

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

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Wednesday, July 24, 2024

8:30 AM

**Community Center, 2195 SE Airoso
Blvd**

Summer Workshop

1. Meeting Called to Order

The 2024 Summer Workshop of the City Council and Staff of the City of Port St. Lucie was called to order by Mayor Martin at 8:48 AM on July 24, 2024, at Port St. Lucie Community Center, 2195 SE Airoso Boulevard, Port St. Lucie, Florida.

2. Roll Call

Council Members Present:
Shannon M. Martin, Mayor
Jolien Caraballo, Vice Mayor
Stephanie Morgan, Councilwoman
Dave Pickett, Councilman
Anthony Bonna, Councilman

3. Pledge of Allegiance

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

4. Public to be Heard

Mayor Martin called on those who signed up to speak:

1. Diane Goldberg, 6470 NW Volucia Drive, of the St. Lucie Audubon Society and Conservation Alliance of St. Lucie, asked that the City be allowed to plant trees along the swales to help with air pollution and provide shade for the homes.

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

5. Workshop Business

5.a Introduction: Preparing for FY 2024-2025

[2024-722](#)

City Manager Jesus Merejo provided a PowerPoint presentation and opening remarks on the City's vision and mission statements. He reviewed the agendas for the next three days, commented on the topics to be covered, and discussed the City's areas of focus. He stated the next three days will be very exciting, as he looked forward to the discussions and engagement.

5.b Adopt the Updated Strategic Plan and Review Strategic Plan

[2024-705](#)

Progress through PSL STAT

Kate Parmelee, Deputy City Manager, provided a PowerPoint presentation and updated the Council on the Strategic Plan for FY 24/25. She stated she met with each of the Council members to discuss their priorities and wanted to share the information with the residents as well.

Ms. Parmelee discussed the opening of The Port District and how it relates to the City's mission and vision as well as commented on the Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation and how it transformed the City's approach to strategic planning. Mayor Martin indicated that Port St. Lucie is the talk of the Bloomberg Center for public innovation, because of the way the City has embraced the process, employed the strategies, and worked closely together. She explained that Bloomberg works with hundreds of cities across the globe and Port St. Lucie is the example everyone else follows. She stated she was so proud and this achievement should be celebrated.

Ms. Parmelee reviewed the results of The National Community Survey, with the top three concerns being Traffic, Control Growth, and Economic Development/Business Support/Development. She also discussed the 2024 Citizen Summit where approximately 900 residents attended and participated. A brief video of the Citizen Summit was shown at this time.

Ms. Parmelee presented the Proposed Strategic Plan Goals and Initiatives as well as the Path to Innovation. She discussed Goal #1 - Safe, Clean & Beautiful, which includes focusing on a low crime rate, improving safety, and beautifying landscaping of roadways, public parks, and gateways. She indicated Goal #2 has been changed to Planning for a Thriving Future, which includes managing growth; public spaces and advancing community design; and neighborhood improvement and community engagement. She reviewed the status of the new and continued priority projects that support these goals.

Ms. Parmelee discussed Goal #3 - Smart & Connected City. Mayor Martin

stated she was confused regarding the need for more public engagement, as they utilize every media source, virtually, in person, etc., and use public engagement in every process or project. Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested having this conversation as a team to strategically discuss this perceived issue and bringing it forward at the next Strategic Planning session. Mayor Martin indicated that she and Ms. Parmelee were invited by Bloomberg to the City Lab this year and the topic is communication. She stated they will bring back what they have learned about how to communicate differently and discuss it with everyone.

Vice Mayor Caraballo commented on the picture with the young girl in front of the chalkboard and recommended it be included in staff roundtable discussions. She stated it is a good example of the residents and the City thinking differently or having different visions, as the City should be flexible and pivot accordingly based on needs of the residents.

Councilman Pickett inquired if follow-up questions were asked of the residents who believe the City is lower than the national benchmark on community engagement. Ms. Parmelee explained Councilman Bonna made a change to the National Community Survey and she will share that data. She agreed the disconnect does not make sense, but that this is an opportunity to develop new tools to better engage residents.

Councilman Bonna stated the language "connection and engagement" may not be perceived by everyone as communication, as one can receive information from the City but may not necessarily feel connected to the City. He believed they needed to fine-tune their communications and focus on reaching people where they are and through the means they prefer. Mayor Martin suggested looking at how they frame the question.

Councilwoman Morgan felt the survey had too many questions and subquestions, was cumbersome, and took too long to complete. She also inquired about the low response rate of 11%. Ms. Parmelee explained it was not a perfect survey or process. She discussed how the surveys were mailed randomly and also available online to anyone. Vice Mayor Caraballo clarified that the survey was scientifically done.

Ms. Parmelee continued her presentation on Goal #3 - Smart & Connected City, and reviewed the new and continued priority projects that support this goal, such as the Youth Council and Teen Programming.

Mayor Martin indicated the City received 45 applications for the Youth Council, which is comprised of 11 students by ordinance. She explained she would like to give all the applicants an opportunity by having the

leadership board and forming subcommittees. Mayor Martin requested that this be brought back to Council for consideration and approval.

Vice Mayor Caraballo stated she agreed and liked the subcommittees as well as volunteer opportunities. She explained that it would help with future appointments and suggested a City University program for the youth. Sarah Prohaska, Communications Director, indicated Communications was taking over City University and is also responsible for the Youth Council, so they could implement this next time around.

Mayor Martin suggested changing the ordinance from 11 members, so not to limit the number of kids who want to participate. Councilwoman Morgan stated she would like more information. Vice Mayor Caraballo explained that 11 students could be the Board, but the other kids could create a mini city government to include department, administration, and Council type roles, which would expose them to leadership and further their education.

Mayor Martin explained her vision is to allow the governing Board to model the Council and build little advisory committees. However, she does not want the Council directing and controlling what they do, as she wants the students to take charge and lead.

Ms. Prohaska discussed how all of the applications were impeccable, as the kids are doing amazing things. She stated the idea was to change the ordinance to not limit the number of students, but to have an application process every year and appoint the kids to be on the Youth Council for two years. She indicated in order to receive their certificate at the end, the students would have to do a service project, serve on a committee, etc.

Ms. Prohaska explained a self-selected Board of Directors would lead and self-govern. She indicated if a member is not fulfilling their duties, the Board would decide whether the student stays on the Council. She stated each committee could have a chairperson, which would be training grounds for eventually running for the governing Board in the future. Ms. Prohaska indicated this model was shown at All-America Cities where they recently gathered some information on Youth Councils. She stated the students would have to apply, show an interest, and invest their time, in order to get the recognition of saying they are a Port St. Lucie Youth Council member.

City Manager Merejo stated Staff would put a package or program together for the Youth Council and bring it back to the City Council.

Ms. Parmelee concluded her presentation on Goal #3 - Smart &

Connected City, by discussing advancing innovation and resiliency. She reviewed the new and continued priority projects that support these efforts.

Ms. Parmelee presented Goal #4 - Diverse Economy & Employment Opportunities, which includes expanding employment opportunities, workforce housing initiatives, and revitalizing eastern Port St. Lucie. She discussed the new and continued priority projects that are contributing to this goal.

Ms. Parmelee discussed Goal #5 - High Quality Infrastructure & Facilities, and the challenges the City is facing to address the crowded roadways. She reviewed the new and continued priority projects that support the planning of roadways, facilities, and fiber for future needs; advancing mobility and improving traffic flow; and improving water quality.

Mayor Martin commented on how exciting it will be when Port St. Luce Blvd and the Public Works Administrative Complex are finally completed. She stated the residents are always concerned about infrastructure and inquired how the City was communicating the mobility plan. Mayor Martin explained that Ft. Lauderdale implemented a branding program called Fortify Lauderdale, which has a dashboard on the city's webpage indicating what is happening in real time. She expressed that Port St. Lucie's website is cumbersome and suggested something similar to Ft. Lauderdale, as their website is easy to read and understand. She asked Council for their thoughts.

Councilman Pickett agreed the easier it is to navigate a website the better. Mayor Martin stated it would become their talking points as well and would put Council all on the same page.

Vice Mayor Caraballo asked what mobility meant to the residents, as she believed it did not mean the same for the City. She thought they needed to do a better job at communicating that to the public and agreed branding, website, and marketing would help, but they needed to be more aggressive when it comes to discussing mobility and having an action plan that includes the demands of the City, so they will be ready for the TPO discussion. She indicated they could only anticipate the City's traffic increasing until other opportunities are made available to connect differently.

Councilman Pickett stated public transportation is not readily utilized because it takes twice as long to get to their destination, so that problem needs to be solved. Vice Mayor Caraballo expressed there were not enough busses, stops, or accessibility.

Mayor Martin stated the micro-transit has been expanded by the County and is the way of the future, because people do not want to wait or get on the giant busses. Vice Mayor Caraballo envisioned a hybrid of micro-transit and big busses, but stated they could not wait on the County. She reiterated the need for an action plan to mobilize people throughout the City. She suggested looking at best practices through Bloomberg, as they should be the model for transportation. Mayor Martin agreed.

Ms. Parmelee noted the City had a rise in public transportation satisfaction in the last year. Mayor Martin stated if they properly communicated the availability of public transit, the satisfaction rate would increase exponentially. She indicated they would have to create a partnership in order to provide that communication.

Vice Mayor Caraballo indicated cities are contracting with Uber and Lyft, and Port St. Lucie does not have those types of ordinances or contracts in place. Regarding senior and workforce housing, she thought the City was going to have a huge challenge as more of the senior population begins to age. She stated she wanted to have a future discussion on changing their ordinances.

Mayor Martin inquired about the status of the ordinances addressing workforce housing and upcoming projects, such as Project Ebenezer. Carmen Capezzuto, Neighborhood Services Director, indicated the Housing Needs Assessment has been completed with St. Lucie County and City of Fort Pierce, and is ready for Council acceptance. He explained the City received a Thriving Communities Technical Assistance grant from HUD in December, and the idea now is to come forward with the Technical Assistance Plan, which is pulling elements from the Housing Needs Assessment. He indicated they want to bring that to Council some time in September, as it will be an action plan for workforce housing, senior housing, etc.

Mayor Martin stated she did not see the connection to Project Ebenezer coming forward, and expressed her concerns of what may happen in the future regarding enforcement since it is not in their ordinances. She indicated that piece needs to come forward ASAP.

Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested workshopping this matter, as she wants a best practice definition of workforce. Mayor Martin recommended looking at the models, and Vice Mayor Caraballo indicated the need for the most recent workforce needs assessment from the EDC.

Mayor Martin stated the Technical Assistance Grant is great; however, it could be time consuming and she wants to keep moving forward. Vice Mayor Caraballo requested that whenever Staff starts applying for federal grants or the like, they make Council aware of any pre-emption conditions. She stated she is concerned any impediments may limit their ability to make a decision or future decisions.

Ms. Parmelee presented Goal #6 - Culture, Nature, & Fun Activities, which includes increasing access to the arts as well as implementing the 10-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. She also discussed Goal #7 - High Performing Government Organization, which includes expanding 1-PSL, reducing the millage rate, and organizational development. She reviewed the new and continued priority projects that support this goals.

Ms. Parmelee concluded her presentation by discussing the Strategic Plan Dashboard as well as other sources that provide information on the Strategic Plan.

Vice Mayor Caraballo inquired about the status of the mobile City Hall. Ms. Parmelee stated they will be doing a design workshop with Staff and providing Council with a fourth quarter progress report as well as prioritizing the initiatives for next year's CIP. She indicated they are currently looking for grants and generating conceptual ideas. Vice Mayor Caraballo thought the mobile City Hall would help residents feel more connected. Mayor Martin stated she was looking forward to it as well, because when she takes the team with her for presentations it is very impactful. She explained the residents leave and share the information with their neighbors and friends.

Ms. Parmelee stated some residents have requested to be ambassadors for the City in order to spread the information, which is another engagement opportunity to bring the City closer together. Mayor Martin indicated the City University graduates become ambassadors for the City, which is why they should develop the program even further.

Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested utilizing their park system, public engagement opportunities, Tradition Town Hall, etc., to bring Staff together, have one-on-one communications, and be accessible. She stated they should bring it to the people, as it is more friendly and neighborly.

Ms. Parmelee explained Staff will be going through a design process and coming back to Council with more updates. Vice Mayor Caraballo requested that Council be made aware of anything that is not being filled

due to budgetary constraints, to which Ms. Parmelee indicated Council will be provided with the full picture moving forward.

There being no further discussion, Councilman Bonna moved to Adopt the Updated Strategic Plan. Councilman Pickett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

(Clerk's Note: Mayor Martin called for a break at 10:25 AM and the workshop resumed at 10:53 AM.)

5.c Sidewalk Master Plan Update 2024

[2024-697](#)

Colt Schwerdt, Public Works Director, commented on the Public Works team and stated they were ready to assist the Council and the City with their challenges and goals. He stated he enjoyed attending the Harvard Bloomberg Initiative and the major topic was Choice Architecture, which focused on communication and how it is framed directs how responses are received. He indicated he thought branding was a good idea and could help with community engagement.

Emily Seitter, Project Manager, CIP & Sales Tax Projects, updated the Council on the Sidewalk Master Plan and introduced the members of the team. She reviewed the objectives, funding & partnerships, and a brief history of the Port. St. Lucie Sidewalk Program.

Vice Mayor Caraballo clarified the annual funding of \$2,750,000 for Port St. Lucie does not include the sidewalks being built with the complete street approach, so additional sidewalks are being completed.

Ms. Seitter discussed FY 2018/19 through FY 2023/24 and the miles of sidewalks constructed, the increase in the cost of constructing sidewalks, and the anticipated programming and funding for 2024 to 2028. She spoke to being financial stewards through continuing service contracts as well as design-build, project oversight, and collaboration.

Regarding Savage Blvd, Councilman Pickett stated the sidewalk is lower than the yard and is under water in areas, and a resident's sprinkler system has rusted or stained the sidewalk. Ms. Seitter stated that was an opportunity for the team to workshop, as they can better educate their residents and dispatch a team to look at the sidewalk elevations. Mayor Martin stated there were several low lying areas on Savona as well.

Thomas Salvador, CIP & Sales Tax Project Group Manager, briefly explained how the sidewalks and swales work together to drain the water in periods of heavy rain. Mayor Martin stated they receive a lot of

questions from the public and suggested Mr. Salvador work with Communications on creating a PSA to explain why there will be water on the sidewalk at times.

Ms. Seitter presented the remaining projects in the 10-Year Sidewalk Master Plan from FY 2024/25 to FY 2027/28 as well as discussed policy and planning. Mayor Martin suggested looking at all of their park spaces for connectivity in 2028, as their goal is to have a park within ten minutes of every home.

Vice Mayor Caraballo updated the Council on a recent Westmoreland tour and requested a future Council discussion to address the missing sidewalk segments, traffic, The Port District, and potential funding opportunities. Mr. Schwerdt indicated Public Works will be presenting their thoughts and ideas in the near future on how they can address these situations.

Ms. Seitter and Ms. Parmelee explained how they could address the park spaces and connectivity, and indicated they could work together to help visualize existing parks, trails, and green spaces, and what is coming or planned.

Ms. Seitter continued her presentation and spoke to focusing on the future, future planning, and engagement & education.

Regarding Green River Parkway, Vice Mayor Caraballo inquired if any pedestrian trackers were on unpaved areas, as she thought that would be great data for traffic calming and future expansion of the Sidewalk Master Plan. She also inquired about the status of the Public Works Facility, to which Mr. Schwerdt stated the employees were located in four different locations at the moment, which makes it difficult. He mentioned that Placer AI and another database management company do point of destination, and Staff can use that information to help them focus on areas where they need to improve these routes. Mr. Schwerdt noted they are in the middle of negotiating the design contract and hope to bring that to the City Council in September. Mayor Martin stated anything that can speed up the design process is very important.

5.d Citywide Roadway Preservation and Resurfacing Plan 2024 Update

[2024-695](#)

Thomas Salvador, CIP & Sales Tax Project Group Manager, provided a PowerPoint presentation to update the Council on the Roadway Preservation and Resurfacing Plan for 2024. He explained this work has been done by the Capital Improvement and Half-Cent Sales Tax Team in the past; however, this work is being transferred to their Operations and

Maintenance Group / Thornhill Group, lead by Steve Jungjohan.

Mr. Salvador reviewed the objectives, roadway network in miles, increase in cost in the resurfacing plan and preservation, progress through 7/8/2024, and year-over-year comparison in dollars and miles. He also presented maps of the 10-year resurfacing plan.

Vice Mayor Caraballo inquired if the gas tax was sufficient for maintenance of the repavings required in the City. Mr. Salvador explained that it was not sufficient. Vice Mayor Caraballo stated there has been political pressure to share the gas tax with another entity, and she finds it to be a difficult conversation with the amount of roadway the City is required to maintain. City Manager Merejo added that the half-cent sales tax was contributing to the maintenance and has helped them to accomplish what they have thus far.

Mayor Martin stated the legislature has not addressed the declining revenues, when they know this has been an issue for a long time. For the record, Mayor Martin stated she will never support giving more money to the County or any other entity, because the City needs every penny to address their roads, given the number of miles they have to maintain and operate as the City continues to grow.

Vice Mayor Caraballo thought it was sometimes presented that the City is being selfish and has all of these resources. She stated these numbers show the City cannot give what it does not have. She stated they needed more funding opportunities in partnership with the County, as many counties have to fund and maintain themselves within city limits. Mayor Martin noted that the City of Port St. Lucie is over 65% of the entire County, which bears repeating.

Mr. Salvadore continued his presentation and discussed the budget for multilane resurfacing, the methodology for the current plan among the four Council districts, and moving to a plan for all of the roadways as one City.

Vice Mayor Caraballo thought the application of the plan would be a challenge and asked to see the first year broken down with the recommendations and then pivoting within the recommendations. She stated if they do not have any work to do in District 2, they should put that in the recommendations so Council can have a discussion. She felt it was important to deal with the worst first, but still have some form of equitable distribution in the system.

City Manager Merejo explained they have reached a point where they have

to start addressing the four-lane roadways used by everyone in the City.

Councilman Bonna stated he does not see district lines and they need to do what makes sense for the whole City. He indicated they are one Port St. Lucie and they should focus on the areas that need the most attention.

Mayor Martin agreed. She stated it is their job to explain to the residents they are one City. She explained that no matter where someone lives in the City, it is Council's job to bring any issues back to the City Manager. She stated pivoting in this program moving forward is exactly what they need to do.

Councilwoman Morgan stated that out of respect, if a Council member is helping a resident outside of their district, it has always been to check with that district's Council member, because they are probably already working the issue.

Regarding equitability, Mr. Salvador indicated they will be working on the 10-Year Plan this coming year and will come back with next year's update to show Council the differences and hear their feedback.

Vice Mayor Caraballo stated for her the policy needs to ensure equitable distribution whenever possible, as the political pressure will come and then they will have to pivot again. She explained they need to make sure they are touching as much as possible whenever possible in every district. Vice Mayor Caraballo stated they need to be able to respond, but agrees they are one City. She thought the multi-lane resurfacing would be a challenge they need to face as a community, which will entail education and distribution of funding accordingly.

Mayor Martin indicated that when she responds to questions, she explains the Council represents the entire City. She stated they needed to get away from saying "east vs. west" and "this district vs. that district" throughout the entire organization.

Vice Mayor Caraballo recommended saying "let me tell you what we are doing in your area," but asked how to respond when nothing is planned in an area for the next five years. Mayor Martin stated they have to tell the truth and show the data. However, if something comes up, the residents should bring it to their attention, so the City Manager can be informed and change the plan if need be.

There being no further discussion, Councilman Pickett moved to Adopt the Updated Citywide Roadway Preservation and Resurfacing Plan for 2024.

Councilwoman Morgan seconded the motion, which passed by voice vote (4-1), with Vice Mayor Caraballo dissenting.

5.e Presentation of Heart of PSL Awards

[2024-732](#)

Corrie Johnson, Human Resources, provided an overview of the nomination process, discussed the projects and accomplishments of the finalists, and announced the winners of the Employee Recognition Awards:

Team of the Year - City of Port St. Lucie and Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Lucie County

Project Manager of the Year - Emily Settler, CIP & Sales Tax Projects

Employee of the Year - Officer Adrienne Pietrzak

Department of the Year - Public Works

William Armstead, CEO, Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Lucie County, thanked the City and Council for their continued support of community youth.

Colt Schwerdt, Public Works Director, thanked the Council and the Public Works team for earning the award for Department of the Year.

(Clerk's Note: Mayor Martin called for a lunch break at 12:15 PM and the workshop resumed at 1:19 PM.)

5.f Traffic Calming Plan 2024 Update

[2024-691](#)

Antonio Balestrieri, Transportation Engineer, provided a PowerPoint presentation to update the Council on Traffic Calming. He reviewed the purpose and strategic objectives of traffic calming, Target Zero efforts to reduce fatalities, why speed matters, steps to neighborhood traffic calming, and to calm or not to calm. He noted Staff would be moving forward with the traffic calming projects on Whitmore Drive and Volucia Drive upon Council's approval.

Vice Mayor Caraballo thought this was an opportunity for the mobile City Hall, as the outreach could take place at or near the location of the project. Mr. Balestrieri indicated only six residents attended the preliminary design presentations at City Hall in January 2024.

Mr. Balestrieri resumed his presentation and discussed the traffic calming projects for FY 2024/25 as well as the annual and revised budgets. He indicated the five streets in the queue are Grand Drive, Atlantus Avenue, Thanksgiving Avenue, Bargello Avenue, and Sidonia Street.

Mayor Martin inquired about Thanksgiving Avenue from Best to Airoso, as it is the back way into the City Hall complex and will be eliminated with the Police Training Facility. She suggested monitoring that area as the traffic

should decrease as a result, to which Ms. Balestrieri agreed.

There being no further discussion, Councilman Pickett moved to approve the Traffic Calming construction for segments of Whitmore Drive and Volucia Drive as described, using FY 23/24 budgeted funds. Vice Mayor Caraballo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

5.g Swale Liner and Swale Rework Master Plan

[2024-645](#)

Louis Johnson, Assistant Director, Public Works, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the Swale Liner and Swale Rework Master Plan. He reviewed the background of the program, objectives and plan, as well as the outstanding 1-PSL requests and priorities.

Mayor Martin inquired about the additional crews to expedite the process for the approximate 1,300 new homes that were added between stopping and restarting the program. She stated she wanted the homes that have been waiting the longest to be addressed first.

Mr. Johnson and Mr. Schwerdt explained the swale issues are located in clusters, because if one home is having an issue others nearby are as well. A map indicating the level of priorities throughout the City was shown at this time.

Councilwoman Morgan stated the vacant lots do not have swale liners and cause the water flow to back up. Mr. Johnson indicated the thought process for vacant lots was to install the liners and address all of the issues in the area at one time to keep the water flowing. Councilwoman Morgan shared her experience with the water flow backing up, as her home does not have a swale liner.

Mr. Schwerdt explained the issue with the vacant lots is from the City's growth, as the contractors are installing the liners when they build new homes. He stated most of the 1-PSL requests are due to downstream issues from vacant lots, so it could take fixing up to ten lots to get the entire issue resolved.

Mr. Johnson presented a map and reviewed the proposed work areas by Council districts for 2024 to 2026. He stated they were establishing two crews to do this work, but could perhaps employ additional resources to expedite the process. Mr. Johnson also discussed the budget as well as the community outreach and education for the program.

Mayor Martin inquired if the \$2.8 million was included in the proposed budget of adding \$5.00 to the stormwater fee. City Manager Merejo

indicated it was included in part of the fee increase and the struggle is to add additional crews, which would increase the rate even more.

Vice Mayor Caraballo asked if there was an ordinance against parking in the swale and damaging the liner. Mr. Capezzuto indicated it would be a code violation and the City could issue citations or open a code case if the damage is being done by the property owner. Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested issuing citations when the City performs their Code sweeps.

Mayor Martin mentioned having the same issue at bus stops. Vice Mayor Caraballo stated that Walter Terrace is being used as a staging area for Floresta and the grass in the empty lot is completely gone. She asked that the area be fixed before the rainy season. Mr. Schwerdt indicated the contractor is responsible for restoring the lot and Public Works will see that it is done.

Councilwoman Morgan stated there are several bus stops in the northern part of the City and the parents are parking on the sidewalks, peoples' yards, etc., on Selvitz. She wondered how they could solve the issue and suggested putting up signs or reaching out to the School District. Mayor Martin stated that Savona and Paar is really bad as well, and there are several areas in the City that get like that. She suggested looking at the bus stop locations to try and address it going forward.

City Manager Merejo stated Staff could work with the School Board to see if there is a nearby plaza or area. He indicated that Treasure Coast is a good example, as vehicles park along Darwin and it is bad. Councilwoman Morgan indicated that all of the right-of-ways at Somerset College Prep are in bad shape, because the parents park on California down to the Motor Coach Resorts.

Mayor Martin stated the issue they have had in prior discussions with the School District is that they move the bus stops periodically, so they do not want to assist in finding a solution. She indicated the School District is moving towards addressing their transportation issues and putting more kids in the neighborhood schools because of cost, so there may be an opportunity.

Vice Mayor Caraballo thought the principals might have the jurisdiction over their schools. She stated that Morningside had a rule for parents where they had to go through the pickup line or wait until after dismissal to pick up their kids. Mayor Martin stated it would make life easier if all the schools had one policy, which is another opportunity to discuss.

Rates, Fees, and Charges

Kevin Matyjaszek, Utility Systems Director, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the Utility Systems Rates. He reviewed the capital charges, miscellaneous fees, and monthly rate studies. He explained the Utility is funded by an enterprise fund and does not receive any money from the general fund, millage, or taxes. Mr. Matyjaszek noted that Fitch Ratings improved their Utility bond credit rating from AA- to AA, which represents the fiscal responsibility of the City and Utility. He indicated Joe Williams with Raftelis Financial Consultants was available via Zoom and is the rate consultant who performed the comprehensive analysis and three different studies.

Mr. Matyjaszek discussed the increase in costs and proposed rates for residential well to water conversion fees, water connection fees for new residential construction within Special Assessment Districts (SADs)/Utility Service Areas (USAs) and outside of SADs/USAs, SW & NW annexation areas, and unincorporated county; residential septic conversion fees within SADs/USAs; and sewer connection fees for new residential construction for sewer with grinders in SADs/USAs and for gravity outside of SADs/USAs, SW & NW annexation areas, and unincorporated county.

Mayor Martin clarified they will now be discussing the rates for existing users. She stated the increases are based on the study that was done and are needed due to the impacts from the new growth and development. She indicated the City needs to recoup these costs from the developers.

(Clerk's Note: Councilwoman Morgan left the workshop at this point.)

City Manager Merejo added that the original established capacity numbers were based upon the 2006 bonds that were acquired at that time to build that capacity. He stated it is 15 to 20 years later and they need to expand the system and the cost has doubled or tripled. He also explained they have to bond the full amount of the dollars required to build the infrastructure, as it happens all at one time and cannot be phased in.

Mr. Matyjaszek reviewed the 5-Year Forecast of Proposed Monthly Usage Rates and stated they will look at the rates again next year. Mayor Martin explained the increases are approved year-to-year and not for the full five years. Mr. Matyjaszek discussed the reasons for the increases.

Mr. Matyjaszek concluded his presentation by showing the average monthly water and sewer bills compared to other Utilities, and reviewing the conclusions and recommendations.

City Manager Merejo stated the rate increase allows for the design of wells, water mains, and plans within the next two years, followed by construction of a major water facility in the western annexation area.

Councilman Bonna stated the cost and fees of new construction are not the same as five to ten years ago and charging yesterday's pricing would not be smart for the City. He explained a fee is different than a tax, as a fee needs to cover the service that is being delivered. He stated when the fee is not adjusted incrementally, it will adjust itself in a crisis.

There being no further discussion, Councilman Pickett moved to approve the Adjustments to Certain Utility Systems Department Rates, Fees, and Charges. Vice Mayor Caraballo seconded the motion, which passed by voice vote. (Clerk's Note: Councilwoman Morgan was not present for the vote.)

At this point, Mayor Martin commended the team. She stated they are constantly planning for the future, whether it is 10-year plan for their sidewalks, 20-year look at stormwater, or 50 to 100 year plan for utilities to ensure there is a future water supply and infrastructure.

5.i Utility Systems Department - Capital Improvement Plan
Update

[2024-692](#)

Kevin Matyjaszek, Utility Systems Director, provided a PowerPoint presentation to update the Council on the Capital Improvement Projects for the Utility Systems Department. He noted that Utilities was working on approximately \$48 million in capital projects this year and estimating \$236 million in projects over the next five years. Mr. Matyjaszek reviewed the utility work necessitated by roadway projects, the McCarty Ranch Extension Water Quality Restoration Area 5, McCarty Ranch Preserve Water Quality Restoration Area 7-A, Prineville Deep Injection Well #2, RO Well F-19, and RO Wells F-37, F-38 and F-39. He also discussed the Western Raw Water Main; Becker Road Water and Low-Pressure Main Improvements; Darwin & Becker Parallel Sewer Force Main; Southport 24" Sewer Force Main; Mariposa Force Main; and Westport Wastewater Treatment Plant Nutrient Reduction Improvements.

Ms. Parmelee spoke to the lobbying efforts by Council for grant and appropriation funding for some of the Utility projects.

6. Adjourn

There being no further business, the workshop recessed at 3:00 PM.

Sally Walsh, City Clerk

Traci Mehl, Deputy City Clerk