

City of Port St. Lucie

City Council Workshop

Meeting Minutes

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

Shannon M. Martin, Mayor

Jolien Caraballo, Vice Mayor, District IV
Stephanie Morgan, Councilwoman, District I
Dave Pickett, Councilman, District II
Anthony Bonna, Councilman, District III

Please visit www.cityofpsl.com/tv for new public comment options.

Monday, September 16, 2024

9:00 AM

Council Chambers, City Hall

Request to Withdraw Item 6B

1. Meeting Called to Order

A Workshop of the City Council of the City of Port St. Lucie was called to order by Mayor Martin at 9:00 AM on September 16, 2024, at Port St. Lucie City Hall, 121 SW Port St. Lucie Boulevard, Port St. Lucie, Florida.

2. Roll Call

Council Members Present:

Mayor Shannon M. Martin
Councilwoman Morgan
Councilman Bonna

Council Members not Present:

Vice Mayor Caraballo
Councilman Pickett

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Martin led the assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Public to be Heard

Mayor Martin opened Public to be Heard. There being no comments, she closed Public to be Heard.

5. Special Presentations

5.a Hear an Update from St. Lucie Public Schools

[2024-933](#)

Kate Parmelee, Deputy City Manager, introduced Dr. Jon Prince,

Superintendent of the St. Lucie Public Schools, who introduced his board members and senior staff in attendance.

Dr. Prince provided a PowerPoint presentation on the St. Lucie Public Schools. He discussed the operating budget, increase in number of students, and future school facilities and expansions. He spoke to St. Lucie County being a destination and having a first class school district. Dr. Prince reviewed the improvements in district performance and scorecards, core instruction, acceleration courses, graduation rates, and school grades over time. He played a brief video showing the pre-apprenticeship programs and different trades offered at the St. Lucie High Schools as well as current students talking about their favorite teachers and memories.

Dr. Prince discussed the increase in industry certifications (CTE), expanding access to elementary math (AMP) courses, as well as AICE, AP, and IB course enrollment. He spoke to the schools efforts in collaborating to fill job openings, offering student career fairs, and CTE student success. Dr. Prince concluded his presentation by discussing the importance of teachers as well as the two handouts he provided to Council, the Success guide for 2024-25 and the We Are St. Lucie Public Schools brag book.

Councilman Bonna commented on the improvements over the years in comparison to the State and the focus on supporting economic development efforts.

Councilwoman Morgan stated the St. Lucie County public schools have come a long way to be a great school system. She congratulated and thanked Dr. Prince.

Mayor Martin expressed how she was impressed with the technical career opportunities, partnerships, Youth Council involvement, etc. She thanked Dr. Prince and the School Board for their leadership.

6. New Business

- 6.a** Hear a Presentation from Bloomberg Harvard Summer Fellow Nikki Zheng on Increasing Access to Nature and High-Performance Public Spaces

[2024-934](#)

Kate Parmelee, Deputy City Manager, introduced Nikki Zheng, Bloomberg Harvard Summer Fellow, who provided a PowerPoint presentation on Increasing Access to Nature and High Performance Public Spaces, as requested by the residents through the City's Citizen Summit and Citizen Survey. She indicated that Ms. Zheng is a former student of Dr. David

Barth and will be working with the City for two years.

Ms. Zheng presented the key findings and recommendations that have developed over the last ten weeks. She discussed putting residents first and forming an interdepartmental innovation team as well as the path to innovation and portfolio of initiatives. Ms. Zheng reviewed how to develop an implementation plan and noted the residents' top priorities, such as well-planned growth, natural environment with trail connectivity, and sense of community through greenspace. She spoke to Port St. Lucie being among the top 100 populous cities in 2024 with its current park system and open space being ranked at the bottom. She indicated the team would be prioritizing tree planting and focusing on city-owned parcel opportunities.

Ms. Zheng concluded her presentation by reviewing the following six recommendations: 1) Establish Acquisition Funding through Land Bank Mechanism; 2) Increase Awareness of Existing Greenspaces & Destinations; 3) Strategically Activate Public Streets; 4) Pilot Projects/Programs After Refinements and Prototype Testing; 5) Benchmark Research, Department Reorganization/Rebranding and Contract Consultants; 6) Incorporate Residents Feedback Through Citizen Summits.

Council thanked Ms. Zheng for her presentation. Mayor Martin requested that Staff maximize and strategize for City pop-up events, identify and hone-in on the spaces within a ten-minute walk, and ensure the events are meeting the City's goals.

Ms. Parmelee stated an analysis will be done over the ten weeks to ensure any investments result in the greatest impact on spaces needing the most access. She spoke to the project of Taking it to the Streets, a living workshop, piloting, prototyping, and testing before anything is rolled out to the residents.

Mayor Martin indicated the residents would like the City to acquire land for parks, so this request needs to be addressed. Ms. Parmelee stated that grant applications and appropriation requests are in the works along with the Capital Improvement Plan and the next 10-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan update.

6.b Update Allocations to Projects Funded by the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) [2024-929](#)

This New Business item was Withdrawn.

6.c Approve a Subagreement with Johns Hopkins University to Support implementation of the Love Your Block Program in [2024-930](#)

Port St. Lucie

(Clerk's Note: Item 6.c was heard after Item 6.d.)

Kate Parmelee, Deputy City Manager, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the "Love Your Block" grant program through Johns Hopkins University and the Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation. She presented the "Love Your Block" logo for T-Shirts to Council and received a positive response.

Ms. Parmelee reviewed the program's objectives, blueprint, and revitalization projects to improve neighborhoods throughout the City. She discussed program impacts that have been made across the United States, the technical and coaching assistance that will be provided by Bloomberg, and the grant award of \$100,000 over two years, including other funding benefits. Ms. Parmelee indicated the City's initial target will be the Whispering Pines neighborhood, as there have been some code violation issues. She concluded her presentation by discussing the next steps and requesting the Council to authorize the City Manager to sign the Subagreement with Johns Hopkins University.

Councilwoman Morgan stated she sees Whispering Pines as a neighborhood and not a block. She thought it was more like Love Your Neighborhood or Love Your Area. Ms. Parmelee explained the program will be modified and adapted to the City of Port St. Lucie. Councilwoman Morgan stated it was a great idea to bring everything up to code and to be proud of where you live.

There being no further discussion, Councilwoman Morgan moved to approve the Sub-Agreement with Johns Hopkins University to support implementation of the Love Your Block program in Port St. Lucie. Councilman Bonna seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote. (Clerk's Note: Vice Mayor Caraballo and Councilman Pickett were not present at the meeting.)

- 6.d** Hear a Presentation on the Parks & Recreation 10-Year Master Plan Update Project

[2024-915](#)

(Clerk's Note: Item 6.d was heard after item 6.a.)

Brad Keen, Parks & Recreation Acting Director, discussed the efforts of the Park and Recreation Department to become accredited via the CAPRA agency, which required a 10-Year Plan that was approved in 2019. He explained Dr. Barth served as a consultant and the City is now five years into the plan, while the City has continued to grow and change. Mr. Keen indicated the decision was made to provide a 5-year update, thus Carlos Perez was hired and will present what has been accomplished.

Mr. Perez provided an overview of the project's purpose and goals, project scope, and schedule. He indicated the team will be updating policies and refreshing the plan as well as build on the City's current HPPS strategies. Mr. Perez explained Phase 1 has been completed, so they will be addressing the community's opportunities, needs, priorities, and funding sources in Phase 2, utilizing a strategic approach. He discussed the steps involved in the project scope as well as in the needs and priorities assessment for Phase 2. Mr. Perez concluded his presentation by reviewing the project schedule and next steps. He noted he will be checking in with Council throughout the process; meeting with each Councilmember one-on-one to discuss findings, input, and/or revisions; and presenting another update to Council.

7. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 AM.

Sally Walsh, City Clerk

Traci Mehl, Deputy City Clerk