Non-Relocation Agreement and discussed topics including maintenance of the franchise, covenant to play, and alternate site conditions.

There being no discussion, Councilman Pickett moved to approve Resolution 25-R74. Councilman Bonna seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

7. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Daisy Ruiz, Acting City Clerk

Jasmin De Freese, Deputy City Clerk