

City of Port St. Lucie

City Council

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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Monday, July 8, 2024

1:00 PM

Council Chambers, City Hall

1. Meeting Called to Order

A Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Port St. Lucie was called to order by Mayor Martin at 1:03 PM on July 8, 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
Vice Mayor Jolien Caraballo
Councilwoman Stephanie Morgan
Councilman Dave Pickett
Councilman Anthony Bonna

3. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance

The City Clerk delivered the Invocation, and Mayor Martin led the assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Proclamations and Special Presentations

There were no Proclamations or Special Presentations.

5. Public to be Heard

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

6. Additions or Deletions to Agenda and Approval of Agenda

There being no discussion, Councilman Bonna moved to approve the Agenda. Vice Mayor Caraballo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice

vote.

7. Approval of Consent Agenda

There being no discussion, Vice Mayor Caraballo moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilman Bonna seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

- 7.a** Approval of the June 10, 2024 Special City Council Meeting Minutes [2024-668](#)

This Consent item was Approved the Consent Agenda.

- 7.b** Approve a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between Indian River State College, School of Continuing Education (IRSC-SCE), and the City of Port St. Lucie for the Port St. Lucie Business Accelerator Program for Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Fall 2024, and Spring 2025 [2024-629](#)

This Consent item was Approved the Consent Agenda.

- 7.c** Approve the Renewal Agreements for the Provision of a School Resource Officer Provision at Somerset Academy St. Lucie and Somerset College Preparatory Academy [2024-637](#)

This Consent item was Approved the Consent Agenda.

- 7.d** Approve a Major Site Plan for Biltmore Properties (P24-007). [2024-640](#)

This Consent item was Approved the Consent Agenda.

- 7.e** Approve a Preliminary Plat and Construction Plans for LTC Ranch Pod 2 (P23-231). [2024-672](#)

This Consent item was Approved the Consent Agenda.

8. Second Reading of Ordinances

- 8.a** Ordinance 24-35, an Ordinance Rezoning Approximately 0.46-Acres of Land, Located South of SW Gatlin Boulevard, on the West side of SW Fondura Road, from Single-Family Residential (RS-2) Zoning District to Service Commercial (CS) for Property Legally Described as Port St. Lucie Section Thirty-One, Block 1708, Lots 18 And 19 (P24-053). [2024-558](#)

The City Clerk read Ordinance 24-35 aloud by title only.

There being no discussion, Councilman Pickett moved to approve Ordinance 24-35. Vice Mayor Caraballo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

- 8.b** Ordinance 24-36, an Ordinance of the City of Port St. Lucie Adopting a Master Sign Program for the Port District (P23-116). [2024-612](#)

The City Clerk read Ordinance 24-36 aloud by title only.

There being no discussion, Councilman Bonna moved to approve Ordinance 24-36. Vice Mayor Caraballo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

9. Other Public Hearings

There were no Other Public Hearings to be heard.

10. First Reading of Ordinances, Public Hearing

- 10.a** Ordinance 24-37, Public Hearing, an Ordinance Amending the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Port St. Lucie to Include a Large-Scale Amendment to the Future Land Use Map to Change the Future Land Use Designation for Approximately 150 Acres from Utility (U) to Light Industrial (LI) for a Parcel of Land Legally Described in Attached Exhibit "A" and Generally Located South of Midway Road, Northwest of Glades Cut-Off Road, and Immediately West of McCarty Road. (P24-057). [2024-654](#)

The City Clerk read Ordinance 24-37 aloud by title only.

Bridget Kean, Planning and Zoning, provided a PowerPoint presentation on this large scale future land use map amendment for the City of Port St. Lucie Glades WWTP Adjacent Lands. She stated the request is to amend the Future Land Use for approximately 150 acres of City owned land from the designation of Utility (U) to Light Industrial (LI), so the subject property can be rezoned to the Warehouse Industrial Zoning District (WI). Ms. Kean showed the location of the subject property, surrounding uses, and proposed future land use. She discussed the background and justification, adequate public facilities analysis, and findings. Ms. Kean stated the Planning and Zoning Department staff found the petition to be consistent with the intent and direction of the City's Comprehensive Plan and recommends approval. She indicated the Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval at their July 2, 2024, meeting.

Mayor Martin opened the Public Hearing.

1. Attorney Lee Dobbins with the Dean Mead Law Firm stated he was representing GreenPointe, the developer of Live Wylder, a residential

community, and provided Council with a map showing nearby developments. Mr. Dobbins spoke to the future uses and zoning of the subject property as well as potential truck traffic through nearby residential areas. He asked that the item be tabled to allow time for the residential stakeholders to meet with City staff regarding putting restrictions on the site.

Ms. Kean noted that this was a transmittal hearing, so they could take Mr. Dobbins concerns into advisement and meet with him without impacting the transmittal.

Vice Mayor Caraballo explained the City's goal is to have minimal impacts and this project will not have any impact on Wylder or the surrounding properties. She stated Mr. Dobbins comments will be noted and considered as they move through the process. Councilman Pickett and Mayor Martin agreed with Vice Mayor Caraballo's comments.

There being no further discussion, Councilman Bonna moved to approve Ordinance 24-37. Vice Mayor Caraballo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

11. Resolutions

- 11.a** Resolution 24-R39, Authorizing the City Manager to Enter into and Execute a Local Agency Program Agreement with the State of Florida Department of Transportation for Federal Funds Concerning the Construction of Intersection Improvements at Southwest Gatlin Boulevard and Southwest Savona Boulevard; Providing for Conflict; Providing for Severability; Providing an Effective Date.

[2024-599](#)

The City Clerk read Resolution 24-R39 aloud by title only.

Councilman Pickett moved to approve Resolution 24-R39. Councilwoman Morgan seconded the motion.

Under discussion, Mayor Martin stated she was looking forward to this project, as the intersection is heavily traveled and needs improvements. Vice Mayor Caraballo agreed and stated she was looking forward to the plans and recommendations from the Public Works team on how to make the adequate improvements. Mayor Martin indicated that Savona Blvd has several issues and she will be looking at that road, as well as Paar and Darwin, with Public Works and the City Manager.

The Council voted and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote to

approve Resolution 24-R39.

- 11.b** Resolution 24-R40, a Resolution of the City Council of Port St. Lucie Approving an Economic Incentive Packet for Project Loop; Providing for Conflicts; Providing for Severability; and Providing an Effective Date.

[2024-647](#)

The City Clerk read Resolution 24-R40 aloud by title only.

Elijah Wooten, Economic Development Administrator, announced a new economic development project. He stated Project Loop is a manufacturing operation that will be located in an existing building within Legacy Park at Tradition and occupy approximately 40,000 square feet. Mr. Wooten indicated the company manufactures electrical equipment and systems for the maritime pleasure industry, and will create 61 new jobs in Port St. Lucie with an annual average wage of \$53,000, plus benefits. He stated the capital investment would be \$1,067,000 in City buildout and \$820,000 in equipment. Mr. Wooten indicated the recommended incentives include an ad valorem exemption of five years at 100%, an impact fee mitigation based on \$3,500 per new job created, and expedited Site Plan review and permitting. He stated the same request is being made of St. Lucie County, in addition to a job growth incentive grant.

Wes McCurry, Sr. Vice President of the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County, presented a PowerPoint presentation on Project Loop, which will be located at I-95 and Becker Road. He reviewed the project scope and discussed the economic impact analysis of approximately \$38 million. Mr. McCurry noted the company was seeking the same incentive package, plus a job incentive grant, from the County. He stated the County approved a resolution committing to the package at their July 2, 2024, meeting. Mr. McCurry announced the company, Marine Digital Integrators, is a division of Dometic, which is a global company that specializes in many different product lines for the outdoor industry, RVs, boating, camping, etc.

Vice Mayor Caraballo highlighted the benefits of having this company in Port St. Lucie and clarified the incentive was only for intangible property taxes and not for the full ad valorem incentives. She explained the economic impact compared to what is being asked of the City, is a very low threshold.

Councilman Pickett stated he likes the package that was brought forward, as it is not fair when a company relocates to Port St. Lucie, creates 50 to 75 jobs, and asks for 100% tax abatement. He indicated there needs to be a balance and he will keep this in mind for future projects.

Mayor Martin stated she shared similar concerns as Councilman Pickett. She explained economic development is important, but that does not mean every entity receives the same incentives or package as it depends on the size and scale. Mayor Martin reiterated this was for intangibles only and not for ad valorem taxes. She stated she will be looking at this closely going forward, to ensure there is a harmonious balance.

There being no further discussion, Councilman Pickett moved to approve Resolution 24-R40. Vice Mayor Caraballo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

12. Unfinished Business

12.a Approval of Employment Agreement with Richard Berrios

[2024-646](#)

Natalie Cabrera, Human Resources Director, stated at the June 19, 2024, Special City Council Meeting, the Council directed the City Manager and Human Resources to negotiate with Interim City Attorney Berrios the terms of employment as City Attorney. She indicated Council has been provided with a copy of the negotiated agreement. Ms. Cabrera stated that Staff recommends the Council move to authorize Mayor Martin to execute the agreement on their behalf.

Vice Mayor Caraballo moved to approve the Employment Agreement with Richard Berrios. Councilman Pickett seconded the motion.

Under discussion, Councilwoman Morgan questioned when the City Attorney annual review and increase would take place. Ms. Cabrera stated the annual review and increase would happen at the City Council Winter Workshop in the second quarter of the fiscal year or at another City Council Meeting Workshop as determined by the Council. She indicated the City Attorney will get the cost of living on October 1st, and the Council has the ability to award merit at the performance reviews.

Councilman Bonna explained he would like the contracts to state "shall" and not "may" review on an annual basis. Councilwoman Morgan stated her understanding is that "shall" means you shall do something and "may" means that you may or may not do it. Senior Deputy City Attorney Elizabeth Hertz indicated one was more discretionary than the other, and it was up to Council based on their desire. Mayor Martin stated it did not matter to her as the performance reviews are done every year. Vice Mayor Caraballo recalled that the language used to say "shall" and was changed to "may," because "shall" made it so the review had to be during the Winter Retreat and "shall" provided for scheduling flexibility. She indicated she thought the language was fine as is. Councilman Pickett stated he feels

the performance reviews will get done, as Human Resources notifies them when it is time to review the City Manager and City Attorney.

The Council voted and the motion passed by voice vote (4-1) to approve the Employment Agreement with Richard Berrios, with Councilman Bonna dissenting.

13. New Business

- 13.a** Request to authorize City staff to take all actions necessary before St. Lucie County Boards, including but not limited to the Board of County Commissioners, to preserve the City's interests with respect to applications for projects involving the properties known as Rainbow Groves, Neill Farm Estates and Palermo Estates.

[2024-676](#)

Mayor Martin explained this request has been done before with communities outside the City's boundaries, where the City has had to consider taking a position to protect itself from any potential impacts.

There being no further discussion, Vice Mayor Caraballo moved to approve Item 13.a. Councilman Pickett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote to approve the Request to authorize City staff to take all actions necessary before St. Lucie County Boards, including but not limited to the Board of County Commissioners, to preserve the City's interests with respect to applications for projects involving the properties known as Rainbow Groves, Neill Farm Estates and Palermo Estates.

14. City Manager's Report

Teresa Lamar-Sarno, Assistant City Manager, reported on Freedom Fest, which was held on July 4, 2024, at the MidFlorida Event Center. She indicated Placer AI is stating that 9,500 people attended Freedom Fest and the Ultimate Experience sold out at just over 500 attendees. Ms. Lamar-Sarno also reported that 18,000 people visited The Port during its first eight days of opening.

Ms. Lamar-Sarno introduced two new interns: Sally Rose Savage from UCLA who will be assisting the City Manager's Office, and Nicki Zheng, a Harvard fellow who will be working on increasing access to nature in the City. Mayor Martin welcomed both interns.

15. Councilmembers Report on Committee Assignments

Councilwoman Morgan reported that she attended the Turning Over of the Keys to the Historical Museum.

Councilman Pickett reported that he attended the Pickleball Club Ribbon Cutting

Ceremony, Turning Over of the Keys to the Historical Museum, Caribbean Independence Celebration Service, and Freedom Fest.

Vice Mayor Caraballo reported on her ride along with Lt. Wilson of the Port St. Lucie Police Department.

Councilman Bonna reported that he attended the Turning Over of the Keys to the Historical Museum and Freedom Fest. Regarding the Employment Agreement for the City Attorney, Councilman Bonna clarified his vote was against the language of the agreement and not towards Mr. Berrios.

Mayor Martin reported that she attended the Turning Over of the Keys to the Historical Museum, and welcomed the Pickle Ball Club to Port St. Lucie.

16. Public to be Heard - (if necessary as determined by City Council at conclusion of public to be heard)
17. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:43 PM.

Sally Walsh, City Clerk

Traci Mehl, Deputy City Clerk