

City of Port St. Lucie

Special City Council

Meeting Minutes - Final

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

Shannon Martin, Mayor, At-Large

Jolien Caraballo, Vice Mayor, District IV
Stephanie Morgan, Councilwoman, District I
Dave Pickett, Councilman, District II
Vacant, District III

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Monday, September 27, 2021

6:30 PM

Council Chambers, City Hall

Budget Hearing

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 Martin on September 27, 2021, at 6:30 p.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 David Pickett

3. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge was said at the 5:00pm Special Council meeting.

4. Public to be Heard

Jeff Chambers of the Port St. Lucie Botanical Gardens provided an update on the visitor numbers and stated that in 2020 the visitor base was 43,000, and in 2021 with 3 months of the gardens being closed, the visitor base had already reached 60,000 and counting. He also stated that they had embraced the Port Project and had bought all new signage for the gardens that reflect the Port logo.

5. Second Reading of Ordinances, Public Hearings

5.a Ordinance 21-89, Public Hearing, An Ordinance Adopting the
Ad Valorem Millage Rate for the Fiscal Year (FY) October 1,

[2021-738](#)

2021 to September 30, 2022; Providing an Effective Date.

The City Clerk read Ordinance 21-89 aloud by title only, and Mayor Martin opened the Public Hearing. (Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Budget and Procurement Director Caroline Strugis gave a presentation for the Fiscal Year 21/22 budget and stated that the desired outcome was for the City Council to formally adopt the Millage Rate Ordinance of 5.6, formally adopt the Budget Ordinance of \$610,594,228, and adopt the Capital Improvement Program Resolution for Fiscal Year 21/22. She stated that the budget increased by \$77 million due to increased investments and capital projects, and that some of the projects were a new Public Works Building, 2 regional parks, a Police training facility, and adaptive signalization of traffic lights, and added that the full-time employee count was 1,238, with most of the positions being added to the Police and increased staffing to Utility Systems.

Ms. Sturgis stated that the Millage Rate was proposed at 5.60, and that this would be the 6th consecutive year that the rate had been reduced. She stated that since the July retreat, there was an increase to the tax base by \$1.2 million, and additional changes were a reduction in the millage rate by 0.0289 for a total of 0.300 which reduced the property tax revenue by \$367,846.

Ms. Sturgis stated that two full-time employees were hired in the Finance Management Department, the Small Business Coordinator was deleted, \$50,000 was allocated to the Chamber of Commerce for Small Business coordination, \$50,000 was transferred to the Road and Bridge CIP Fund., and there was an increase in the Storm Water Fee.

Ms. Sturgis stated that there was an adjustment for the City's Solid Waste expense due to mandatory contractual obligations, but that as directed by City Council per the last hearing, the increase would be absorbed by the fines that had been assessed to Waste Pro, therefore property owners would not see an increase for that adjustment. She stated that the General Fund would be decreased by \$1.1 million, but they would maintain the reserve requirements, and the Golf Fund would not see any changes or fees.

Ms. Sturgis stated that the Building Fund would increase by \$3 million due to anticipated growth, the Utilities Fund would increase by \$10 million with the Sewer Rate averaging \$3 per month for homeowners, the Storm Water Fund would increase by \$3 million with the rates of

residential lots increasing by \$5 per year (42 cents per month) and undeveloped lots increasing by \$3.75 per year (31 cents per month).

Ms. Sturgis stated that they would issue approximately \$80 million in debt for Capital Projects, with the total Capital Budget being \$164,078,491, and major projects included were the Port Project, a new Public Works building, an upgrade of Westport Wastewater, the Floresta Drive Project, two new Regional Parks, and a new Police Training Facility at \$14 million. She advised Council that there was a correction to the amount, noting that at the first Public Hearing she stated that the Police project would be \$8 million. Ms. Sturgis also included the Trim Announcement as required by the State in her presentation slide, adding that the Rollback Rate was 4.6620 mills, and it would bring the same amount of ad valorem tax revenue as the prior year for new construction.

Mayor Martin asked if anyone wished to speak on this item. Mr. Roll, a landlord of Port St. Lucie, stated that with the property taxes increasing, this would lead to an increase in rent prices for tenants which would cause a problem for the elderly.

There being no further discussion, Mayor Martin closed the Public Hearing, and Vice Mayor Caraballo moved to approve Ordinance 21-89. Councilman Pickett seconded the motion, and the City Clerk restated the motion as follows: for approval of Ordinance 21-89. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

- 5.b** Ordinance 21-88, Public Hearing, An Ordinance Adopting the Budget and Making an Appropriation for the Fiscal Year (FY) October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022; Providing an Effective Date.

[2021-739](#)

The City Clerk read Ordinance 21-88 aloud by title only, and Mayor Martin opened the Public Hearing.

There being no discussion, Mayor Martin closed the Public Hearing, and Councilwoman Morgan moved to approve Ordinance 21-88. Councilman Pickett seconded the motion, and the City Clerk restated the motion as follows: for approval of Ordinance 21-88. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

6. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Sally Walsh, City Clerk

Jasmin De Freese, Deputy City Clerk