

City of Port St. Lucie

Special 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, August 21, 2023

9:30 AM

Council Chambers, City Hall

1. Meeting Called to Order

A Special Meeting of the CITY COUNCIL of the City of Port St. Lucie was called to order by Mayor Martin on August 21, 2023, at 9:30 a.m., at Port St. Lucie City Hall, 121 SW Port St. Lucie Boulevard, Port St. Lucie, Florida.

2. Roll Call

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

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Martin led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Public to be Heard

There was nothing to be heard for this item.

5. Special Presentations

5.a Accept the Half-Cent Sales Tax FY 22/23 3rd Quarter Projects Update

[2023-605](#)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Public Works Director Heath Stocton presented to the Council and provided updates on various city projects including Floresta Drive Phases 1, 2, & 3. He noted that Phase 2 would conclude in August 2023 and Phase 3 would

begin in Fall 2023, and the projects involved construction of a new bridge, installation of round-abouts, installation of drainage, installation of sidewalks, and repaving. He also discussed US 1 improvements, and Vice Mayor Caraballo inquired as to which projects were currently being worked on, to which Mr. Stocton replied that they were working on mainline irrigation offsite as well as minor projects. He concluded the presentation with updates on SLC Prima Vista improvements, an implementation schedule, budget & expenditures, and revenue summary.

There being no discussion, Councilman Bonna moved to approve the Half-Cent Sales Tax FY 22/23 3rd Quarter Projects Update. Councilwoman Morgan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

6. Approval of Consent Agenda

There being no discussion, Councilman Pickett moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilwoman Morgan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

- 6.a** Approval of Minutes for the June 26, 2023 Board of Zoning Appeals, July 10, 2023 Regular City Council Meeting and July 24, 2023 Regular City Council Meeting [2023-689](#)

This Consent item was Approved.

- 6.b** Appointment to Serve and Member Status Update [2023-677](#)

This Consent item was Approved.

- 6.c** Authorize the City Manager to Enter into an Amendment to a Right of Entry Agreement with Crown Castle South, LLC for the Public Works Compound Located at 450 SW Thornhill Drive. [2023-719](#)

This Consent item was Approved.

- 6.d** Award Contract #20230078 for the Direct Purchase of Materials for the Southport Force Main Project. [2023-615](#)

This Consent item was Approved.

- 6.e** Permission for Port St. Lucie Police Department to Proceed with the Allocated Funds from the State FY 2023 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Application - Local Solicitation. [2023-692](#)

This Consent item was Approved.

- 6.f** Approve Amendment #4 to Contract #20210103 for the Design Services for the Hegener Drive Extension Phase 3 [2023-697](#)

Project.

This Consent item was Approved.

- 6.g** Award Contract #20230020 for an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan for the Parks & Recreation Department. [2023-698](#)

This Consent item was Approved.

- 6.h** Approve Amendment #7 to Contract #20170132 for the Engineering Services for Nutrient Reduction Improvements at Westport Wastewater Treatment Facility with CHA Consulting, Inc. [2023-696](#)

This Consent item was Approved.

- 6.i** Award Contract #20220096 for the Design-Build of Police Training Facility. [2023-695](#)

This Consent item was Approved.

- 6.j** Approve Flock Group, Inc. as a Sole Source Vendor for License Plate Recognition (LPR) Cameras. [2023-589](#)

This Consent item was Approved.

- 6.k** Award Contract #20230048 for Emergency Catering Services During and Post Emergencies to Puff 'n Stuff Catering, LLC & Creative Catering . [2023-616](#)

This Consent item was Approved.

- 6.l** Approval of the Letter of Understanding between the City of Port St. Lucie and the International Union of Police Associations, AFL-CIO, Local 6015, Representing the Officers Bargaining Unit [2023-634](#)

This Consent item was Approved.

7. Resolutions

- 7.a** Resolution 23-R90, Declaring that Florida PACE Funding Agency's Continued Operation in the City of Port St. Lucie without Authorization is a Public Health, Safety and Welfare Emergency and Authoring the City Attorney's Office to Initiate Litigation, as appropriate, to Stop Florida Pace Funding Agency Operations in the City. [2023-747](#)

The City Clerk read Resolution 23-R90 aloud by title only.

City Attorney Stokes stated that they were not invoking Chapter 164 of the Florida Statutes, but in the event that there was a provision in Chapter 164, they could waive it if there was an emergency. Councilman Bonna clarified that this was due to one rogue funding agency, not all. City Attorney Stokes then informed of the statute allowances and failsafe.

There being no further discussion, Councilman Pickett moved to approve Resolution 23-R90. Councilwoman Morgan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

8. New Business

- 8.a** Request Council Make a Determination Regarding the Effect of Senate Bill 418 (Amending Section 624.4651, Florida Statutes) on its Representation on the TRICO Board.

[2023-729](#)

City Attorney Stokes stated that Senate Bill 418 required certain local government cooperative insurance plans to have elected officials representing them other than staff, and recommended maintaining the structure as it is now by having a staff member representative. Vice Mayor Caraballo requested to have regular updates on TRICO.

It was the consensus of the Council to have an update at the 2024 Winter Workshop and have an annual update.

There being no further discussion, Councilwoman Morgan moved to approve support of Senate Bill 418. Councilman Pickett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

- 8.b** Hear an Update and Recommended Revised Allocations to Projects Funded by the American Rescue Plan

[2023-743](#)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Sabrina McLeod, Projects Coordinator, presented on the American Rescue Plan and stated that the city of Port St. Lucie was allocated \$24,739,425, which needed to be obligated by December 31, 2024, and expended by December 31, 2026. She discussed the eligible uses of funding including supporting public health expenditures and addressing negative economic impacts.

Camille Wallace, Neighborhood Services Deputy Director, further discussed the topic of addressing negative economic impacts, and provided the Council with two options regarding the Buyer-Initiated Down Payment & Closing Cost Assistance Program. She stated that the first option would provide a subsidy of up to \$100,000 per qualifying household and would serve approximately 4 households, and the second option

would provide a subsidy of up to \$50,000 per qualifying household and would serve approximately 8 households. She stated that city staff recommended option #1.

Ms. McLeod continued the presentation by further discussing the replacement of lost public sector revenue and investments in water, sewer, & broadband. Upon conclusion of the presentation, the Council members discussed the two options, with Councilman Bonna, Councilwoman Morgan, Councilman Pickett, and Mayor Martin in favor of option 2 due to having the ability to help more households, and Vice Mayor Caraballo in favor of option 1 due to having a higher subsidy for today's economy.

There being no further discussion, Councilman Bonna moved to approve Option 2 – Subsidy: Up to \$50,000 per qualifying household, adjusted to income and purchase price of the home. Councilwoman Morgan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote with Mayor Martin, Councilwoman Morgan, Councilman Pickett, and Councilman Bonna in favor, and Vice Mayor Caraballo opposed.

There being no further discussion, Councilwoman Morgan moved to approve the recommended revised allocations to projects funded by the American Rescue Plan. Vice Mayor Caraballo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

8.c Hear a Presentation from North Star Ideas on the
Community Identity Project Research Results

[2023-726](#)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Sam Preston, North Star Ideas, presented research by selected surveyors done both inside and outside of the community, which provided surveys on their experiences with the City of Port St. Lucie. He discussed Internal Qualitative Data which included various topics such as growth, affordability, safety, and nature, as well as opportunities, challenges, what items were missing from the city, identification, and outsider comments. He then discussed the results for the community survey which included the survey questions for the best descriptors for the city, greatest assets, hidden gems, what people do not know about the city, what distinguishes Port St. Lucie from other communities, greatest challenges, and what was missing in the City. The surveyors also rated Port St. Lucie's attributes & characteristics, what was most important to the City's identity, and what was iconic about the City.

Mr. Preston then discussed the External Quantitative Data which included surveyors from Miami-Dade and Orange Counties, of whom answered various questions regarding the Treasure Coast cities including what comes to their mind when thinking about the City, was the City

improving/declining/staying the same, safety, retirement options, nature, highest potential for well-planned growth/economic prosperity, home-buying, weekend getaways, business start-up, and which phrases/adjectives best describe the city. They were also asked if they had visited Port St. Lucie in the last 3 years and the reason for visiting/not visiting. Mr. Preston then discussed the lasting impressions of the visitors, their perceptions of different attributes of the city, and their responses to what would be most important to Port St. Lucie's identity.

Mr. Preston concluded his presentation with a discussion on External Qualitative Data, providing results for assets, challenges, what was missing, and opportunities. Councilwoman Morgan questioned having a large attraction, stating that it would increase traffic, and she also stated that she was pleased with the results. She also stated that Port St. Lucie could be considered a 'large, quaint town.' Vice Mayor Caraballo and Mayor Martin expressed agreeance with Councilwoman Morgan, and they discussed the planning of the City as it related to the survey comments. City Manager Merejo stated that Cheney Brothers had a concern with hiring employees, but later found that they were not having any issues with applicants, and that they were also seeing that residents that used to travel to Palm Beach County for jobs were now staying local. He also mentioned that there had been rate adjustments as well. Councilman Pickett discussed the positive aspects of the Southern Grove Jobs Corridor, and Councilman Bonna expressed his approval of the results in relation to having an integrated City and also discussed planning in agreeance with Vice Mayor Caraballo and Mayor Martin.

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Alyssa Spangenberg, Brand Strategist/Project Manager, presented on the City's DNA statement, stating that the target audience was families and the young-at-heart seeking a down-to-earth Florida lifestyle, with the frame of reference being that Port St. Lucie is the largest city between Orlando and Miami/Dade. She also stated that the point of difference continued to be that the City was one of the safest in the country and that it was a welcoming community for people of all backgrounds, and that the benefit was it was 'a city where someone can belong and build a full life'. Mayor Martin suggested removing the word 'can' and making it state that it is 'where you do belong'. Communications Director Sarah Prohaska noted that this was only to be used internally and not publicly, and that it was just being used to help build the statement. Vice Mayor Caraballo stated that she wanted the brand to be long-lasting, and Councilman Bonna suggested stating, "Where you belong and can build a full life."

Ms. Spangenburg continued the presentation by discussing the next steps

and timeline, noting that they were planning to work with professionals to work on design concepts as an Advisory Committee. She stated that the logo/colors would be set for presentation at the October 16, 2023, City Council meeting, and that the new City website was aimed to be launched in January 2024.

A break was called at 10:56 a.m., and the meeting resumed at 11:07 a.m.

8.d Approve Digital Signage Project and Vote on Orientation and Finish

[2023-742](#)

Ms. Prohaska stated that the goal was to remove all paper banners from around the City and replace them with digital signs. (Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Avi Monina, Digital Media Production Coordinator, discussed the current process of approving, creating, and placing the banners, versus what the future process could be with the new digital signs, noting that the process was easier and faster. He discussed the current storage issues for the banners and provided three options for the finish on the new digital signs which included dark stone, light stone, and stucco. He then proposed two options for the orientation, which would be either vertical or horizontal.

Mike Kendrick, Parks & Recreation Deputy Director, stated that the sign for Sportsman Park had a limitation on the size, and that they could look at other locations. City Manager Merejo noted that a standard should be used across all City departments so that the sizes and orientation are consistent. Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested adding side panels to the framing, as well as the City logo, and she also recommended the vertical orientation, stone option, and the addition of landscaping. Mayor Martin agreed with adding the stone option and vertical orientation. Councilman Pickett agreed with the vertical, but stated that he was not opposed to either orientation depending on which site needed which orientation. Councilwoman Morgan stated that she was in favor of the darker stone and vertical orientation.

It was the consensus of the Council to frame the sides of the digital signs.

It was the consensus of the Council to have the Communications department provide a design plan for consistent landscaping for all digital signs throughout the City.

It was the consensus of the Council to select the dark stone design.

It was the consensus of the Council to have the Communications department provide recommendations for the orientation of each digital

sign.

City Manager Merejo recommended bringing the topic back to Council each time there is a new location added for digital signage. Mr. Monina continued his presentation by discussing the costs and funding for the new digital signage, as well as the cost of the current banners and process, noting the waste that the current process creates. He also noted that by utilizing digital signage, they would be able to advertise more notices than using the current banner system. City Manager Merejo stated that consideration could also be given to having a better City sign on the Turnpike and possibly I-95, to which the Council agreed.

Upon conclusion of item 8d., Councilman Bonna discussed a request to have an Ordinance added to a future agenda that would allow a Safe Haven Baby Box added to the City's emergency resource areas, such as the Fire Department. He noted that it did not cost any tax-payer dollars and did not require anyone to do anything. Mayor Martin noted that all of the City's Fire Stations were Safe Baby stations, and that they would be open to hearing more about the topic and having a presentation come before them at a Council Workshop.

It was the consensus of the Council to have information provided to them on the establishment of a Safe Haven Baby Box Ordinance, and to have discussions held at the next Workshop.

9. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:39 a.m.

Sally Walsh, City Clerk

Jasmin De Freese, Deputy City Clerk