

City of Port St. Lucie

City Council Workshop

Meeting Minutes - Final

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, Sr., Councilman, District III

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Monday, April 21, 2025	9:00 AM	Council Chambers, City Hall
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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 April 21, 2025, 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 Caraballo
Councilwoman Morgan
Councilman Pickett
Councilman Bonna

3. Pledge of Allegiance

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

4. Public to be Heard

No one signed up to speak during this portion of the Agenda.

5. New Business

5.a Provide Feedback on Proposed Guideline Updates for the City's Convenient Drop-off Center and Provide Direction for the Center's Future.

[2025-252](#)

Mariana Feldpausch, Director of the Office of Solid Waste, presented proposed updates for the City's Convenient Drop-Off Center in a PowerPoint presentation. She indicated that the new proposed guidelines

would include reducing the operating hours, closing at 4:00 PM Wednesday through Saturday and at 2:00 PM on Sundays, new regulations prohibiting small items, bagged trash, box trucks/U-hauls, yard waste, and a maximum of three-monthly trips.

Councilman Bonna questioned how the proposed changes would help with the operational costs, to which Director Feldpausch advised that they need to collect additional data. Mayor Martin inquired about the amount of cost savings with the elimination of yard waste, to which Director Feldpausch indicated she would need to report back. Councilman Bonna expressed that he would like to know what the cost savings will be to the City.

Director Feldpausch stated that the total disposal costs were \$677,000 but could provide a cost savings estimate by eliminating the yard waste. Mayor Martin advised that she needed additional data and requested all the information before the Council at one time. Councilman Bonna advised that he needed additional data to defend any decision with data and be able to respond to the residents with their decision.

Mayor Martin indicated she had an issue with eliminating services and not saving City funds and would likely table the item.

Vice Mayor Caraballo advised that she was comfortable moving forward with the item and inquired if the site was being operated with the Solid Waste Fee collected by the residents, to which Director Feldpausch responded in the negative. She explained that this facility was being operated by the General Fund, and it would be an unknown operating cost every year. Director Feldpausch indicated the site was slated to operate in next year's budget at \$3,000,000. Vice Mayor Caraballo shared that many residents shared that in their experience, the convenient drop-off site was not convenient because they had to load up their items and take them to the site themselves. She indicated that many residents preferred the curbside option, but do not know that the FCC offers that possibility. Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested possibly distributing marketing materials from FCC to advise the residents of this possibility, rather than them coming to the City drop-off site. She also suggested providing the residents with additional education as to the County Landfill information. Vice Mayor Caraballo advised that she was open to making a decision on the item today based on this year's budgetary constraints.

Mayor Martin indicated she did not see cost savings since she noticed that there would be additional bi-weekly service for bulk pick up. She advised that another option was for the residents to pay for the usage of the drop-off site, which she did not understand, as the resident currently

already pays the Solid Waste Fee, to which Director Feldpausch responded that the fee would be to cover the costs associated with operating the site. Mayor Martin stated that folks were already upset about the current Solid Waste Fee and having them pay at the drop-off site would mean they'd be paying additional costs. Mayor Martin indicated the need to complete the entire presentation.

Director Feldpausch presented the remainder of the PowerPoint presentation. She showed the future options for the drop-off site.

Mayor Martin inquired about the finalization of the County Disposal Costs, to which City Manager Merejo advised that the fee had not yet been finalized.

Vice Mayor Caraballo advised that she did see it as cost savings and explained that in Option 1, it would require the residents to pay per visit, and the General Fund and Solid Waste Fee is paid by the entirety of the City's population. She explained that currently, the population is paying for the additional drop-site that they may never use, and the cost savings would go to the entirety of the City. And those individuals who would like to take their items to the drop-site would have to pay the additional fee, like how they would pay for the additional Bulk Waste pickup at their home or going to the County Landfill. Vice Mayor Caraballo indicated that she saw this as a cost-saving option. She stated she was willing to see if the Council wished to have additional discussions.

Councilman Bonna advised that his point was to demonstrate what the cost estimate figures will be and have all the data before him before making that decision. He proposed possibly deciding on the operational hours and deciding the future of what will happen to the drop-site location, to which Mayor Martin agreed with Councilman Bonna.

Councilwoman Morgan advised that the drop-off site was intended to be temporary and advised that the residents now expected the service. She advised that the Council should have acted on this sooner.

Councilwoman Morgan stated that many residents do not use the drop-off site, and it's costing the City \$3,000,000 for a year for a service she did not use. She stated she did not know how many residents used the facility. She questioned the count captured by the presentation but noted how many of those visits were duplicate or repeat visitors. Councilwoman Morgan advised that the current number of visitors was about 72,000 users, to which Director Feldpausch indicated that about half were repeat users. She indicated that from the beginning, Contractors had been taking

advantage of the City drop-off site. Councilwoman Morgan stated she believed the drop-site location was horrible. She asked how someone could have so much bulk waste. Councilwoman Morgan expressed that it was not fair to her or any taxpayer that other people have 10 times the amount of bulk waste that she has. She indicated the need for the resident to order a roll-off or take it to the dump. Councilwoman Morgan agreed to reduce the hours, but would rather do away with the drop-off site, as it is not fair for all city residents.

Councilman Pickett stated that the convenient drop-off site was not so convenient for the City anymore. He advised that it had been four years since the initiation of how the City should operate the site. Councilman Pickett explained that by reducing the hours, all that would happen would be folks saving their items for a later drop-off time. He advised that the site was intended for an emergency site in 2021 due to issues with Waste Pro but continued to waste City funds to operate. Councilman Pickett stated that if you use the drop-off site, you should pay for the service. He added that those who do not use the site should not be held financially responsible for the site's operating costs. Councilman Pickett advised that the site should be a self-sustainable drop-off facility. He agreed with Councilwoman Morgan's comment relating to the location of the site and suggested that the site be moved to the old FPL facility. Councilman Pickett suggested getting rid of the site altogether.

Mayor Martin added that there were no cost savings in Option 2. She stated that if the service was being increased, then there would not be cost savings and requested additional data and figures. Mayor Martin advised that she was okay to discuss the operational hours of the site. She stated that unless the City goes back to the original contractual services, there would not be any savings.

Councilman Bonna discussed the possibility of scheduling bulk waste on demand. He explained he rarely used bulk service and only utilized three or four bulk pickups per year. Councilman Bonna inquired if it was ever researched if an opportunity to give residents 6 pick-ups per year, but on demand as needed. Director Feldpausch responded that she spoke to FCC and they stated that they did not have the software. She explained that for them to complete additional services, they would need another year to get the necessary trucks and personnel. Director Feldpausch advised that FCC stated that it would not be a viable option to get the software, train the staff, and the end of the contract with the City would be too close. Councilman Bonna asked if it was expensive software, to which Director Feldpausch stated that she did not go into the cost detail with FCC. She explained that this was not something they currently do and that

they would need additional software and personnel to be able to do it.

Mayor Martin inquired if they were willing to do the on-demand service. She indicated that she liked that idea. Director Feldpausch stated she would have further discussions with FCC but in previous conversations they reported back that it would not be a viable option.

Councilwoman Morgan questioned why it was not a viable option, to which Director Feldpausch stated they currently cannot provide on-demand service due to the lack of software, personnel, and the contract ending soon after.

Mayor Martin questioned why FCC would need additional personnel if the City would be doing away with the monthly bulk service, to which Director Feldpausch stated they would need administrative personnel to schedule the on-demand bulk service.

Director Feldpausch clarified that she would discuss with FCC the possibility of doing away with the monthly bulk waste pickups and having residents schedule on-demand bulk waste pick up.

Councilman Bonna suggested that every resident would get 4 or 6 on-demand bulk waste pick-ups per year, but to be scheduled when the resident wants them and needs them. He stated he only utilizes these bulk waste pickups 3 or 4 times a year.

Councilman Pickett added that he did not feel this was a big deal to execute and did not find the task difficult. He noted it would be a matter of them agreeing to do it.

Chief Assistant City Manager Teresa Lamar-Sarno noted that what was previously relayed to FCC was to add the on-demand service to the monthly bulk day pick-up. She clarified that the intent was to eliminate the once-a-month bulk day pick-up and only provide on-demand services, to which Councilman Bonna responded in the affirmative. He requested to review the usage data and try to determine if most residents use 4 or 6 pick-ups a year. Councilman Bonna suggested utilizing a certain number of free pick-ups, and anything after the free on-demand services, then it would require the customer to pay an additional fee. He stated it was the Council's responsibility to meet the needs of most residents as it pertained to bulk waste pickup.

Mayor Martin and Vice Mayor Caraballo agreed with Councilman Bonna's suggestion.

City Manager Merejo inquired if the City Council wished to set a date as to when they would like to sunset the facility, to which Mayor Martin indicated that they needed additional data and the input they requested so that they could make a final decision.

City Manager Merejo asked if the City Council wished to request any additional information, to which Councilman Bonna requested to find out if the increase in usage was from the same individuals who are utilizing the service more than before.

Councilman Pickett and Mayor Martin agreed with the request. Councilman Pickett indicated the need to know how many customers are using the facility and how many of those are repeat visitors.

Director Feldpausch asked the City Council if they wished to know the increase in new users to the facility, to which Councilman Pickett and Mayor Martin responded in the negative.

Councilman Bonna stated he would like to know where the increase was coming from, if it was from a repeat of the existing user base or entirely new users to the facility.

Vice Mayor Caraballo requested a chart of all the driver's license visits that shows how many times they have visited the facility. She stated that she agreed with Councilman Bonna's suggestion of on-demand pickup.

Mayor Martin asked if the City Council wished to have everything come back before them again or if they wished to move forward with the proposed guideline updates.

Councilman Pickett moved to approve the Regulations Update Proposed and the Proposed Operational Hours. Councilwoman Morgan seconded the motion. Under discussion, Mayor Martin inquired about the Communications Marketing Plan to advise the public that the drop-off site will no longer accept yard waste, to which Director Feldpausch stated that they would update the flyer with the new guidelines and distribute from April 25th to May 11th, set up a vehicle messaging board at Crosstown and Cameo, update the Office of Solid Waste website and activate the City's emergency banner on the main City website from April 25th to May 11th. She advised that the new guidelines would be effective May 14th. Mayor Martin inquired if there would be press releases and asked to share them on social media. Councilman Pickett suggested a 30-day notice. The Council Members agreed. Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested June 1st. The

Council Members agreed. Director Feldpausch inquired about the operational hours, to which Mayor Martin indicated the motion was done but needed additional information under discussion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Chief Assistant City Manager Teresa Lamar-Sarno asked if they were to bring back Option 3 with the additional FCC questions or the entire slide with additional data requested by the City Council. Mayor Martin requested that all options be presented.

It was the consensus of the City Council for staff to bring back additional data regarding all options for the presentation and for staff to have further conversations with FCC regarding the elimination of the City's current once-a-month Bulk Waste Pickup, moving to a TBA number of Bulk Waste Demand Pickups throughout the year.

5.b Hear a Presentation of the St. Lucie County Vulnerability Assessment

[2025-340](#)

Sandra Bogan, St. Lucie County Innovation Resilience and Performance Division, introduced Tetra Tech, who provided a presentation of the draft of the St. Lucie County Regional Resilience Vulnerability Assessment.

Georgia Vince, Director of Business Development for Tetra Tech, provided the City Council with an overview of the purpose of the St. Lucie County Vulnerability Assessment.

Attorney Erin Deady gave the City Council an overview of the Resilient Florida Program.

Vice Mayor Caraballo stated she appreciated that they were working together with the County to review and plan for the City.

Councilman Bonna also thanked the County for their collaboration and suggested that the City join the American Flood Coalition.

It was the consensus of the City Council to have the City join the American Flood Coalition.

Mayor Martin thanked the County for their presentation and spoke regarding potential improvements to Walton Road and California Boulevard.

Councilman Pickett suggested raising Walton Road to avoid flooding in the area.

5.C Review Federal Appropriations Priorities[2025-408](#)

Kate Parmelee, Deputy City Manager, thanked the City Council for their continual advocacy to the City's Federal Appropriations requests. She demonstrated the previous year's appropriations requests and asked the City Council if they wished to reprioritize their requests based on the current list.

Mayor Martin shared that after speaking to Congressman Brian Mast he was supportive of the Real-Time Information Crime Center.

Vice Mayor Caraballo was supportive of moving forward with prioritizing the real-time operations center.

Councilman Bonna asked for Chief of Police Leo Niemczyk's opinion, to which Chief Niemczyk stated that in a previous conversation with City Manager Merejo they discussed possible location alternatives where there would not be a need to build a new building for the operations center.

City Manager Merejo indicated that they would prefer to move forward and request the appropriation of \$600,000 for the Real-Time Information Crime Center.

Councilman Pickett asked if the Police Mobile Command Post was warranted, to which Chief Niemczyk explained it would not just be utilized for crime scenes but also for City events and have a mini police headquarters on scene.

Vice Mayor Caraballo stated she felt the Real-Time Operations Center was more critical now.

Chief Niemczyk advised that the Real-Time Information Crime Center would be the priority project.

Deputy City Manager Parmelee advised that this appropriation would not cover building expenses but rather software. She recommended changing the name of the project to "Real-Time Public Safety Operation Center".

Vice Mayor Caraballo and Mayor Martin shared that they preferred to seek an appropriation request for the Veterans Memorial Stormwater Quality Retrofit.

Deputy City Manager Parmelee inquired if it would still be the same ranking for the appropriations: 1. Transportation, 2. CDBG, 3. Public Safety, and 4. Water.

Mayor Martin stated that she found it difficult that they would be supportive of a Pedestrian Improvement Pathway. Vice Mayor Caraballo agreed. The Council agreed to change CDBG to fourth in the ranking. Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested tying together CDBG and Water, to which Deputy City Manager Parmelee responded that she would have to check with the lobbyist to find out if it was a possibility. She asked if it was not recommended to combine to keep the items separate.

Vice Mayor Caraballo moved to approve the FY 2026 Submitted Federal Appropriations, with Item #2 being moved to Item #4 and potentially combined with Item #4 pending the recommendation from the City's Lobbying Team. However, if they recommend keeping the items separate, then the City Council will keep the items separate. Councilman Pickett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

6. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:22 AM.

Sally Walsh, City Clerk

Daisy Ruiz, Deputy City Clerk