

City of Port St. Lucie

Strategic Planning Session

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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Thursday, March 10, 2022

8:00 AM

Community Center

1. Meeting Called to Order

A Strategic Planning Session of the CITY COUNCIL of the City of Port St. Lucie was called to order by Mayor Martin on March 10, 2022, at 8:48 AM, at the Port St. Lucie Community Center, 2195 SE Airoso 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

(Clerk's Note: There was nothing heard in this section of the Agenda.)

4. Public to be Heard

No one signed up to speak for this section of the Agenda.

5. New Business

5.a Hold the 2022 Strategic Planning Workshop

[2022-241](#)

Kate Parmelee, Strategic Initiatives Director asked the Council Members to discuss their vision of what they would like their legacy to be for the City.

Councilman Bonna explained he would like to see the Council meet the current challenges the City faces.

Councilwoman Morgan discussed making the City a better place for residents.

Councilman Pickett stated he would like the City Council to continue working towards completing septic to sewer conversions in the City and would like to continue to make sure that the City of Port St. Lucie is still one of the safest cities.

Vice Mayor Caraballo agreed with Councilman Pickett. She mentioned she would like to see the City Center Booming, lowering tax rates in the City, having no more septic systems in the City, McCarty Ranch becoming a full-service camp ground, the City becoming the place to be for jobs and/or start-ups, seeing the City's medium income increase, completion of the Village Green Corridor, the City becoming the most engaged City in the United States, and seeing St. Lucie West Boulevard widened.

Mayor Martin agreed with the Council Members and stated she would like to keep the promises that were made through the City's Strategic Plan. She explained she would like to see the Sidewalk Master Plan completed and would like to see the progress in the City's Parks Master Plan. Mayor Martin also stated she would like to continue to see improvement in the City's infrastructure as well as seeing the continuation of providing a high level of service to the City residents.

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint Presentation was shown at this time.) Dr. Kim DeLaney discussed the various topics the Council previously prioritized.

Councilman Bonna stated he was proud of being in one of the two most integrated largest cities in the country. Mayor Martin agreed with Councilman Bonna and discussed modifying the transportation system throughout the City.

Vice Mayor Caraballo discussed broadening the definition of the word "diversity" and shared her group's tag line: "A City for All".

Caroline Sturgis, Budget Director discussed the tag line and acronym the group came up with during their breakout session.

Councilwoman Morgan added her group also came up with “A City for All”.

Ms. Parmelee and Sarah Prohaska, Communications Director agreed with “A City for All”.

Councilman Pickett discussed Mr. Stokes’ idea of a new tag line: “Port St. Lucie, the Crown Jewel of the Treasure Coast” and questioned how the City would celebrate its diversity.

Dr. DeLaney discussed amending Goal 7 and having expanded and specific intention for civic engagement.

Vice Mayor Caraballo discussed having more of a cultural tie in for the upcoming years of the ZAM festival and feature cultural artwork and artists.

Councilman Pickett stated he would like to meet the expectation of the ZAM festival becoming a cultural festival.

Mayor Martin stated she would like the City to be known for hosting a type of yearly event and provided examples of festivals in those cities.

Dr. DeLaney spoke on the possibility of the City hosting an international festival that is focused on activities, culture, art, food and music. She discussed ideas for the City’s branding, vision, and mission statement. Dr. DeLaney asked the Council Members for ideas as to what kind of gateway signage and monuments they envision in the City.

The Council discussed various options for the new gateway signage and incorporating public engagement during the process.

Russ Blackburn, City Manager advised he has previously been a part of rebranding and recommended that the Council stay engaged and in-control during the rebranding process.

The City Council stated they supported controlled public engagement during the rebranding process.

Dr. Kim DeLaney stated rebranding as an activity comes into Goal 7. She explained that part 1 of rebranding would be figuring out what the

Council would say and how they would imagine themselves, while part 2 would get into gateways, signage, and physical messaging. Dr. DeLaney inquired if the Council had potential gateway locations, they would like to see besides Interstate 95 and the Florida Turnpike.

Mayor Martin discussed the various entry points throughout the City and stated she would like to highlight certain areas depending on the space provided. She also discussed the neighborhood signs that are currently installed and suggested installing larger neighborhood signs, as many times they are blocked by the neighboring foliage.

Vice Mayor Caraballo stated she would like to do something different than the examples provided to the Council and provided an example of a metal tree to showcase beautification throughout the City. She suggested the Council look at something more unique than archways and possibly something that speaks to the City and its vision.

Mayor Martin discussed the "T" sign experience, as the Council recently learned that a sign like that would not be received well by the residents. She stated she would like to stay true to what Port St. Lucie is as a City and provided current examples.

Dr. DeLaney summarized the rebranding process for the City Council. She discussed the housing stock diversity and land use and asked Council Members for their thoughts regarding affordability in other housing besides single-family homes.

Mayor Martin discussed the various housing options currently in the City and expressed her concern over the continuation of apartments being built throughout the City. She stated the City prides itself in having 87% homeownership and explained it is difficult to address affordability as the Council does not have control.

The City Manager inquired if there was any desire to look at 300 to 600 square foot units and offer real diversity such as microunits.

Dr. DeLaney suggested offering regulatory incentives to encourage different types of usage in the City.

Vice Mayor Caraballo stated she would like to figure out what the City currently has projected as far as development goes, to find out if there is equilibrium in the City. She discussed providing a message of

positivity around diversifying housing as many times people automatically associate diversified housing as low-income housing.

Chief Bolduc added an original 1,000 square foot home in Port St. Lucie is now over \$250,000.

Teresa Lamar-Sarno, Deputy City Manager reported that the Planning and Zoning Department is researching if there are necessary comprehensive plan amendments due to the number of applications the department is receiving to convert commercial properties to multifamily properties.

Councilwoman Morgan and Mayor Martin discussed the changes occurring at home with household living situations.

Dr. DeLaney reported the median age in the City was 42 and suggested a land use analysis to better understand the City's housing stock.

Vice Mayor Caraballo asked if there was a database for city governments to research land use and information technology so that they are better equipped when making decisions.

Mayor Martin stated it would be helpful to obtain a map showing what remains vacant as Commercial, Industrial, and Professional property.

Ms. Lamar-Sarno stated the Planning and Zoning Department had some maps available for the Council with the information requested.

Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested exploring the next job corridor, as Southern Grove is almost built out.

Dr. DeLaney stated the best practices to be better informed about the City is done through Strategic Planning and suggested the City move from an 8-year period to a longer term such as a 20-year period. She stated she currently is assisting in a land use analysis in the City by district. Dr. DeLaney suggested a Citywide Master Plan.

Councilman Bonna added that it would be helpful to have additional data when faced with changing land use from commercial to residential.

Mayor Martin agreed that having data would make it helpful for the

Council's decision making and mentioned the Riverplace application that recently moved from commercial to residential land use.

A recess was called at 10:21 AM, and the meeting resumed at 10:47 AM.

Dr. DeLaney asked the Council for their beautification priorities for the City.

Mayor Martin stated she would like to focus on areas that the Council knows need improvement and used Port St. Lucie Boulevard as an example. She asked the Council what areas they wish to improve and asked to set up an action plan to address the improvements.

Councilwoman Morgan mentioned the need to have City gateways look more inviting and the need to add landscaping.

Councilman Pickett and Mayor Martin discussed the need to keep the landscaping and gateways timeless.

Dr. DeLaney suggested the Council look at older properties that were built under older codes that are no longer maintaining their landscaping to the level in which they were approved. She stated the Council could provide a regulatory opportunity to revisit those sites and have a code enforcement mechanism to engage the private sector to step up the landscape plans.

Mayor Martin agreed with Dr. DeLaney and suggested providing a tree giveaway for businesses to enhance their commercial property. She recommended creating a partnership between the Keep Port St. Lucie Beautiful Committee and the businesses to continue to make the City beautiful.

Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested providing a letter to the business owner with the original plan specifications and a six-month period to comply. She agreed with Councilman Pickett regarding maintaining the standard of the landscape. Vice Mayor Caraballo stated there are deficiencies with the city sidewalks, medians, and bridges. She suggested having a beautification plan that encompasses a maintenance schedule. Vice Mayor Caraballo recommended research on shade opportunities on sidewalks to encourage walking.

Mayor Martin stated she would not agree to adding additional workout stations if they would not be utilized. Councilman Pickett mentioned many folks do not use the exercise equipment due to the lack of shade under those stations.

Sherman Conrad, Parks and Recreation Director stated adding shade structures to the fitness station is more costly than the actual fitness station.

Dr. DeLaney discussed the renovation of City Hall.

Mayor Martin mentioned the lobby needs a complete revamp as well as the Council Chambers. She added that the Communications Department and break rooms needed to be reconfigured and remove the institutionalized feel of them. Mayor Martin discussed the underutilization of the patio area outside of the Community Center.

Vice Mayor Caraballo discussed having staff involved in the process of renovating City Hall.

Roger Jacobs, Facilities Maintenance Director reported on various projects for the upcoming year.

Vice Mayor Caraballo and Kevin Matyjaszek, Utilities Director discussed the plans for the Utilities Department.

Dr. DeLaney and Ms. Parmelee confirmed the various items the Council highlighted during their previous conversations.

Dr. DeLaney discussed the advancement of innovation and technology in the City.

Councilman Bonna stated he would like to continue to see education as one of the City's goals. Vice Mayor Caraballo stated she had a different perspective regarding the subject.

Mayor Martin suggested including public engagement or communication as a City goal, to which Councilman Bonna and Councilwoman Morgan agreed.

Mayor Martin discussed innovation and technology in the City and the 1PSL system currently used by staff to communicate with residents.

Vice Mayor Caraballo provided ideas to make the City a Smart City.

Dr. DeLaney initiated the conversation on how the City can expand access to culture, nature, and fun.

Mayor Martin discussed destination events and having connectivity within various City facilities that make it accessible for the public.

Councilwoman Morgan discussed a potential partnership with the County and their "Visit St. Lucie" website. Ms. Prohaska and Linda McCarthy, Event Center Director confirmed they work in partnership with the County to promote City and County events.

Vice Mayor Caraballo suggested taking inventory of City assets to understand what the City has available to create culture, nature, and fun for usership opportunities. Mayor Martin agreed with Vice Mayor Caraballo and suggested reintroducing amenities to residents.

Vice Mayor Caraballo discussed various opportunities to expand McCarty Ranch and inquired if there would be a potential master plan for the area. Mr. Conrad reported that the Utilities Department completed their master plan for the area; however, a recreational master plan has not been created.

Vice Mayor Caraballo inquired on the allowable useable space for McCarty Ranch and Mr. Matyjaszek discussed the plans for the area. Mayor Martin added that she would like to see progress and find out what areas of McCarty Ranch would be designated for recreation.

Bradley Keen, Assistant Director for the Parks and Recreation Department discussed the current amenities offered at McCarty Ranch.

Mayor Martin asked that McCarty Ranch be included in the culture, nature, and fun goal list. Vice Mayor Caraballo agreed with Mayor Martin and stated she would like to see the designated area for a campground at McCarty Ranch.

Mr. Merejo discussed the challenges in providing additional future amenities at McCarty Ranch.

Mayor Martin requested a publicly noticed Council Meeting to take

place at McCarty Ranch to have an opportunity to discuss in a group setting.

Mr. Conrad suggested that the Council visit the Savannas Recreation Area prior to making their way to McCarty Ranch to provide a comparison and insight as to what the City Council would like to see at McCarty Ranch.

The City Manager asked the Council if they would like to see an initiative for McCarty Ranch, to which Mayor Martin responded in the affirmative.

A recess was called at 12:26 PM, and the meeting resumed at 1:28 PM.

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint Presentation was shown at this time.)

Ms. Parmelee and the Council discussed the changes to the City's strategic plan, goals, and strategic initiatives.

Mayor Martin asked that a video be published for the public to understand the new flashing yellow traffic lights recently installed in St. Lucie West. Ms. Prohaska advised a video was ready for publication regarding the subject.

Mayor Martin suggested having a checklist to keep the public better informed about future traffic changes.

The Council discussed electric vehicle charging stations, ways to improve the Minsky Gym mural and plans to renovate the mural at City Hall.

Mayor Martin suggested providing additional time to digest the survey results in between the retreat and strategic planning session.

Vice Mayor Caraballo and Mayor Martin discussed reverting back to the original strategic planning procedure and finding a favorable location.

Dr. DeLaney, Mayor Martin, Ms. Parmelee, and the City Council provided closing comments.

6. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:34 PM.

Sally Walsh, City Clerk

Daisy Ruiz, Deputy City Clerk