

City of Port St. Lucie

Special City Council

Meeting Minutes

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

Monday, October 20, 2025

11:00 AM

Council Chambers, City Hall

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 October 20, 2025, at 11:01 a.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

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Martin led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Public to be Heard

Mayor Martin introduced the Chamber rules for decorum. There was no public to be heard.

5. First Reading of Ordinances

5.a Ordinance 25-67, 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 to the Council. (Clerk's Note: A video was played at this time.) She clarified that General Fund dollars would not be used for this project, and she discussed the Urban Land Institute and exhibited an article referencing the positive impact of arenas re-shaping cities. She also discussed the Master Plan for Walton & One, discussion with the United Soccer League (USL), CRA designated areas, the purpose of a CRA, and

the Development & Funding Agreement. She stated that they worked alongside the Finance Department and created a projection for taxes, and she and Vice Mayor Caraballo clarified that homeowner property taxes were not being utilized for this project.

Councilman Bonna inquired as to how the upcoming vote regarding the removal of property taxes would affect this project, to which Stephen Okiye, Finance Director, replied that it was very difficult to make a determination, but regarding the City itself, it would have an adverse effect. Councilman Bonna expressed that he wishes to have something in place in the agreements that protects the City, and Vice Mayor Caraballo stated that it was important to obtain the dollars to protect the citizens. Mayor Martin clarified that this CRA had already existed and was not created for the stadium, and that there would be a second reading for the Operating Agreement and Development & Funding Agreement on November 4th.

Ms. Davis continued the presentation and discussed the Stadium Operating Agreement and the next steps for Council approval. She also clarified the process for the Performance Bond and noted that the reimbursement was only provided after certain criteria had been met. Mayor Martin further clarified that taxpayer dollars would not be paying for this project.

Colt Schwerdt, Public Works Director, discussed the traffic plans, stating that an in-depth traffic analysis would be conducted and provided to the Council, and that they had been coordinating with PSLPD for the creation of a Safety Center, as well as traffic management. Chief Leo Niemczyk stated that current events have had up to 10,000 people, so they would be able to make a plan to get everyone out in 40 minutes, but it would become less time as the area and plan is amended.

Mayor Martin opened Public to be Heard.

Resident Dodi Spence inquired if this was the only location available for the stadium, if the City would be charged to use the center for events, if this is going to be a tax-incentive business, and she inquired about the noise level. She also stated that she would like to see a flat tax across-the-board.

Resident Julius Prause stated that he felt like this was rushed and that this project had been known as a secret project. He inquired about an option for an indoor stadium instead and he expressed concern about hidden taxes, traffic and noise level.

Resident Peter Overhuls inquired if the Council had done a feasible study, and how the roads could be traveled on. He spoke on noise levels and payment of projects by the City. He suggested that the City Council continuously hold public meetings.

Resident Amy Mulrooney stated that she was not against the stadium but suggested that the City review the agreement to ensure the best deal possible.

Resident Kearsten Bernard represented resident Trent Ackleson and stated that a petition had been submitted. She inquired as to the timing for this meeting, stating that people could not take off work, and she discussed traffic concerns.

Concluding the Public to be Heard comments, Vice Mayor Caraballo asked staff to clarify the secrecy of the project, to which Ms. Davis discussed the Florida Statutes requiring certain secrecy for the projects, and she provided information about trade secrets. Vice Mayor Caraballo inquired if companies in this format provide their financials, to which Ms. Davis responded in the negative. Ms. Davis discussed how the location was chosen, to which she referred to the previously presented article, noting that stadiums do best in multi-use areas. She also stated that if the City used the stadium for events and chose to use the stadium's concessions, then they would have to pay, but if they staffed their own events for concession, they did not have to pay. Vice Mayor Caraballo inquired if they would be receiving any economic development incentives, to which Ms. Davis replied that this was a discussion that would need to be brought to the Economic Development Council with the development team because it was separate from the Operating Agreement and Development & Funding Agreement. She also noted that staff had been working on this project for over 2 years.

Vice Mayor Caraballo clarified that there would be a Second Reading for this item and stated that they did not have a decision for an indoor stadium because it was the choice of the developer. She also stated that staff have tried to address the issue of hidden taxes with this agreement.

Mr. Schwerdt also noted that US1 had more capacity than St. Lucie West Blvd. Vice Mayor Caraballo clarified that the meeting was held at this time due to having one meeting during the day, and one at night.

Councilman Pickett stated that they were getting 120% of the stadium cost in a bond, so if the developer did not complete this, they already had the money. He also stated that the contract had been one of the most

comprehensive he'd seen the City enter into.

Councilman Bonna added statements regarding the secrecy of the project, noting that other cities may have been in talks with the developers as well. He discussed various scenarios regarding the funds, building the stadium, and benefits to the City. He stated that there were risks to the City, but the agreement was constructed to protect the taxpayers.

Mayor Martin reiterated that this was not the same scenario as Digital Domain and VGTI, and that she had previously had concerns for this project because of those scenarios, but the City had procedures put in place so that those incidents would not happen again.

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

Mayor Martin then clarified the procedures for First Readings, Second Readings, and Public Hearings. Vice Mayor Caraballo recommended playing the video at the next meeting for those that were unable to attend.

6. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:14 p.m.

Sally Walsh, City Clerk

Jasmin De Freese, Deputy City Clerk