

**City of Port St. Lucie**  
**City Council / City Staff Workshop**  
**Meeting Minutes - Draft**

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

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**Thursday, August 3, 2023**

**8:30 AM**

**Community Center, 2195 SE Airoso  
Blvd**

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1. Meeting Called to Order

A City Council/City Staff Workshop of the CITY COUNCIL of the City of Port St. Lucie was called to order by Mayor Martin on August 3, 2023, at 8:45 AM at the Port St. Lucie Community Center, 2195 SE Airoso 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 reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Public to be Heard

Diane Goldberg spoke in favor of protecting the City's waterways.

Pete Previte thanked the Parks and Recreation Department and City Council for their support on the new pickleball courts at Whispering Pines Park.

The City Manager discussed the actions the City has taken to improve its waterways.

5. Workshop Business

**5.a** Hear an Update from Indian River State College [2023-666](#)

Dr. Timothy Moore, IRSC President, provided an informational update of the Indian River State College. (Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint Presentation was shown at this time.)

Mayor Martin inquired if IRSC would be able to offer an Engineering Degree by next spring, to which President Moore advised IRSC would not be able to due to needing approval by all public and private higher education institutions that have competing programs.

Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested working together with IRSC to find out if they can be a part of Southern Grove.

Councilwoman Morgan suggested IRSC expand to the Ravenswood site.

A recess was called at 9:45 AM and the workshop resumed at 10:07 AM.

**5.b** Hear an Investment Review Regarding the City's Investment Portfolio. [2023-649](#)

John Grady, Managing Director, Public Trust Advisors, provided a review of the City's Investment Portfolio Presentation. (Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint Presentation was shown at this time.)

**5.c** Provide a Review of the City's Debt Portfolio. [2023-653](#)

Stephen Okiye, Finance Director, provided the City Council with a review of the City's Debt Portfolio. (Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint Presentation was shown at this time.) He discussed the Capital Project Bond Issuance Estimates and the Debt Roll-Forward.

**5.d** Discussion: Boards and Committees; Charter Requirement that City Council Establish Governing and Procedural Rules for Every Board & Committee of the City (except for the Police Pension Board). [2023-669](#)

Deputy City Attorney Frank Moehrle reviewed the Boards and Committees Charter Requirements. (Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint Presentation was shown at this time.)

Attorney Moehrle discussed Amendment 3 and Amendment 5 from the 2022 General Election that streamlined the rules and procedures for all City Advisory Boards that required City Council to disseminate rules and procedures to all the Boards and Committees except the Police Pension Board.

Attorney Moehrle discussed the term limits for all Boards and Committees. Mayor Martin indicated she did not agree with the 3-year terms. She inquired if currently the terms were two 4-year terms, to which Attorney Moehrle responded it depended on the board/committee. He stated that the Public Art Advisory Board did not have a term limit.

City Attorney Stokes clarified that there is no term limit for members and noted that was one of the decisions that needed to be made by the City Council. City Attorney Stokes asked if the Council wished to have term limits along with set terms. He indicated that the term appointments shall be staggered.

Mayor Martin stated she misinterpreted based on how it was read in the resolution. Councilwoman Morgan questioned why the resolution stated "shall not run concurrent with the election of the Mayor or City Council members", to which Attorney Moehrle indicated that the appointments would be in off years during non-election years. Mayor Martin pointed out that members resign during the middle of their terms and causes the Mayor to provide a reappointment for the vacancy. She advised that it did not make sense, to which Attorney Moehrle stated the intent was that none of the terms correspond with the City Council terms. Mayor Martin and Councilwoman Morgan both indicated they understood; however, that was not how things occurred. Vice Mayor Caraballo noted that a good reason to have the assignments during off-years would give the Council Member the opportunity to get to know who they are appointing. City Attorney Stokes added that with three-year terms it would eventually be on Council election years. It was the consensus of the City Council to remove the following sentence from the proposed resolution: "Term appointments for board members shall be staggered and shall not run concurrent with the election of the Mayor or City Council members."

The City Clerk, Sally Walsh, indicated they worked with the legal department on some of the topics for the proposed resolution. She advised the reason for the disassociation with the City Council terms was due to some of the committees/boards having City Council districts recommend candidates and they often do not have a recommendation and the seat remains vacant. She added that the intent was to eliminate the recommendation portion. Mayor Martin clarified the Council had stopped district appointments, to which the City Clerk advised some of the resolutions for the specific boards still contain that language. Mayor Martin indicated the resolutions should be corrected. She advised that the Planning and Zoning Board was not completed by district appointments anymore. Mayor Martin indicated she did not agree with having no term limits for the board members. Councilwoman Morgan indicated she

agreed with not having district appointments by City Council members. She also agreed that there should be term limits for committees/boards. Councilman Bonna advised he did not wish to impose term limits for members of the committees/boards since the City Council did not have term limits. He also added that the members were volunteer roles. Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested that the City Council provide a term limit to re-evaluate each member. Mayor Martin agreed with the suggestion made by Vice Mayor Caraballo. City Attorney Stokes suggested announcing any pending vacancies to any boards/committees during their meetings. Vice Mayor Caraballo advised the same. Mayor Martin mentioned she would be open to discussing that portion during the City Council rules discussion. The City Clerk advised that staff's intention was not to have term limits; however, the members have not gone through a re-application process at the end of their terms. It was the consensus of the City Council to provide a 3-year term limit and that each member must re-apply after each 3-year term. City Attorney Stokes advised that it would be up to the Council to establish a grandfathering for all the current committees/boards members. Mayor Martin indicated she did not want members to be grandfathered in to their term. Councilwoman Morgan noted it would have been helpful to review a list of all the members and their terms. City Attorney Stokes advised he would work with the City Clerk's office to put a list together for the Council. Mayor Martin asked that the board/committee lists do not include names. Attorney Moehrle added that many of the boards/committees were not having yearly elections for officers for chair, vice chair and chair pro tem and recommended that there be a requirement that at the first meeting of each year that the board/committee nominate a new chair, vice chair and chair pro tem and vote by paper ballot. Councilman Pickett noted he did not like the need for a paper ballot. City Attorney Stokes advised the purpose and reason behind the paper ballot. Mayor Martin inquired if Councilman Pickett would agree if the ballot contained the name, to which he responded in the affirmative. Vice Mayor Caraballo asked if the Council wanted term limits for the chair position, to which Mayor Martin indicated that she preferred having a rotating chair on an annual basis. It was the consensus of the City Council to rotate the chair, vice chair and chair pro tem positions on an annual basis.

Attorney Moehrle discussed sunshine training. Vice Mayor Caraballo asked that the City work with the Treasure Coast League of Cities to find out if they are interested in having an annual ethics training event for all boards/committees to attend. Attorney Moehrle stated their office had reached out to the Attorney General's Office to find out if they could host an annual training. Vice Mayor Caraballo noted there was an online training available through Florida League of Cities and Florida State University. She added that the board/committee member should take an

ethics training prior to starting their position and provide proof of completion. Mayor Martin noted the Council was required to go through Ethics training and Florida Sunshine training and hoped that the two would be combined in the initial onboarding of the board/committee members. Councilman Pickett inquired if members were afforded the opportunity to participate in the ethics training at City Hall, to which Mayor Martin stated that training was for elected officials. Vice Mayor Caraballo added that was why she was asking to have the City host a similar event in conjunction with the Florida League of Cities or for members to participate in the online form of training. Mayor Martin noted that the online course was not free. Councilman Pickett stated it was \$75 to participate online. Mayor Martin asked the City Council if they were willing to require volunteers to pay a \$75 registration fee for online training. Vice Mayor Caraballo asked the City Manager if the City could cover the \$75 registration fee, to which he responded in the affirmative. Councilwoman Morgan inquired if the Council would be asking that they only complete the training once a year or once every three-years, to which City Attorney Stokes suggested that the Council require that they complete the online training upon on-boarding and once the City offers in-person training course each member can attend in-person to avoid paying \$75 per member each year. It was the consensus of the City Council to move forward with the once-a-year Ethics & Sunshine training. Attorney Moehrle discussed member attendance to be strictly in-person and remove the remote options except for a declared state of emergency. It was the consensus of the City Council to no longer offer remote options for attendance for all board/committee members. The City Council agreed to continue to allow Applicants to participate via Zoom. Attorney Moehrle discussed Exhibit A relating to the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee changing the quorum requirements from 6 members to 5 members from the 9-person board. He also discussed the resignation process and indicated they included a provision that any member who resigns prior to the expiration of their term shall not be eligible for reappointment to any board/committee for a period of one year following their resignation. Mayor Martin agreed with the provision. Vice Mayor Caraballo asked what if it was a member that just wished to change their board. City Attorney Stokes indicated they could add a note stating, "unless good cause is shown". The Council agreed to add that language to allow them that latitude.

City Attorney Stokes stated that many boards/committees were created by ordinance, resolution, and by City Council votes at the dais. He explained the proposed resolution would make it easier for the City Council to amend in the future and would repeal the sections of the ordinances that deal with the boards/committees.

Mayor Martin questioned if the Council would have to remove a board/committee member by resolution, to which City Attorney Stokes responded in the negative. City Attorney Stokes indicated that the removal of board members was governed by state statute based on due process; however, the City must contain similar provisions. He stated the City could investigate establishing a removal procedure of its own. Mayor Martin indicated she did not want a future Mayor or Council Member where they must publicly disclose certain information and potentially damage an individual's reputation. City Attorney Stokes advised he would research the matter and come up with a plan to allow the individual being removed the opportunity to request a public hearing. It was the consensus of the City Council to not use a resolution for the removal of any board/committee member.

City Attorney Stokes inquired if the Council wished to include the Charter Review Committee in the resolution. Mayor Martin indicated she did not see that being an issue and pointed out that she did not know what the Safety Review Committee was. Renee Major, Risk Management Director, explained it was made up of employees of each City department that reviews all the traffic crashes, incidents and worker compensation injuries. Mayor Martin inquired if the Board was governed by Sunshine and stated it did not make sense to include an employee review board in the proposed resolution. Councilwoman Morgan and Vice Mayor Caraballo questioned the inclusion of the Site Plan Review Committee and inquired if that committee was governed by Sunshine, to which City Attorney Stokes responded in the affirmative.

The City Manager recommended that the City Council remove the Safety Review Committee from the proposed resolution. Mayor Martin asked that the Safety Review Committee be removed and include the Charter Review Committee in the resolution. It was the consensus of the City Council to remove the Safety Review Committee from the list and add the Charter Review Committee to the proposed Resolution. Vice Mayor Caraballo pointed out that the Site Plan Review Committee was made up of city staff, to which City Attorney Stokes advised it was governed by state law and was quasi-judicial in nature. Vice Mayor Caraballo questioned how it would be possible for the City Manager and the Public Works Director to not speak on a pending project outside of the meeting, to which City Attorney Stokes advised they would further research the matter before bringing the resolution back before the City Council. Mayor Martin also discussed the same issue with the Youth Council and added that teenagers are being put into a position where they cannot communicate with each other. She indicated it was problematic to force teenagers to go through Sunshine Law when they may want to discuss things. City Attorney Stokes

mentioned their office researched that concern and noted that other Youth Council's that have avoided that issue had created their Youth Council outside of the City, through the Chamber of Commerce or School Board.

Attorney Moehrle asked the Council if they would like all board/committee members to reapply or if they preferred to have the member serve until the expiration of their term prior to the effective date, to which Mayor Martin responded in the negative and indicated that they wished to start over and would not be grandfathering in any members.

City Clerk Walsh asked if the City Clerk's Office should discontinue publishing agendas, attending the meetings and taking minutes for the Safety Review Board as it was ordered to be removed from the proposed resolution. She added the Risk Management department could record their own meetings if they wish to do so for internal purposes. Mayor Martin and Vice Mayor Caraballo agreed. City Attorney Stokes added he would like to further research the Safety Review Committee. The City Council asked that this be brought back to them for further review. It was the consensus of the City Council to no longer have the City Clerk's Office publish agendas, attend, record and provide minutes for the Safety Review Board Meeting.

A recess was called at 11:49 AM and the workshop resumed at 1:05 PM.

**5.e** Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Current

[2023-660](#)

Recommendations and Assignments Recommendations.

David Graham, Assistant City Manager, presented the current recommendations and assignment recommendations for the Citizens Advisory Committee for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. (Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint Presentation was shown at this time.)

Mayor Martin thanked the Citizen Advisory Committee and noted that the reason for the continuation of a feasibility plan to have a City-operated Solid Waste was due to the number of comments received from the public.

Councilman Pickett commented that during his service in the Solid Waste Task Force they did explore the idea for the City to run their own garbage pickup.

Vice Mayor Caraballo advised she would like to explore if the City could potentially handle each service that the current contract handles for the yard, solid, and bulk waste. She mentioned the challenges the City faced was mainly with the yard and bulk waste. Vice Mayor Caraballo questioned whether it would be better to start the city-operated services by completing

bulk and yard waste pickup rather than solid waste. She agreed on moving forward with the assignment for the CAC to review the Streetlighting Program and Business Tax Program.

Vice Mayor Caraballo questioned when the last time the Business Tax Program fees were adjusted, to which Charlie Proulx, Finance Deputy Director, noted that the last time the fees were reviewed was in 2013. Joel Dramis, Building Official, added that in the 1990s they referred to this program as an Occupational License Program before the state changed the terminology.

It was the consensus of the City Council to assign the recommended assignments to the Citizen's Advisory Committee.

**5.f** Discussion Regarding Proposed Revisions to the Rules of Council, Public Hearings and Quasi-Judicial Matters.

[2023-546](#)

City Attorney Stokes discussed the rules of Council, Public Hearings and Quasi-Judicial Matters. (Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint Presentation was shown at this time.) He discussed the possibility of adding an informal meeting in lieu of having one-on-ones with staff and the option of allowing council members meetings with less than a quorum. City Attorney Stokes advised that there would not be final action at these informal meetings; however, the City Clerk would have to attend to take minutes. Mayor Martin stated she did not have an issue with having informal meetings as necessary. She mentioned that she was not in favor of the idea of the informal meeting replacing the one-on-ones with staff.

Councilman Pickett agreed with adding an informal meeting option.

Councilman Bonna indicated he agreed with Mayor Martin's stance relating to the informal meeting not replacing the one-on-one with staff. He added that he believed the informal meeting could be held during an already scheduled special meeting. Councilman Bonna added that the City Council did not need a regularly scheduled 4th meeting.

Vice Mayor Caraballo agreed that the informal meeting does not need to be a regularly scheduled meeting but wished to have the option to have an informal meeting with less than a quorum.

Councilwoman Morgan stated she liked the idea of an informal meeting. She advised that her concern with one-on-ones was that staff was receiving input from 5 different people. Councilwoman Morgan added it would be easier to have the informal meeting scheduled and then



cancelled.

The Council discussed the possibility of adding an agenda review meeting prior to the City Council meetings.

It was the consensus of the City Council to agree to allow the City Manager to call an Informal City Council Meeting, as necessary.

The City Manager stated he would continue to have one-on-ones with the City Council Members.

Mayor Martin noted that the Informal Meetings would be beneficial when there was no consensus on an item.

City Attorney Stokes discussed the City Council Meeting times.

Mayor Martin mentioned that the Special Workshop meetings were currently held every 3rd Monday of each month at 9:30 AM and asked the Council if they wished to change the time, to which Councilman Pickett suggested changing the time to the top of the hour, at either 9:00 AM or 10:00 AM.

It was the consensus of the City Council to change the time of the Special Workshops meeting currently held every 3rd Monday of the month to 9:00 AM.

Mayor Martin mentioned that the Regular meetings were currently held every 2nd and 4th Monday of each month at 6:30 PM and asked the Council if they wished to change one of those meetings to a day-time meeting.

Vice Mayor Caraballo stated she was willing to change one of the meetings to a morning meeting; however, she mentioned she would like to have public hearings during both meetings. She explained that she did not want an individual to be barred from speaking during the first or second reading on a public hearing item. Vice Mayor Caraballo stated she would prefer two public hearings on each item to allow everyone to have an opportunity to provide their public comment.

Mayor Martin indicated that the Council always allows public comment whether it be at first or second reading.

City Attorney Stokes noted that the Public Hearing portion would be changed to the first reading of ordinances instead of the second reading of

ordinances.

Councilwoman Morgan indicated she would like to change the meeting times for both 2nd Monday Regular City Council meeting at 1:00 PM and 6:00 PM for the 4th Monday Regular City Council meeting. She stated that she preferred to have the Public Hearings and Presentations during the first reading of ordinances.

Councilman Pickett agreed with the time change of 1:00 PM for the 2nd Monday Regular City Council Meeting and 6:00 PM for the 4th Monday Regular City Council Meeting. He confirmed he did not have a preference as to when the Public Hearing was to be held.

Councilman Bonna agreed with the proposed changes.

Vice Mayor Caraballo stated the initial conversation was to propose a morning meeting to allow those who work at night to show up to the morning meetings. Councilwoman Morgan noted that the reason she suggested the change to 1:00 PM was due to Councilman Bonna's previous comment that would allow him and other members an opportunity to meet with staff prior to the meeting. Vice Mayor Caraballo noted she would vote with the majority on the time changes for the Regular City Council meetings. She requested that the Public Comment be added to the expanded agenda during the second reading of ordinances. Mayor Martin stated there was no need for that since people can sign up to speak with a comment card if they wish to speak.

It was the consensus of the City Council to change the 2nd Monday Regular City Council meeting time to 1:00 PM and the 4th Monday Regular City Council meeting time to 6:00 PM.

It was the consensus of the City Council to be provided presentations and provide the public hearing during the first reading of ordinances.

Mayor Martin asked to have a conversation to discuss when these changes would occur. City Attorney Stokes suggested that these changes be effective after January 1, 2024.

It was the consensus of the City Council to initiate the above new changes as of January 1, 2024.

City Attorney Stokes discussed the possibility to change the order of a Public Hearing that is not Quasi-Judicial.

Mayor Martin agreed with the proposed changes to the order for Public Hearings.

Vice Mayor Caraballo noted that a possible negative outcome of the change could be longer presentations from the Applicants. Mayor Martin shared the same concern.

City Attorney Stokes raised the issues on some of the quasi-judicial Public Hearings.

Mayor Martin stated she wished to not change it on non-quasi-judicial items. She stated she would like to revisit this in the future.

It was the consensus of the City Council to agree to amend the Order of the Public Hearing for Quasi-Judicial Items and have the Presentation by the Applicant be completed prior to the City Staff Presentation.

City Attorney Stokes discussed changing the rules to allow the Council to table an item when an applicant does not attend their meeting.

City Attorney Stokes discussed decorum at City Council Meetings. Vice Mayor Caraballo requested that City Attorney Stokes draft proposed decorum rules for the City Council. Mayor Martin agreed with Vice Mayor Caraballo's comment.

City Attorney Stokes confirmed he would work on bringing back proposed decorum language for the City Council to review.

It was the consensus of the City Council to have the Legal Department draft decorum rules.

City Attorney Stokes advised he would work with the City Manager's Office and the Port St. Lucie Police Department to schedule a meeting to discuss security measures. Vice Mayor Caraballo inquired if discussions about security measures and the safety of City Hall could be held under a shade meeting, to which City Attorney Stokes responded in the affirmative.

Councilwoman Morgan mentioned there was an issue with the Planning and Zoning Board. She stated she did not believe the Board should be allowed to table items unless it was recommended to be tabled by staff or the applicant. Councilwoman Morgan added that she wished to discuss variances.

City Attorney Stokes stated his office recommended that the

boards/committees should not be allowed to table items unless otherwise recommended by staff or the applicant. He discussed the review of Special Exception Use and Variance Applications. City Attorney Stokes inquired if the City Council wished to change the way Special Exception Use and Variance Applications are handled currently.

Councilwoman Morgan stated there had been an increase in Zoning Board Appeals and recommended that Variance Applications be reviewed by the City Council, rather than the Planning and Zoning Board.

Mayor Martin inquired if all the Variance Applications should come to the City Council or only certain types of variances. She noted they previously changed the handling of Variances in the past. Mayor Martin asked that staff return with what type of Variance Applications should come before the City Council rather than the Planning and Zoning Board.

Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested that Planning and Zoning staff provide a memo to the City Council whenever a variance gets denied and for it to include a notification that the variance was denied at the Planning and Zoning Meeting. She added that the memo would allow the Council member to watch the meeting and review the item.

Councilwoman Morgan disagreed and noticed there were variances that were approved that in her opinion should not have.

Mayor Martin asked that the issue be reviewed by the legal department and brought back before the City Council.

Mayor Martin stated that recently a Planning and Zoning Board Member became frustrated at a meeting, left the meeting early and passed a note stating they would not be attending any future Planning and Zoning meetings. She asked the City Council if they thought that to be a resignation, to which the City Council agreed it was a resignation.

Vice Mayor Caraballo, Councilman Pickett and Councilman Bonna provided their closing comments.

Councilwoman Morgan provided her closing comments and discussed the possibility to have a later discussion regarding mandatory septic to sewer conversions throughout the City with the County. She also stated she would like to later discuss the City dump site on Cameo Boulevard.

Mayor Martin provided her closing comments.

City Manager Merejo provided his closing comments.

6. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:40 PM.

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Daisy Ruiz, Deputy City Clerk

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Sally Walsh, City Clerk