

# 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  
Dave Pickett, Councilman, District II  
Shannon Martin, Vice Mayor, District III  
Jolien Caraballo, Councilwoman, District IV

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**Monday, February 8, 2021**

**5:30 PM**

**Council Chambers, City Hall**

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**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 Mayor Oravec on February 8, 2021, at 5:33 PM, at Port St. Lucie City Hall, 121 SW Port St. Lucie Boulevard, Port St. Lucie, Florida.

**2. Roll Call**

Council Members Present:

Mayor Gregory J. Oravec  
Councilwoman Jolien Caraballo  
Councilman Dave Pickett (virtual)

Council Members absent:

Vice Mayor Shannon Martin  
Councilwoman Stephanie Morgan

**3. Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Oravec led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. Public to be Heard**

(Clerk's Note: No one signed up to speak under this item.)

5. **New Business**

5.a Southern Grove Master Plan Economic Analysis Workshop

[2021-114](#)

Teresa Lamar-Sarno, Deputy City Manager, stated that staff started working on the Southern Grove Master Plan over a year ago and a large portion of it included an economic analysis. She said the City hired the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) to not only develop their Master Plan, but to look at the economics; the Special Assessment District; the Community Development District; all the contracts, deals, and economic development programs; as well as the market analysis for the area.

Kim Delaney, Ph.D., Director of Strategic Development and Policy at the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, along with Zoom attendees Tom Lavash, Managing Principal, and Tom Moriarity, Principal Consultant, with WTL+a, Real Estate and Economic Advisors, presented an overview of the economics with respect to the Master Plan development.

Dr. Delaney reviewed the Southern Grove study area, Southern Grove Master Plan, Infrastructure Networks, and Development Concepts. Mr. Lavash presented the Study Deliverables; Key Findings of the Demographics, Employment Profile, and "Workplace" Real Estate; Early Successes at Southern Grove; and the Financial Scorecard.

Mayor Oravec questioned if the scorecard was based on real dollars and if total economic impact, such as payroll on direct or indirect jobs, was not included. Mr. Lavash stated that was correct. He said they would like to update the current multipliers to understand the current impacts.

Mr. Lavish reviewed the Peer City Analysis and Key Findings for Lakeland in Polk County, Palm Bay in Brevard County, Pembroke Pines in Broward County, West Palm Beach in Palm Beach County, and Cape Coral in Lee County. He also reviewed the Economic Impact Analysis for Southern Grove, which included direct, indirect and induced impacts as well as buildout and infrastructure costs and tax revenues.

Mayor Oravec asked for the total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the City of Port St. Lucie for comparison. Mr. Lavish explained that

they did not do a citywide economic analysis, as this was specific to Southern Grove. Mayor Oravec stated that they should have that information, so that it can be added as a reference.

Mr. Moriarity presented the Public Incentives and Implementation for Southern Grove, including Near-Term Impacts of COVID-19 and Real Estate Impacts in Florida. He also discussed the financial and policy incentives as compared to their peer cities. He ended the presentation with a review of the Land Disposition Strategies for Southern Grove.

Mayor Oravec asked if Council had any questions. Councilwoman Caraballo requested a comparison of the average wage of the jobs coming into the City and how that relates to the economy. Mayor Oravec stated that an affordability index should be included as well.

Councilwoman Caraballo questioned the projection for City jobs and the potential for 96% of the jobs in the County. Mr. Lavish explained that 96% of all new jobs, created between 2007 and 2018 in St. Lucie County, were in Port St. Lucie. He said the City has 50% of all jobs in the County.

Councilman Picket commented on the statistic that 59,000 people leave Port St. Lucie to work elsewhere. He said if they could keep those jobs here, it would make the City a more viable place to live. Mr. Lavish stated that was a striking number to learn. He indicated the number of people who lived in Port St. Lucie between 2009 and 2018 and left the City every day for work increased by over 15,278 or 59%. He said that reinforces the focused effort for business retention and recruitment to Southern Grove for the City as a whole.

Mayor Oravec discussed leveraging, jobs and wages, service calls to apartment complexes versus retail, and how it is hard to get to the net. He suggested that Council work with the team as part of the Strategic Planning Session to identify specific indicators and metrics by which to evaluate their job creation efforts and include them on the dashboard.

Mayor Oravec asked what comes after Southern Grove and how the City will continue economic development for decades to come. In response, Dr. Delaney explained that the short answer is a series of implementation actions specific to Southern Grove that deal with policies, procedures, and expectations. She said this property is a microcosm of a City that is going through its different stages of

evolution. She stated the larger story is how these recommendations translate into actions for the City over time. Mayor Oravec challenged the team to do much better than the projections and compare that with what they think the City needs to be, as Southern Grove will not be enough and they will need another tool.

Councilwoman Caraballo agreed that toolboxes are needed based on the part of the City they want to grow and would include incentives, types of jobs, and what the citizens want. She said it is a great long-term plan to leave a legacy for future Councils to use as guidance and she is ready to have that conversation.

Mayor Oravec noted that he will be asking the Council to table 11.g, Resolution 21-R18 Adopting the Southern Grove Master Plan, at the Regular Council Meeting this evening.

**6. Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM.

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Karen A. Phillips, City Clerk

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Traci Mehl, Deputy City Clerk