

City of Port St. Lucie

City Council Workshop

Meeting Minutes

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

Shannon M. Martin, Mayor

Jolien Caraballo, Vice Mayor, District IV
Stephanie Morgan, Councilwoman, District I
Dave Pickett, Councilman, District II
Anthony Bonna, Sr., Councilman, District III

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Wednesday, July 23, 2025

8:30 AM

**Port St. Lucie Community Center,
2195 SE Airoso Blvd., Port St. Lucie,
FL 34984**

Summer Workshop Day 1

1. Meeting Called to Order

A City Council/City Staff Retreat of the CITY COUNCIL of the City of Port St. Lucie was called to order by Mayor Martin on July 23, 2025 at 8:57 a.m., at City of Port St. Lucie Community Center, 2195 SE Airoso Blvd., Port St. Lucie, FL 34984.

2. Roll Call

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

3. Pledge of Allegiance

The Mayor led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance and held a moment of silence for a St. Lucie County Firefighter that passed away.

4. Public to be Heard

Resident Diane Goldberg spoke on budgeting for planting for retention pond beautification and water pollution control improvements. She requested that it be added to the budget and she offered her assistance for this matter.

5. Workshop Business

5.a Adopt the Updated Strategic Plan and Review Strategic Plan
Progress through PSL STAT

[2025-711](#)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Deputy City Manager Kate Parmelee presented to the Council and shared the vision and mission and exhibited a video of the Port St. Lucie team winning the All-America City award. (Clerk's Note: A video was shown at this time.) Mayor Martin expressed positive sentiments, and Ms. Parmelee discussed the Citizen Summit and the Strategic Planning Goals & Initiatives for FY 24-25, and she introduced the key updates for the Strategic Plan.

Chief Niemczyk presented the "Improve Public Safety Goal" and discussed Police recruitment, policing district, traffic/bicycle/pedestrian safety, Real Time Public Safety Operations Center and Crime Center, drones as a first responder. Vice Mayor Caraballo inquired if they had plans to look at using thermo-plastic to highlight areas with more traffic and high impact points, to which Colt Schwerdt, Public Works Director, responded in the affirmative, stating that they have a 5-year road striping plan. Vice Mayor Caraballo shared feedback on an increase in road debris, to which Mr. Schwerdt replied that they also had a schedule for this, but the street sweepers went down and have now been fixed. Chief Niemczyk added that they were introducing a traffic crash aspect for analysts to data-mine crash locations daily.

Vice Mayor Caraballo requested the addition of a line-item that could address minor changes throughout the year i.e. roadway striping and inquired if Public Works had plans to measure real-time data at their new center, to which Mr. Schwerdt responded in the affirmative. Councilman Pickett inquired if we were closer to getting red light cameras, to which Chief Niemczyk responded in the affirmative. Mayor Martin expressed a positive opinion of now being able to separate driver behavior from other issues.

Communications Director Sarah Prohaska presented the "Community Engagement Goal" and discussed City University and Love Your Block. Vice Mayor Caraballo recommended the team continue to leverage sponsorships, perhaps with local home improvement stores, to assist with the continuation of 'Love Your Block'. Mayor Martin suggested having a presentation to showcase the before and after of the 'Love Your Block Grantee Projects' once completed, to which Ms. Prohaska responded in the affirmative and added that they would have a 1-year celebration.

Ms. Prohaska continued the presentation and discussed the Youth Council, engagement management, New Resident & Stay Informed

campaign, Mobile City Hall, and the Digital Engagement Hub.

Ms. Parmelee then discussed the “Safe, Clean & Beautiful Goal”, and discussed the goals for Strategic Growth for a Resilient Future, Engaged & Connected City, and Diverse Economy & Employment Opportunities. Councilman Pickett recommended placing ‘additional jobs corridor’ to the “Priority Projects” section. Mayor Martin recommended the addition of a business component to be included in the “Smart & Connected Cities” goal. Ms. Parmelee stated that it could be changed to read “City-wide Resident and Local Business Engagement.” Councilman Bonna suggested the addition of “Residents, Businesses, Neighborhoods”.

Ms. Parmelee continued with discussion on High Quality Infrastructure & Facilities. Councilman Pickett suggested the addition of the word ‘continue’ to the “Septic and Stormwater” section. Mayor Martin recommended listing the projects so that the residents can see what’s coming and listing the Residential Culvert Assistance Program and the Oak Hammock Water Shed Improvement Project (pending approval).

Ms. Parmelee continued with discussion on “Culture, Nature, & Fun Activities”, and Mayor Martin suggested that they change “Fun Activities” to “Recreation”. Ms. Parmelee then discussed High Performing Government Organizations.

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

A break was called at 10:04 a.m., and the meeting resumed at 10:24 a.m.

5.b Sidewalk Master Plan Update 2025

[2025-664](#)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Emily Seitter, Public Works, presented to the Council and discussed funding & partnerships. Mayor Martin requested to have another conversation/meeting with the Transportation & Planning Organization (TPO) partners and City Manager Merejo stated that they needed to have a list prepared and have an additional conversation prior to the meeting. Mayor Martin also expressed concern that the TPO consultant had outdated data.

Ms. Seitter continued discussion on funding & partnerships. Assistant City Manager Kristina Ciuperger stated that they were meeting monthly with the County regarding the future of the Half-Cent Sales Tax, and Mayor Martin requested that everyone have conversations with their county counterpart

and make this item a priority.

Ms. Seitter continued the presentation and discussed increased grant funding, the Port St. Lucie Sidewalk Program and Master Plan, policy and planning, and connecting communities. Mayor Martin stated that speed bumps don't work, and permanent infrastructure was the way to go regarding traffic calming measures, to which Councilman Pickett agreed. Vice Mayor Caraballo stated that the next plan should come forward in the next year or so. Ms. Seitter addressed the Council's concerns and stated that speed tables were not a panacea for all concerns, and that speed tables were a driver impact while sidewalks were a resident's perception, so they exist exclusively from each other. She stated that they were in favor of supporting sidewalks over tables. Vice Mayor Caraballo stated that she would also like to address shading.

Councilwoman Morgan requested that staff provide information to the residents to inform that edging the side of the sidewalk that is on their property is their responsibility. Councilman Bonna inquired if there were criteria to discuss why traffic calming was more effective in some areas than others, to which Ms. Seitter replied that they would make a note to see how they could quantify those results in a more digestible way.

Ms. Seitter then stated that they had compiled a list of connections and pieces intent for locations, and they would like to come back before Council to present the intentions for the next program. Ms. Seitter concluded the presentation with discussion smart cities and collaboration.

5.c Traffic Calming Plan 2025 Update

[2025-657](#)

(Clerk's Note: Thomas Salvador presented on behalf of Antonio Balestrieri.)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Thomas Salvador, Public Works, discussed the strategic objectives and purpose of traffic calming, why speed matters, Target Zero initiative, and public engagement.

Councilman Pickett inquired if the public engagement meetings were effective, to which Mr. Salvador responded in the affirmative. Councilman Pickett clarified that it had to be 50% of the homeowners that sign a petition for it to be accepted, and Mr. Schwerdt stated that they would work with the Communications Department to refine public education.

Vice Mayor Caraballo inquired as to how they were getting the 10% number for reduction in speeding, to which Mr. Salvador replied that it was

through streetlight data. Vice Mayor Caraballo requested data for Milner Dr, and she inquired about an update on the State's recent decisions for traffic calming, to which Mr. Schwerdt stated that they were working on this with the City Attorney's Office. Mayor Martin stated that they may need to take a hard look at their current process and maybe change it, to which City Manager Merejo stated that they could review the policies and have one-on-one meetings.

Mr. Salvador then discussed efficiencies & insights with connected data, traffic calming projects for FY24/25 and FY25/26, and annual & revised budgets. Councilman Bonna stated that they wanted to better understand the criteria and why they would be effective solutions for these projects.

Councilman Bonna moved to approve traffic calming construction for segments of SE Grand Drive and SE Atlantus Avenue as described, and to approve the use of FY 25/26 funds and expedited construction using remaining FY 24/25 budget funds. Vice Mayor Caraballo seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

5.d Heart of PSL Awards

[2025-708](#)

Corrie Johnson, Human Resources, presented the Heart of PSL award to the winners:

Team of the Year – Office of Management and Budget

Project Manager of the Year – Meighan Beckett (Office of Solid Waste)

Employee of the Year – Brianne Nasso (Police Department)

Department of the Year – Utility Systems

A lunch break was called at 12:07 p.m., and the meeting resumed at 1:18 p.m.

5.e R&B Capital Projects, Residential Culvert Program,
Stormwater Fee & Capital Projects

[2025-691](#)

Public Works Director Colt Schwerdt gave a brief introduction and Everett Tourjee, Public Works, presented to the Council. (Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) He provided updates for Floresta Phases 2 & 3 corridor improvements, Port St. Lucie Blvd segment 3, and the E. Torino Pkwy roundabout & turn lane.

Councilwoman Morgan suggested removing the bus stops from Torino and City Manager Merejo stated that they would have a meeting with the

School Board. Councilman Pickett expressed concerns for the Centennial High School exit and informed that he had contact the School Board. Vice Mayor Caraballo recommended considering public art for the roundabout on Torino Parkway relevant to the park theme.

Mr. Tourjee continued with updates for St. Lucie West Blvd/Peacock Blvd intersection improvements, Tulip/College Park intersection improvements, Gatlin/Savona Phase 1 intersection improvements, and Paar/Savona & Paar/Darwin roundabouts. He gave updates on corridor improvements for Bayshore Blvd, California Blvd Phase 1, Savona Blvd, St. Lucie West Blvd, E. Torino Pkwy, and Southbend Blvd. He also provided an update on the Marshall Pkwy & I-95 Interchange.

Mayor Martin discussed the Mobile City Hall project and other types of opportunities besides mail. City Manager Merejo discussed challenges, stating that residents need it now but there's a process, so they need to communicate with residents what the city's challenges are and make them a part of the process of what the City is going through.

Vice Mayor Caraballo requested that 2 projects be moved up for consideration: Greenway & Melaleuca, Melaleuca & Berkshire.

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Assistant Public Works Director Louis Johnson presented the Residential Culvert Assistance Pilot Program. He discussed the importance of the program, the program to support our residents & stormwater system, the purpose of the program, how to apply, Driveway & Culvert Replacement Program process, evaluation, Property Owners Agreement, tax assessment, allocated budget, and the program evaluation & future goals. He also discussed the St. Lucie County Program, the County's numbers, and education & community outreach. Mr. Schwerdt noted that approximately 50 to 55 driveways could be taken care of and this would also address multiple code violations.

Mayor Martin requested that residents with code violations be notified and given consideration for the available programs to assist. Councilwoman Morgan inquired if brick pavers will get replaced or will the resident get a concrete slab, to which Mr. Schwerdt replied that it is currently only concrete slabs. Vice Mayor Caraballo inquired about circular driveways, to which Mr. Schwerdt replied that it would depend on the situation. Councilman Bonna expressed that he was in favor of this program and requested that the PACE program presentation be added to a later Workshop. Vice Mayor Caraballo stated that she would like to learn more about the new state bill to see if it protects residents.

City Manager Merejo requested that there be a requirement to video every culvert replacement.

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Mr. Schwerdt presented on Stormwater and he discussed fees, fee comparisons, and he gave updates on current CIP Projects including the D-11 Canal improvements, Floresta Phase 3 baffle boxes, A-14 water control structure, watershed A & B improvements, and the Whitmore Dr baffle box. He then discussed the proposed CIP for FY 25-26 and Oak Hammock watershed improvements. Vice Mayor Caraballo stated that they needed to communicate to the public on safety issues of not correcting the stormwater system.

Mr. Schwerdt continued presenting on the Oak Hammock watershed improvements and he added that if they received direction from the Council, the Public Works team would start the process right away and get the advertisement out by October 1st. He also discussed the Elkam Basin improvements, Hog Pen Slough water control structure, E-8 canal improvements, accelerating swale & culvert programs. Mr. Schwerdt then discussed the solutions which were making the financial investment, assessment breakdown, and assessment fee recommendation.

Councilman Pickett inquired about assessments for the unimproved properties, to which Mr. Schwerdt stated that the properties get charged 75% of the rate. Councilman Pickett stated that he was in support to raise the rate for everybody, and the Council and staff further discussed a legal case that determined the current rates. Vice Mayor Caraballo requested that they look at the history of the case, and Councilwoman Morgan inquired as to how many properties have a unity of title for their home and the empty lot next to them that doesn't have a swale liner, to which Mr. Schwerdt was unsure, but they would look into this along with the City Attorney's Office. Councilman Bonna inquired if all the current projects were on track, to which Mr. Schwerdt responded in the affirmative. The Council then further discussed planning, transparency, and fiscal responsibility.

There being no further discussion, Vice Mayor Caraballo moved to approve the preliminary Stormwater rate. Councilman Pickett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

A break was called at 3:10 p.m., and the meeting resumed at 3:36 p.m.

5.f Utility Systems Department - Capital Improvement Projects
Update

[2025-690](#)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Utilities Assistant Director John Eason presented to the Council and discussed utility work roadway projects, McCarty Ranch water quality restoration Area-7A, Prineville deep injection well #2, and Ro-Well F-19.

Mayor Martin requested a tour/celebration of the McCarty Ranch Water Quality project with the delegation, potentially in October. City Manager Merejo requested that staff make a list of projects and work with the FPL team to make resolutions on a quarterly basis, reaching out to the Mayor and Council for assistance, if necessary. He also stated that he would request meetings with Marshall Critchfield, St. Lucie County External Affairs Manager, on a regular basis.

Mr. Eason continued with discussion on the Western Raw water main , Becker Rd main improvements, Darwin & Becker parallel force main, Southport 24-inch sewer force main, Mariposa force main, replacement of Lift Station NP-13, Prineville Water Treatment Plant generator replacement, McCarty Ranch water main, Westport Wastewater Treatment Plant nutrient reduction improvements, Range Line Rd & Glade future injection wells, design-build services for eight Floridian wells, and the Range Line Rd Water Treatment Plant.

5.g Discuss Adjustments to Certain Utility Systems Department Rates, Fees, and Charges

[2025-688](#)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Utilities Director Kevin Matyjaszek presented to the Council and discussed the miscellaneous fees & monthly rate studies, residential well to water conversion fees, water connection fees, residential septic conversion fees within SAD's/USA's, sewer connection fees, and a 5-year forecast for rate increases. He then gave a septic conversion update and provided a grant program summary. Mayor Martin thanked Commissioner Clasby for his support and assistance in obtaining funding.

Mr. Matyjaszek advised of a current litigation case, and City Attorney Berrios clarified the use of settlement funds. City Manager Merejo stated that he would like to further discuss the funds with Mr. Matyjaszek and then provide a memo to Council, but that the funds should go back to Utilities.

It was the consensus of the Council to utilize the litigation funds for utility services.

Vice Mayor Caraballo moved to approve an increase for Connection Fees. Councilman Pickett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by

voice vote.

Councilman Pickett moved to approve a 3.5% Water Rate increase.
Councilman Bonna seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

5.h Discuss and Provide Direction on Future Convenient Drop-off Center Operations.

[2025-702](#)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Solid Waste Director Mariana Feldpausch presented to the Council and discussed a convenience drop-off center timeline, aims & objectives, convenience drop-off center user data, definitions, 2024 breakdown by scanned visits, accumulative scanned visits, CDC scans by waste type, service costs, savings, pros & cons/benefits & challenges, and a closure plan. Mayor Martin clarified the costs, stating that the costs listed in the presentation were not included in the assessment because these were General Fund & Solid Waste Fund dollars in addition to the assessment.

Mayor Martin stated that the record needed to be corrected to reflect that this was never a temporary service, and she expressed concerns about loss of service because it would look like they were taking a service from residents.

The Council then held discussions on the closure of the facility.

Councilman Bonna moved to close the Drop-Off Center by October 1, 2025. Councilwoman Morgan seconded the motion, which failed by roll call vote with Councilman Bonna and Councilwoman Morgan in favor and Mayor Martin, Vice Mayor Caraballo, and Councilman Pickett opposed.

Vice Mayor Caraballo moved to table the item. Vice Mayor Caraballo then withdrew her motion.

Councilwoman Morgan moved to close the Drop-Off Center by January 5, 2025. Councilman Pickett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by roll call vote.

6. Adjourn

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Sally Walsh, City Clerk

Jasmin De Freese, Deputy City Clerk