

City of Port St. Lucie

Special City Council

Meeting Minutes

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

Gregory J. Oravec, Mayor

Stephanie Morgan, Councilwoman, District I
John Carvelli, Councilman, District II
Shannon Martin, Vice Mayor, District III
Jolien Caraballo, Councilwoman, District IV
Dave Pickett, Councilman Elect, District II

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Monday, November 16, 2020

1:30 PM

Council Chambers, City Hall

1. Meeting Called to Order

A Special Virtual Meeting of the CITY COUNCIL of the City of Port St. Lucie was called to order by Vice Mayor Martin on November 16, 2020, at 1:30 PM, at Port St. Lucie City Hall, 121 S.W. Port St. Lucie Boulevard, Port St. Lucie, Florida.

2. Roll Call

Council Members

Present:

Mayor Gregory J. Oravec (arrived 1:52 PM)

Vice Mayor Shannon Martin

Councilwoman Jolien Caraballo

Councilman John Carvelli

Councilwoman Stephanie Morgan

3. Pledge of Allegiance

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

4. Public to be Heard

No one signed up to speak under this item.

5. Special Presentations

- 5.a** Presentation from the United Way of St Lucie County regarding the Born Learning Trail Partnership with Cleveland Clinic.

[2020-866](#)

Elijah Wooten, Business Navigator, City Manager's Office, and member of the United Way Board, introduced Jessica Parrish, President & CEO of the United Way of St. Lucie County. He stated that United Way has a program called the Born Learning Trail, which is a series of activities located in parks for children and their families. He said the trail will be sponsored locally by the Cleveland Clinic.

Ms. Parrish provided a presentation on the partnership between the United Way and Cleveland Clinic. She explained that United Way has not been hosting several events due to COVID, so they came up with a volunteer engagement idea for the Born Learning Trail.

Ms. Parrish stated the Born Learning Trail has been with the United Way worldwide since 2005 and is a national public engagement campaign. She said they utilize the Born Learning Trail to engage local organizations, as they essentially sponsor the cost of the trail and provide the volunteers to install it.

Ms. Parrish stated the Born Learning Trail is a series of ten interactive signs that offer fun learning activities that are mainly geared towards younger children in Pre-K through first grade and their families. She said the trails are mostly put in parks along other trails or near community centers where families tend to gather for activities.

Ms. Parrish showed Council an example of some of the activities and signs. She stated that all activities are painted on the sidewalk, so there is no apparatus or equipment installation. She said the signs provide explanations and instructions, in English and Spanish, on how to perform the activity.

Ms. Parrish indicated that currently there are only four trails on the Treasure Coast, which are all in Indian River County. She said this would be the first of its kind in St. Lucie and Martin counties.

Ms. Parrish stated some proposed locations per the Cleveland Clinic are Woodland Trails Park, Jessica Clinton Park, and Winterlakes Park. She said that the team will tour all three locations, get their feedback, and recruit the volunteers via Cleveland Clinic in January 2021 to install

the trail. She stated the actual installation and ribbon cutting will be done in late January/early February 2021.

Ms. Parrish stated that United Way purchases the trail kit and the volunteers install it. She said the partnership with the City is simply the permission to install the trail in their park. She noted that no construction permits are needed.

The Council members expressed their desire for this concept and asked Ms. Parrish to work with staff to develop some ideas for an educational piece or trail in Pioneer Park, Woodland Trails Park, and the Crosstown pond area.

5.b Village Green Drive Corridor Revitalization Project Update

[2020-902](#)

(Clerk's Note: Mayor Oravec joined the meeting during the presentation of this item.)

Jennifer Davis, CRA Project Manager, stated that one of the strategic priorities for the City is Goal 1: Clean, Safe & Beautiful. She said, as such, the City engaged MARLIN Engineering to work on the Village Green Drive corridor revitalization project. She stated that Christina Fermin, Project Manager with MARLIN Engineering, will present remotely and provide a project status update. She said that Frank Knott is available to answer any questions as well.

Ms. Fermin stated that MARLIN Engineering has been tasked with managing the Village Green Drive master plan. She said the project team includes the City of Port St. Lucie, with MARLIN Engineering leading the master planning efforts, in partnership with Cotleur & Hearing and Firefly Public Relations & Marketing.

Ms. Fermin provided an overview of the project, data collection, public and stakeholder involvement, and the next steps in their project planning. She stated that Task 1 will be ongoing throughout the process, as it includes public involvement, meetings and coordination. She said that Task 2, which is data collection and analysis, is in the process of being completed. She stated that they will be moving onto Task 3, the conceptual design phase, shortly. She said that Task 4 is finalizing the master plan after their second public meeting sometime in February 2021.

Ms. Fermin showed Council a table illustrating the raw data that was collected over a 72-hour period and the average daily traffic along

Village Green Drive. She noted that the average speed is higher than the posted speed limit of 30 mph. She stated the average daily traffic south of Walton is around 4,000 vehicles and north of Walton it is between 11,000 and 13,000 vehicles.

Ms. Fermin reviewed the crash data from 2015 to 2019. She stated there has been a total of 114 crashes along Village Green Drive with four involving bicyclists and one involving a pedestrian. She said none of the crashes resulted in a fatality. She stated that rear-end crashes were the most common.

Ms. Fermin explained that the turning movement counts involved setting up video equipment at the intersections. She said the data was taken the week of September 14, 2020, and recorded during the morning, afternoon and evening peak periods. She stated that US-1 and Village Green Drive had the highest amount of traffic at over 26,000 vehicles, as well as the highest amount of bicycle activity, with 67% of that traffic traveling north and south along US-1. She said that Walton Road and Village Green Drive is also a signalized intersection and had approximately 8,000 vehicles during this period, with about 40% of the traffic traveling westbound. She stated the intersection at Tiffany and Village Green, an unsignalized intersection, had about 3,000 vehicles during this time. She said this intersection had the highest amount of pedestrian activity, which they believe is related to the Woodstork Trail.

Ms. Fermin stated that the team has created a project website for public and stakeholder involvement and outreach. She said it includes a link to an online survey from which they have received over 300 responses. She stated that they have been coordinating with the City on utilizing social media and e-mail blasts to get the information disseminated.

Ms. Fermin stated that on September 10, 2020, her team visited the industrial park along Village Green Drive, including the MidFlorida Event Center. She said they met with businesses and handed out flyers to inform them of the project and the meetings as well as to solicit their feedback. She stated the businesses expressed concern about lengthy road closures due to construction; commented on branding with monumental architecture for area recognition, as a lot of people are not aware of the Village Green Drive corridor; and stated that sidewalks are welcome for their employees using transit. Regarding Niemeyer Circle,

the businesses commented on cut-through traffic and folks avoiding Village Green Drive due to the speed traps. She stated another comment suggested creating a walking path through Hogpen Slough.

Ms. Fermin stated that a walking audit was held on October 1, 2020, which included their project partners with the City, TPO, and School District. She said they met at the MidFlorida Event Center and split into two groups at the Village Green corridor. She stated they discussed and experienced how the vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians utilize the corridor. She said the feedback and comments related to sidewalks, trees and shade, ADA accessibility, benches, streetlighting, safer crossings, a gateway feature, exercise equipment, an interactive trail, wayfinding, recycling bins, etc.

Ms. Fermin stated their first virtual public meeting was held on October 8, 2020. She said their PowerPoint included an overview of the project and the data they had collected to date. She stated they also provided some education and inspiration for the different types of pedestrian, bicycle, transit, vehicular, and landscape improvements that could be done. She explained that they provided some polling questions as well, which will be used to gain additional feedback. She stated their second public meeting will give folks the opportunity to vote on their preferred design alternative as well as provide feedback.

Ms. Fermin reviewed the results of the polling questions: 100% drive, 57% walk, 435 bicycle Village Green Drive; City Center is the greatest community asset, followed by the neighborhoods and the Medical Complex; 75% of the folks live within one-half mile of Village Green Drive; 75% want wider sidewalks, lighting, and pedestrian amenities, being benches, trash receptacles, etc.; over 70% prefer a shared use path or multiuse trail for bicyclists; 57% want an enhanced vegetative median and street furniture; 67% prefer ornamental landscaping, shade trees, and median enhancements; 63% prefer a roundabout for traffic calming; 88% prefer a trash and recycling bin; 75% prefer some type of shelter; 88% want improved or enhanced signal timing for vehicles, followed by improved or enhanced signal timing for bicycles and pedestrians. She noted that the polling questions and survey are on the project website until December 15, 2020.

Ms. Fermin stated their next steps include wrapping up Task 2, closing out the survey, conducting an analysis of the survey, and providing the existing conditions document. She said Task 3 is conceptual design,

where they will be providing three alternatives for Village Green Drive as well as preliminary cost estimates for each design alternative, and presenting it at the public meeting in February 2021. She stated Task 4 includes refining the alternatives and incorporating the additional comments, feedback, and changes. She said they hope to move toward a preferred alternative, for which they will create 15% design plans to be presented to Council at their May 2021 meeting.

Councilwoman Caraballo stated she was surprised to hear that the citizens are supporting the roundabouts. She said the roundabouts help traffic flow and improve safety.

Councilwoman Caraballo inquired as to how many people attended the first the public meeting, to which Ms. Fermin stated there were approximately 12 attendees. Councilwoman Caraballo expressed her concern regarding the low attendance at workshops, especially when they are working on a master plan as significant as Village Green.

The City Manager explained that staff is trying to gather information in multiple ways. Ms. Davis stated that staff did a mailing to about 1,000 residents in the area, an e-blast, and some marketing efforts through social media. She said about fifty people were registered for the meeting.

The Council members suggested, to encourage participation in virtual meetings, workshops, and surveys, sending post cards to residents within two miles of a project, using the comment section of the Utility Bill, and going door-to-door, especially to the businesses.

Mayor Oravec stated that the City needs a Roundabout page online that includes a video and the rules of the road. He said that people prefer the one-lane roundabouts versus the two lanes.

5.c St Lucie Transportation Planning Organization Draft 2045
Long Range Transportation Cost Feasible Plan

[2020-858](#)

The City Manager explained that staff previously provided some information to the Council on the cost feasible plan being developed by the TPO, and that Council requested it be put on a Special Meeting agenda for further discussion. He indicated that Roxanne Chesser is in attendance along with representatives from the TPO to answer any questions.

Ms. Chesser with the Public Works Department introduced Peter Buchwald, Executive Director and Project Manager with the St. Lucie Transportation Planning Organization (TPO). She stated that they will be discussing the draft Smart Moves 2045 long range transportation plan cost feasible projects. She said the TPO is the organization responsible for planning and programming state and federal funding for transportation projects in the City of Ft. Pierce, St. Lucie Village, City of Port St. Lucie, and the unincorporated areas of St. Lucie County. She stated that every five years the TPO updates the long-range plan, which is now underway.

Ms. Chessner indicated that the new Smart Moves 2045 plan will include two project lists. She stated that in August 2020, the TPO Board approved the first list, which is known as the needs plan. She said this plan identifies projects to meet the future transportation needs of the community without regard to cost.

Ms. Chesser stated that the TPO is now in the process of creating the second list or the cost feasible plan, which identifies projects that can be completed within the anticipated funding. She said that the first five years of the cost feasible plan is comprised of projects from the adopted Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for FY 2021-2025. She stated the projects for the remaining twenty years are from the needs plan list, which can be completed with the anticipated funding.

Ms. Chesser stated that during the October 7, 2020, TPO Board Meeting, three cost feasible plan funding scenarios were presented for consideration by the Board. She said the scenarios are the same for the five project types and the difference is with the roadway and bicycle/pedestrian project. She explained that scenario #1 is known as a historical view and provides the least amount of funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects, while the roadway projects include widening St. Lucie West Boulevard between I-95 and Cashmere and widening California Boulevard from Savona to Crosstown Parkway. She stated that scenario #2 is a balanced view and provides more funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects at the expense of the California Boulevard project. She said that scenario #3 provides the most funding for the multimodal or the bicycle and pedestrian facilities at the expense of both California and St. Lucie West Boulevard widening projects.

Ms. Chesser stated that after review of the scenarios, the TPO Board requested that a list of the projects included in scenario #2 be provided

for further review and consideration at the December 2, 2020, TPO Board Meeting.

Ms. Chesser stated the goal of today's presentation is to provide the updated draft of the cost feasible plan for scenario #2 and receive feedback from the City Council. She said from this point forward, the presentation will focus on the newly revised draft cost feasible plan for scenario #2.

Ms. Chesser showed Council the first five years of the cost feasible plan. She said all the projects are included in the approved TIP and the items in bold are projects located within the City. She said these funded projects include sidewalks on Alcantarra and Curtis; Gatlin Boulevard signalization improvements; and several projects along I-95, which include an overlay of project development and environmental study, landscaping at Becker, Gatlin Boulevard ramp improvements, and a new bridge at the St. Lucie West Boulevard interchange, property acquisition for the Gatlin Park & Ride, improvements to the twin bridges on Port St. Lucie Boulevard, construction of three of the four Port St. Lucie Boulevard widening projects, property acquisition for the last segment of Port St. Lucie Boulevard from Becker to Parr, and a bike path trail on Selvitz Road.

Ms. Chesser showed Council a map with locations of the approved TIP for the north St. Lucie TPO area as well as a map that shows the locations of the projects in the south St. Lucie TPO area.

Ms. Chesser reviewed the projects for the 2026 to 2045 time period. She stated this list will be the funded Automated, Connected, Electric and Shared (ACES) mobility projects, and the transit projects. She said most of the transit projects impact the City's service. She showed Council a list of the remaining funded transit projects, traffic calming or traffic management projects, operational improvements, and a few of the bicycle improvement projects. She noted that Torino Parkway traffic management and bicycle improvements on Lennard Road are funded for construction with scenario #2.

Ms. Chesser stated that bicycle improvements for Airoso, Bayshore, Port St. Lucie Boulevard, Commerce Center Drive, and Floresta Drive are planned for construction at the designated timeframes. She said the sidewalk projects include working on the gap on Bayshore Boulevard between Walgreen's and Port St. Lucie Boulevard as well as

the sidewalk on Calmoso Drive. She indicated that a sidewalk will be constructed on Becker Road within this plan.

Ms. Chesser stated that the roadway projects are big dollar projects. She said the list includes improvements for Port St. Lucie Boulevard from Becker to Paar, which are funded for construction. She stated that widening St. Lucie West Boulevard is also included. She said that unlike scenario #2, which was presented to the TPO Board in October, this plan includes the widening of California from Del Rio to Crosstown.

Ms. Chesser stated that the unfunded roadway projects in the plan include widening the remainder of California Boulevard from Savona to Del Rio as well as the widening of Cashmere, Southbend, Bayshore, Torino, Selvitz, and Savona.

Ms. Chesser showed Council the list of roadways to be developed by the developers of future construction and a map with the locations of all the projects for scenario #2. She also presented a summary sheet that includes all three scenarios with the inclusion of California Boulevard from Del Rio Boulevard to Crosstown Parkway.

Mayor Oravec asked the City Manager to recommend a scenario, to which the City Manager stated that scenarios #2 and #3 move them to a balanced community, but with the number of lane miles they need and the growth in their community, he recommended scenario #1. He said that will be part of Council's discussion with the TPO, as the roadways included in scenario #1 are needed.

Councilwoman Caraballo indicated that the TPO voted for #2, the balanced scenario, at the last meeting. She said she shared her concern with the TPO that she did not want to construct or reconstruct roadways and not include sidewalks or bike paths. She stated she did not know if the City had to work with DOT as well as the TPO on this.

Vice Mayor Martin stated she still favored #2, the balanced scenario. She said the numbers may change things. She stated the City's needs will continue to be great as they continue to grow. She said she would love #3, the maximum scenario, but the numbers are probably not realistic.

Councilman Carvelli and Councilwoman Morgan stated that they agreed with scenario #2.

Mayor Oravec inquired as to how the California Boulevard project was removed from scenario #2, to which Ms. Chesser stated it had to do with the methodology they used to prioritize the projects and the amount of funding.

Mayor Oravec asked if every jurisdiction lost a project from scenario #1 to scenario #2. Mr. Buchwald with the St. Lucie Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) stated that the difference between scenario #1 and #2 was California Boulevard. He explained that they looked at ways to reinsert California Boulevard into scenario #2 to move towards that balance. He stated that they can add a smaller section, the most congested segment of the road, back into the plan.

Mayor Oravec inquired about the level of investment in scenario #2 in each of the jurisdictions over the period.

Councilwoman Morgan stated the needs plan for California was from Savona to Crosstown. She said she noticed that California will remain from Crosstown to St. Lucie West, which is what they need. She stated that is staying in the plan, because it is funded. Mayor Oravec indicated that was included in their half-cent sales tax.

The City Manager stated the section south of Crosstown came out of scenario #1 and would have been funded under the balance plan or scenario #3, but not at the same level.

Mayor Oravec asked what the total span is for California that they would like to have done. In response, Mr. Buchwald stated it was Del Rio to Crosstown. Mayor Oravec said he thought it was Del Rio to St. Lucie West. He stated the project of Crosstown to St. Lucie West was included in the half-cent sales tax and referenced in the documents being presented today.

Ms. Chesser stated that, from the north, California from St. Lucie West Boulevard to Crosstown is a sales tax project. She said the needs plan identified a need for California to be widened from Crosstown to Savona, which is the entire length. She stated that that is provided for in scenario #1.

Ms. Chesser explained that scenario #2 provides for a half-mile segment from Crosstown to the first crossing of Del Rio, which is the

most heavily traveled segment of the roadway. She said scenario #3 does not include this segment.

Mayor Oravec inquired as to how that impacted parity amongst the organizations on the TPO, the two cities and the county, and how the funds were split between the parties. In response, Mr. Buchwald stated that they have not yet performed an analysis on the amount of allocation each jurisdiction received. He said the TPO is an organization that includes all the jurisdictions at a county-wide level. He stated they could do the analysis and have a discussion on the priorities for programming the long-range plan. He said the TPO Board adopted goals, objectives, and policies, but ensuring equity among the jurisdictions was not one of the priorities, as they wanted to meet the goals and objectives from within the organization itself.

Mayor Oravec stated that he is on the TPO, because he was elected Mayor of the City of Port St. Lucie. He said the fundamental issues he has with the allocation of funds is equity and fairness, as the City is 62.5% of the County. He stated that there has been more growth over the last decade in the City of Port St. Lucie and it seems like they have the lion share of the County roads that need improvement. He said he has a problem with County projects leapfrogging them at the expense of the City's projects.

Mayor Oravec stated that he is happy to support scenario #2, if that is what the Council wants. He said they should be prepared for the City to have to build some of its own roadways.

Mayor Oravec inquired if the County collects more road impact fees than the City. In response, the City Manager stated that the County's road impact fee budget is impacted by over 60% of the fees collected in the City. Mayor Oravec said that he has an issue with the County's road impact fee and the improvements it pays for, as he did not think these fees went back into the City.

Mayor Oravec stated another approach is to maximize what the TPO does and then have the localities do the extra level of service. He said they could argue that scenario #1 is the way to go, and then have Port St. Lucie pay for the multimodal path and build it to their standard. He stated they could stretch the basic pot of funds and then upgrade it with local funds. He said he wanted the City Council to address this issue over time, as he does not think it is tenable, fair or right.

Councilman Carvelli questioned if Glades Road up to Selvitz was cut out. In response, Mr. Buchwald stated that it was identified as a need, but it is unfunded. He said the County is in the process of moving forward with the preliminary phases. He explained that for the 2040 long range plan they did a different type of scenario planning. He said they looked at it as if the TPO received some impact fee or local money, and how it could leverage that with the federal and state funding to do more projects. He stated the Board voted to stay with the federal and state funding, as it is directly attributable to the TPO. He said they do not really address impact fees and what roads they are being attributed to, other than the committed projects from their sales tax. He stated there has been tremendous investment in the City of Port St. Lucie by the TPO, including Crosstown Parkway, St. Lucie Boulevard, and several other projects. He said the biggest challenge is that only 10% of the County's entire roadway network is on the state system. He stated they have aggressively programmed some of those state funds on the Automated Connected Electric Shared (ACES) use vehicle locations along I-95, as well as on some other all system improvements where they can.

Mr. Buchwald stated that summarizing and calculating the amount of funding for each jurisdiction could be analyzed several different ways. He said they can go back or forward. He stated the twelve board members work collectively to come to a consensus and agree on what is best for the County in general.

Councilman Carvelli stated that unfortunately Glades Road may be their biggest nightmare over time, as roads extend out of Port St. Lucie and cut through Tradition. He said the condition of the road, lighting, and shoulder are bad, and now it is heavily traveled by buses and the Copper Creek development is going in there. He stated he hopes the 2045 Plan is revised down the road. In response, Mr. Buchwald indicated that the plan is updated every five years depending on the changes that occur.

Mr. Buchwald explained that it is important to protect the projects they have in the first five years of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He said the scenarios were meant to address what the TPO, the City, and the other jurisdictions received from public input, as the residents said they would like to have more multimodal paths, trails, bike lanes, and sidewalks. He stated there is not a 50% balance of

investment this time around, but they are moving closer. He said it is more like 33% of modes other than roadway, to improve the overall quality of life in their communities.

Mayor Oravec stated that in most jurisdictions in Florida, Crosstown would be a county or state road, as it connects I-95 to US-1. He said it was made possible in the City of Port St. Lucie, and the TPO investment was made possible, because the voters elected to do it.

Mayor Oravec asked if the investment for Port St. Lucie was for future investment. In response, Mr. Buchwald stated the investment made to date was to get it to where it is and for future investment in the long-range plan.

Mayor Oravec stated that Port St. Lucie Boulevard south exhibits the push and pull of utilizing State and TPO funding. He said Port St. Lucie Boulevard is one of the few State roads in the City and connects I-95 via Gatlin to Port St. Lucie Boulevard to US-1. He said the future sections are not a done deal and could be delayed further.

Vice Mayor Martin stated she agreed with Mayor Oravec. She said the City acknowledged Port St. Luce Boulevard south as being important and put money aside to go into a reimbursement agreement, but they are not getting any help from the County.

Vice Mayor Martin asked if scenario #2 was contingent upon receiving the numbers. In response, Mr. Buchwald stated that the revenue estimates in the long-range plan will not change, because the Florida Department of Transportation is not redoing those estimates. He said the first five years will impact them the most, which is shown in the TIP. He noted that Secretary O'Reilly from District Four will be at the January 2021 TPO meeting to explain the impacts from the pandemic to the first five years of their work program.

Mr. Buchwald stated he understood and shared Council's frustrations. He said Port St. Lucie Boulevard is taking far too long to get accomplished. He stated these were funded TPO priority projects that were going to get constructed, but the pandemic hit. He explained that Port St. Lucie and the surrounding area is different than many parts of the state, because Port St. Lucie is a big city and does a lot on their own.

Councilwoman Caraballo recalled that they picked the balanced approach, but the TPO wanted to discuss Mayor Oravec's concerns as to what projects were cut and the potential impacts to the plan. She stated she understands the numbers are not going to change, but Council wanted to see a breakdown of the projects in the balanced plan and what would be cut. She said they wanted to have that discussion, as the County had concerns as well. In response, Mr. Buchwald stated this was the draft plan based on those comments and that a portion of California Boulevard has been reinserted.

Mr. Buchwald stated that the discussion at the Board meeting centered on which bicycle and pedestrian projects could be funded. He suggested going forward that they have a general list of example projects and have the local jurisdictions apply for funds on an annual basis through the Transportation Alternatives Program. He said, rather than applying for \$700,000 of funding per year, they would be applying for \$1.7 million depending on their needs.

Councilwoman Caraballo stated that there is no reward when the City moves faster than the TPO, except that those resources are given back to their citizens. She said it is like the City is being penalized for doing so, as they see more County projects on the list and more City projects being pushed out. She stated that allocation needs to be discussed in the future, because there will be a fight for funds if COVID impacts the next five years. She said the City has projects that are needed today, and it is not just Midway Road.

Vice Mayor Martin stated that they tried to have that conversation at a TPO meeting, but there was no response. She said it is important to bring those numbers forward and show the differences, especially as they go into next year with their legislative priorities with the County. She stated that they have to keep pushing for that fairness or they will never get it.

Vice Mayor Martin stated that she agreed with Councilwoman Caraballo. She said when they revisit the projects at the January 2021 meeting, things may change. She recalled that some City projects moved further down on the list after the committees ranked them in priority. She stated she mentioned at the meeting that she was unhappy with the changes and that she would be watching for it at their December 2020 meeting, so their projects would not change.

Mr. Buchwald reviewed the list of programmed projects with Council. He stated the projects within the City of Port St. Lucie are being programmed for construction, which he thinks shows some equity compared to the other jurisdictions. Mayor Oravec stated, to help prove that point, another column or two needs to be added for estimated costs. He said that the State system money may not be as important as seeing the discretionary TPO money. Mr. Buchwald stated that they will provide some better graphics.

Mayor Oravec explained that, as Vice Mayor Martin said, there was no discussion at the TPO meeting. He stated that former City Managers and former City Councils have taken the approach that they are not going to wait ten or fifteen years to do every road project, because this City has a different standard.

Vice Mayor Martin indicated that as a result of November 3, 2020, she is concerned that with all the priorities the City has been trying to accomplish, they are going to continue to get no response. She stated that sometimes they need to change the players in order to get better outcomes. She said she is concerned with what the future partnering between the TPO and the City's legislative agenda. She stated the City does things differently, thinks outside the box, and finds ways to get to yes. She said, unfortunately, this does not happen with their partners.

Mayor Oravec agreed that it is frustrating, as it has been this way for twenty years. He stated that it is not going to be solved in the immediate future, but with this legislative agenda and a concerted effort to not let it go, by having it be a part of their strategic effort and monitoring the list until the outcome is achieved, they can get there.

Mayor Oravec asked Mr. Buchwald for an update on the St. Lucie West Boulevard and I-95 interchange and if it is threatened by the reduction in revenue. In response, Mr. Buchwald stated he would not have that update until January 2021, as the districts just received their allocations from the central office.

Mr. Buchwald stated that he thought the venue at the TPO was the appropriate place to have those ongoing discussions with all the jurisdictions, in terms of what is equitable, what is priority, and what it is best for the entire community.

Mr. Buchwald stated, on a good note, what seems to be bipartisan at

the federal level is infrastructure, as they are talking about doing a large infrastructure bill when they return to work in January 2021. He said that they are adding more money from the General Fund for transportation improvements and getting a new bill to replace the Fast Act, which will be the largest transportation bill in U.S. history. He stated there will be additional federal money coming, but it unfortunately takes a bit longer, as there are many more rules and they are not quite as efficient as the City.

There being no further discussion, Vice Mayor Martin moved to approve supporting scenario #2. Councilwoman Caraballo seconded the motion.

Under discussion, Mayor Oravec stated, for the record, the comments made during the conversation said that, essentially, based on existing information, things could change if the pot of money is significantly reduced. Council agreed with this statement.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

(Clerk's Note: A break was called at 2:50 PM and the meeting resumed at 3:01 PM.)

6. New Business

6.a Adopt the City of Port St. Lucie/St. Lucie County Legislative Program

[2020-531](#)

At this point, Mayor Oravec stated that he saw a project for widening Southbend in the TPO Plan for the future. He said it is outside his term, but locally they have not had that conversation. He recalled that in previous conversations they discussed that it functions fine as a two-lane road and widening it would change the character of the neighborhood. He stated that when doing long range plans, projects are suddenly inserted based on purely numbers and not policy. Councilwoman Caraballo stated she would be interested in utilizing those dollars for more multimodal projects, because the curb cuts will eventually be done.

Kate Parmelee stated that Ella Gilbert, Deputy City Attorney, was with her to present the first ever City and St. Lucie County Legislative Program. She said this was prioritized in Council's strategic plan as result of their workshop this summer, as part of their goal as a High Performing Government Organization. She stated the City of Port St.

Lucie is the largest municipality in St. Lucie County with over 63% of the County's population. She said the City plays an integral role in the development and growth of St. Lucie County as a whole.

Ms. Parmelee stated that this Legislative Program was identified to encompass and articulate the areas where partnerships are critical to the sustained growth, development, and effectiveness of the City and the County together. She said they will provide a quick overview of the issues that have been gleaned from individual meetings with the Council members as well as their feedback at the Strategic Planning workshop. She noted that joint meetings have been scheduled for January 26, 2021, and March 9, 2021, and the agendas have been outlined by both the County Administrator and the City Manager.

Ms. Parmelee reviewed the issues of impact fees, the CARES Act funding, transportation, and the Tourist Development Tax. She stated that other issues identified included water quality partnership opportunities, and the County Parks Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU), Trails and Land Preservation Collaboration.

Mayor Oravec stated that it was important to look for the overlapping opportunity, otherwise it will be difficult and most likely unproductive.

Councilman Carvelli asked if the Parks Master Plan MSTU update is one of the priorities, as it is on the agenda for January 26, 2021. In response, the City Manager explained that staff will be bringing the agenda items to the Special Council Meetings in advance of the joint meetings, so Council is able to talk through these items with their County counterparts. Mayor Oravec stated that he needs a primer on impact fees well before the conversation, so he has an opportunity to reflect, ponder, and talk to people in the community about it.

Councilman Carvelli stated that as they put their priorities together, they should focus on their top three items. In response, Ms. Gilbert stated that staff attempted to have a balance of the big-ticket items as well as the wins. She said at the January 26, 2021, meeting, they have the Parks Master Plan, CARES Act update, the Florida Trend Article Community Spotlight, and impact fees.

Mayor Oravec stated they are probably seeking impact fees, the Tourist Development Tax, and the Parks MSTU. He said they may have a list of ten priorities, but they need to pick the top three. Ms. Parmelee

stated that staff is requesting those three priorities from the Council today. Councilwoman Caraballo indicated that her three priorities are impact fees, Tourist Development Tax, and transit because of the multimodal and high demand from the citizens on transportation. Vice Mayor Martin stated that transit/transportation, impact fees and MSTU are the most important to her. Councilman Carvelli said that his top three are impact fees, Tourist Development Tax, and MSTU.

Mayor Oravec stated they have been advocating for lower taxes, but the MSTU is a component of the tax. He asked that the record reflect that all Council members support the MSTU.

Councilwoman Morgan stated her top priorities are water quality, impact fees and the Tourist Development Tax. Council agreed that their top three priorities for the Legislative Program are: transit/transportation/impact fees, water quality, and tourist development tax.

The City Manager reminded Council that on January 26, 2021, they will have the Parks Master Plan MSTU update by Dave Barth, who helped the City compile its Master Plan and is working on a similar exercise with St. Lucie County. He said this should stimulate a conversation on where their two park plans interface. He stated the CARES Act, Florida Trend Article and impact fees will also be discussed. He said that in December 2020, Council will receive an update from the Budget Advisory Committee. He stated there will also be a very good primer on impact fees.

The City Manager stated that on March 9, 2021, they will have water quality collaboration, which is an opportunity to get the County to also address some of the hotspots outside the City limits. He said the County requested a CRA update, which will be provided. He stated there will be a discussion about the Tourist Development Tax and, time permitting, legislative reviews for each of their entities. Mayor Oravec asked the City Manager to see if the road impact fee conversation can start with a broader discussion on transportation.

Mayor Oravec asked for Council's support on improving the St. Lucie West Boulevard interchange with Reserve Boulevard, from the off ramp to the Reserve roundabout, to which there was Council consensus.

There being no further discussion, Vice Mayor Martin moved to

approve adopting the priorities for the Legislative Program as discussed. Councilman Carvelli seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

6.b Review and adoption of 2021 State Legislative Program

[2020-903](#)

Ella Gilbert noted that the cover page of her presentation had an error, as the date should read November 16, 2020, and not 2021.

Ms. Gilbert indicated that tomorrow is the organization session for the State Legislature and the swearing in of all new members. She said that their State Legislative Delegation for the City of Port St. Lucie includes State Senator Gayle Harrell, State Representative Toby Overdorf, and new State Representative Dana Trabulsy. She stated that staff is excited to work with their legislative delegation on Council's top three priorities for the State Program.

Ms. Gilbert stated that the proposed State Program aligns with the City's Strategic Plan and compliments their Federal Legislative Program. She said it is a joint effort with the Strategic Initiatives Director as well as State and Federal Legislative Affairs. She stated that they are targeting funding via appropriations and grants. She explained that the State Program provides the City the means to advocate for the vital state funding they need for various projects and programs. She said it was developed by the State Delegation and the City's contract lobbyist, Chris Carmody, Jr., with Gray Robinson, who is in attendance virtually via Zoom.

Ms. Gilbert reviewed the list of priorities with Council. She said they are trying a different approach by specifically itemizing them in their State Legislative Program. She stated that they are also seeking assistance on the grant side.

Ms. Gilbert stated that the St. Lucie River/C-23 Water Quality Project at McCarty Ranch, Economic Development Southern Grove Jobs Corridor, and the Septic-to-Sewer Conversion are the major priorities they have had over the years. She said they have learned that water quality is a high priority for the Governor.

Ms. Gilbert stated that their list of supporting priorities includes asking the State to fund FRDAP, so the City can get approval for Pioneer Park as well as historic preservation funding and funding for various other State programs and grants. She said they would also like support for broadband funding, before and after care funding, and sober homes.

Councilman Carvelli asked Mr. Carmody what he has heard are the delegation's funding priorities. Mr. Carmody stated that the list they see in front of them is a good start. He said Gray Robinson has been working with Ms. Gilbert, Ms. Parmelee and the team weekly on grants and the legislative priorities that will put Port St. Lucie's best foot forward. He stated that water projects will continue to be a priority, even despite the economic concerns with the pandemic and decrease in tax revenue. He said that economic development will be a priority as well, as they have had some productive meetings with the new DEO Director, Dan Eagle.

Mr. Carmody stated that this is going to be a tough session for projects in general. He said they have heard some legislative members say they are not going to do any project requests, because the budget is not in the right shape. He explained that the State economist back in July had estimated the State was going to be \$3.6 billion down for this current fiscal year, but the State is doing better on recovery and increasing revenue. He said they are going to be short, but not as short as originally projected. He stated that he thinks projects will make it through.

Mr. Carmody stated they have discussed getting some of the bigger funds that are not project specific funded in higher amounts. He said that this is so the City can draw down grants next year and not fall under the veto pen of a specific project or feel like a single appropriation for Port St. Lucie will put it under a microscope. He stated that it will be broader, and others can compete for it, but they will be fitting in the silos that the City typically goes after. He said he would start with water and economic development.

Mr. Carmody stated they will hear COVID and mental health in a lot of the projects this year, and opioid funding will still be a priority. He said that is less City focused and more health care. He stated he thinks it will come down to their great membership with Representative Overdorf, Representative Trabulsy, and Senator Harrell.

Mayor Oravec stated that water and economic development continues to be their priority. He said they have missed the request for economic development twice, so he wants their approach to be different this time. In response, Ms. Gilbert stated that the City can support the funding at the agency level and then pursue the grant level.

Mayor Oravec stated he would like to see how that will be articulated, conveyed, discussed, and presented to the delegation. Ms. Gilbert explained that it is a two-prong approach. She said they are still putting in the actual appropriations request.

Mayor Oravec stated that they have already tried that approach and asked for Council's help. Vice Mayor Martin thought that they should keep trying, so they do not miss out. Councilwoman Morgan stated she agreed with Vice Mayor Martin, because of the changes in Southern Grove and the growth within this past year. Councilwoman Caraballo said that they should keep economic development as a priority, but that it should be presented as a shovel ready project and include what has happened in the last year. Councilman Carvelli suggested marketing it better to the Governor.

Mayor Oravec questioned if the City should be going after pots of money and funding programs versus appropriations for water quality. In response, Ms. Gilbert stated that the City simultaneously has applications in through FDEP and the South Florida Water Management District. She said staff has submitted specific appropriation requests for septic-to-sewer as well as pursued the grant funding opportunities.

Mayor Oravec stated he did not want FDEP or the South Florida Water Management District to deny any potential funding because the City has applied to both, to which Ms. Gilbert indicated that the City received an appropriation for septic-to-sewer as a line item and also received funding simultaneously through the agencies.

Mayor Oravec stated the City received a lesser appropriation. He said his conversations with the agency heads indicated that the City's projects would be great for a significant amount, but the City has put in for an appropriations request. He stated that they will see what happens, but he would like some additional thought on this.

Ms. Parmelee stated that staff discussed the larger grant requests with the Assistant Secretary at DEP. She said they were told that the City is in line with what they are looking to do as an agency, but it does not completely fit the box. However, the City would qualify for some of the larger statewide funds. She stated that they discussed maybe having long term funding agreements in the future and some other

mechanisms where the City may be able to compete for some other pots of funds that benefit the various waterways in the state. She stated the City applied with the state for three pots of funding - water quality, the Indian River Lagoon, and alternative water supply - through grants this summer. She said staff wants to continue to support these pots of funding, because the City has projects in each category.

Mr. Carmody stated that everything they have gleaned from talking to the agency heads and legislators is that the City is not losing by putting in for these projects. He said they received a partial appropriation for septic-to-sewer, which helped with the additional funds from the department, because their project had been vetted. He stated it was a double win, because it was funded through the legislature and approved by the Governor, and then received funding from DEP. He encouraged the City to go down both roads. He said they have to seek some of these funds, because they are a growing city and need funds now, but they should also be working with the DEO, DEP, and other departments and agencies on getting appropriations through them.

Mayor Oravec asked if there was a ranking on their Historic Preservation grant and FRDAP grant. In response, Ms. Parmelee stated the City received a ranking, possibly 31, for the Historic Preservation grant, but has not received a ranking for the FRDAP grant.

Mayor Oravec inquired as to what was funded last year. He stated he would like that information as well as the FRDAP ranking when it becomes available. Ms. Parmelee said she would get that information.

Councilwoman Caraballo stated that they adopt the Florida League priorities, and the League adopts their Legislative agenda. She said if State funding is an issue, there is some alignment in the priorities this year with what this Council has discussed. She stated that Florida is one of two states in the nation that does not have appropriate sales tax fairness in legislation. She said that will be a big concern, as things are now being purchased online in large numbers.

Councilwoman Caraballo stated that mobility was adopted as a policy on the Land Use and Economic Development Committee. She said the mobility plans discussion and the additional language will help protect cities in the future for adopting these plans. She stated she has had conversations with the lobbyists from Altamonte Springs who helped

them develop their mobility plan. She said, depending on the conversation they have with the County, she would like to see a discussion at Council's Retreat regarding mobility plans and what they are currently facing with impact fees.

Councilwoman Caraballo stated that resiliency is one of the League's draft position statements. She said there are some items where the City can stand with the League and help advocate for them on the state level.

Mayor Oravec suggested that the City take a different approach, because it is unlikely that they will get through discussing the top three priorities. He recommended that any proposed Bill consistent with the City's agenda that becomes a hot button issue, comes back to Council for a Resolution to support it. He said they could put it on the agenda and transmit it as a formal declaration of their support. Council supported Mayor Oravec on this request.

There being no further discussion, Councilwoman Caraballo moved to approve the priorities - transit/transportation/impact fees, water quality, tourist development tax - as discussed for the Legislative Program. Vice Mayor Martin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

6.c Adopt the City of Port St. Lucie Federal Program [2020-884](#)

Mayor Oravec asked that this item be deferred to the next Special City Council Meeting.

Councilwoman Caraballo moved to approve deferring item 6.c. to the next Special Council Meeting. Vice Mayor Martin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

6.d Finalize the City of Port St. Lucie 2021 Community Survey™ . [2020-885](#)

Ms. Parmelee stated that they are kicking off their 2021 Community Survey. She said the National Research Center (NRC) recently merged with Polco, so there have been some minor modifications to the survey questions this year. She stated the questions are based on what is benchmarked nationally, so they can have that comparison. She indicated that in addition to the 1,200 paper surveys, they will be mailing out 1,500 postcards with a weblink, so that up to 2,700 residents will be randomly sampled in this year's survey. She said that this will increase their reach and potentially decrease their margin of error to perhaps +/- 4%. She noted that staff will heavily promote the

opt-in online survey as well.

Ms. Parmelee stated that some questions have been added to the survey regarding communications, for performance measures and benchmarking purposes. She said that during their new Council Member Orientation, it was suggested that the residents be asked if they use Next Door. She recommended that Council add this question to the survey.

Councilwoman Caraballo suggested that questions on solid waste and home-based businesses be included in the survey. Councilman Carvelli recommended adding a question to see if there is community support for a gun range.

Mayor Oravec stated he liked the idea of getting clarification from the residents on the priority of the gun range versus the parks that are being planned for the City. He said Chief Bolduc, the Police Department, and people in the community are interested in it. He stated that they should evaluate bringing it into their Parks Master Plan and then prioritizing it, to which Council agreed.

Ms. Parmelee noted that the question could be put in this year's survey. Mayor Oravec stated that this would be an exercise for staff to start triangulating for the next five-year or ten-year CIP.

Mayor Oravec stated he thought there were going to be some questions about City Center. He said he wants to have a conversation with Council and the public about what they would like to see at the City Center.

Vice Mayor Martin and Councilwoman Caraballo did not have a problem with putting the gun range question on this year's survey. Councilwoman Morgan said she was leaning towards putting it on the next survey.

Councilwoman Caraballo suggested having a separate survey for the City Center to make sure they get it right. She said there has been significant investment by the public over time. She stated that the NRC can do additional surveys.

Mayor Oravec stated this is a destination question or a nature, culture, and fun question, as they have the gun range, the different parks, and

the City Center. He said he did not mind asking this question every year. He stated that staff could look at the CIP and the Parks Master Plan, and then identify the next batch of priorities. He said they could put the gun range question in there to see what the people say every year until they get to the CIP, as the survey is just a snapshot in time.

Councilman Carvelli recommended shortening the list of questions and eliminating the redundancy in the survey. He said the survey is too long and that it frustrates people, so they are not going to get good feedback.

Vice Mayor Martin stated she thinks the sooner they get the gun range question on the survey the better. She said they are looking at a two-prong approach from the Police Department aspect and the community aspect. Mayor Oravec stated there was Council consensus to ask the question. He asked staff to present the question at the next meeting.

Mayor Oravec indicated that garbage and yard waste was already included in the survey.

Councilwoman Caraballo explained that she has been approached about having a salon as a home-based business. She said if their house is already modified to incorporate a salon, they are allowed a business license. She stated that this creates a loophole, because they could modify their home and then apply. She said it got into the broader discussion with staff about other types of businesses, but technically they should modify their home for ADA accessibility.

Councilwoman Caraballo stated that a broader discussion on homebased businesses in the future of COVID will eventually have to happen, especially if they start getting more requests from residents. She said she sees future discussions on ordinances, adjustments, and opportunities for expansion of the community. She stated her question is: What is the appetite for people having homebased businesses in residential areas? She said as a Council member, she acts at the will of the public. She stated she wants to understand the appetite of the public before getting into those future discussions.

Mayor Oravec suggested that the issue and the question be better defined, so they could ask the right question. Ms. Parmelee stated the question discussed was: Should we explore changing ordinances given the types of homebased businesses being discussed?

Mayor Oravec stated if there is an issue there, that they bring it through the Special Meeting process, give Council a primer on the current rules and regulations, what is being proposed, and if there is a public question that should be asked, so that they can gauge the public support for change. Councilwoman Caraballo stated that she is okay with that and looks forward to discussing it some more at a future special meeting.

Mayor Oravec stated that Council will also need a presentation on the current home occupational ordinance. Councilwoman Caraballo said that is the discussion that needs to be had, because she believes they will see an issue with fairness and equity amongst everybody and the types of businesses that impact the neighborhoods.

Mayor Oravec stated that he liked the survey as is and would rotate three custom questions each year.

Councilwoman Morgan stated that she just had a meeting with a resident who is having issues with people coming in and out of a homebased business. She said that it is overwhelming, and the resident cannot have the enjoyment of a single-family home.

Mayor Oravec advised the City Manager that Council would like to have a future presentation and discussion on homebased businesses. He stated he has heard of issues with cabinet makers, painting cars, and auto mechanics in single family neighborhoods. He said there is a long list that can be difficult to regulate. Councilwoman Caraballo stated that is what she is having difficulty with.

Councilwoman Caraballo stated she agreed the survey can get lengthy. She suggested for more participation in the future that the top ten questions that the Council gauges be put online or emailed. She said the longer versions, which she likes as well, could be mailed. Mayor Oravec stated that there has been good participation, and it drives their Strategic Planning process in an exemplary way.

Mayor Oravec asked staff to come back to the next Council Meeting with the added question for the gun range and Council will finalize it at that time.

Ms. Parmelee stated she will continue to ask the NRC if there is any

way to shorten the survey. She said the margin of error is +/-5% for the random sample. She stated they received over 300 surveys last year. She said they had lower participation in the online survey last year, so they want to increase that promotion. She stated staff will be doing some more targeting promotion of their returning surveys, because they will get more accurate pictures.

Mayor Oravec stated it was new the first time they did it online. He said they have to go with the eb and flows of what is going on in the community, but it is going to be a tough year. Ms. Parmelee stated the Council acts on the will of the citizens, so they will continue to tell that story.

- 6.e** Review and Accept the City Manager's Biweekly Report/Strategic Plan Update

[2020-880](#)

Mayor Oravec requested that this item be deferred to the next Special City Council meeting.

Vice Mayor Martin moved to approve deferring item 6.e. to the next Special Council Meeting. Councilwoman Caraballo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

7. Resolution

- 7.a** Resolution 20-R125, A Resolution of the City of Port St. Lucie, Florida, Honoring Dr. John Carvelli

[2020-948](#)

Mayor Oravec requested that Council add an item to the agenda.

Councilwoman Morgan moved to approve adding Resolution 20-R125, Honoring Dr. John Carvelli, to the agenda. Councilwoman Caraballo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

Mayor Oravec read Resolution 20-R125 in full.

Vice Mayor Martin moved to approve Resolution 20-R125. Councilwoman Morgan seconded the motion.

Council and staff thanked Councilman Carvelli for working on the Council and serving the residents of Port St. Lucie. Councilman Carvelli thanked the Council, staff and City, as well as his family, stating that it has been an honor to live in and serve the community.

The City Manager presented Councilman Carvelli with a plaque of a “Carvelli” chart acknowledging Councilman Carvelli’s desire for Gantt charts.

The City Clerk restated the motion as follows: for approval of Resolution 20-R125. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

8. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:40 PM.

Karen A. Phillips, City Clerk

Traci Mehl, Deputy City Clerk