

# City of Port St. Lucie

## City Council Workshop

### Meeting Minutes - Draft

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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**Thursday, February 27, 2025**

**8:30 AM**

**Port St. Lucie Community Center**

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**\*Winter Workshop Day 2\***

1. Meeting Called to Order

A Special Meeting of the CITY COUNCIL/CITY STAFF of the City of Port St. Lucie was called to order by Mayor Martin on February 27, 2025, 9:00 a.m., at the Community Center, 2195 SE Airoso Blvd, Port St. Lucie, FL 34984.

2. Roll Call

Councilmembers Present:  
Mayor Shannon M. Martin  
Vice Mayor Jolien Caraballo  
Councilwoman Stephanie Morgan  
Councilman David Pickett  
Councilman Anthony Bonna

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Martin led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Public to be Heard

Diane Goldberg spoke regarding the City's responsibility for working with other entities on biosolids.

5. Workshop Business

**5.a** Hear an Update from Indian River State College

[2025-199](#)

(Clerk's Note: This item was heard after Item 5b.)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint was shown at this time.) Andy Treadwell,

IRSC Pruitt Campus President, provided an update on Indian River State College. His presentation included the importance of college as well as the Promise Program.

- 5.b** Hear an Update from St. Lucie Public Schools and SLPS Career Program

[2025-200](#)

(Clerk's Note: This item was heard before Item 5a.)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint was shown at this time.) Dr. Jon R. Prince, Superintendent St. Lucie County Public Schools, provided an update on the public schools and the SLPS Career Program. His presentation included information on SLPS Gets to Work, Xello, Classroom to Careers, upcoming Career Fairs, grand openings of new schools and the District's goals. The City Council thanked Dr. Prince for his work & presentation. Councilwoman Morgan discussed pick up/drop off, bus stops and traffic issues.

A break was called at 10:10 a.m., and the meeting resumed at 10:30 a.m.

- 5.c** Hear Presentation of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update

[2025-206](#)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint was shown at this time.) Brad Keen, Parks & Recreation Director, introduced Carlos Perez, Perez Planning + Design, who provided an update on projects. He explained data which was collected to help address the City's needs & priorities during its growth. Mayor Martin stated that staff needed to story-tell the progression of park projects so that it is in the forefront of the residents mind.

Mr. Perez explained that through the Citizen Summit, he was able to receive the details for what exactly residents were looking for when it came to the high priority needs. He explained the Placer AI data, which showed that the park system had over 3 million visits in the last year and stated that the data and the needs were lining up. Mr. Keen stated that there was a need to improve tracking, recording of visits and asset resources. Vice Mayor Caraballo voiced that she wanted to explore smaller pocket events such as yoga in various parks so residents could attend an event in a neighborhood park. Mr. Keen stated that they needed to combine all the data, collectively, to make strategic decisions. Vice Mayor Caraballo hoped to diversify the recreation opportunities outside of sports fields. She stated that the City Council should have a future discussion on each park with current & needed programming. Mayor Martin stated that staff had to remember to have interdepartmental contact along with the technology piece. Councilman Pickett inquired if the AI data could be set around smaller events such as basketball games, etc., to which Robert Chenier,

Parks & Recreation Project Manager, replied that it was possible but the smaller the area the less accurate the data becomes. Councilwoman Morgan stated that the City needed more County parks as residents paid a heavy tax for County parks, but did not receive their fair share. Vice Mayor Caraballo voiced her issue with maintenance in the future, relating to county parks as they give a single contribution but do not contribute to maintenance or staffing. She stated that she would like to revitalize old park systems and wanted to recognize the difference in usage of parks. Mr. Keen stated that staff was working together to create recreational amenities for the residents such as walking trails around stormwater ponds. Vice Mayor Caraballo urged staff to revisit "10 things to do" in a park. Mayor Martin urged the Council and staff to visit the Savona/Paar intersection & inquired about purchasing the parcels because it would be a prime example for a passive park instead of using them as commercial properties. It was the consensus of the City Council to have the City Manager's Office prepare a priority list of properties to be purchased and used for parks (passive & active).

**5.d** Program Update: Recognized User Groups Policy, Field Use & Demand Study

[2025-186](#)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint was shown at this time.) Jack Kardys, JKS Strategic Group, provided an update on field use and provided recommendations on improving field utilization. He stated that the slot system ensured efficiency and maximized field use. The City Council discussed the capacity of the fields as well as capacity issues with the teams. Mr. Keen advised that the new agreements would contain capacity limits for the fields and if the team exceeds that number, they may lose field privileges. Vice Mayor Caraballo stated that monitoring registration numbers was key for efficiency of field use & Councilman Pickett stated that the leagues had to make improvements to the parks per their agreement with the City.

Mr. Keen advised that staff had positive face-to-face meetings with each user group and added that the user groups supported the new plan.

Mayor Martin felt that calling them, "user group" did not help to form a partnership & suggested using a new name. Mr. Kardys informed the City Council that the proposed agreements could be adjusted to fit the activity which would allow the City Council to meet the needs of the growing City. He stated that the Sports Program Coordinator would be the liaison for all user groups and would monitor field use, to which Mayor Martin added that more than one person had to learn that role.

A break was called at 12:23 p.m., and the meeting resumed at 1:26 p.m.

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- 5.e** Hear the Parks & Recreation Department High Impact Plan [2025-201](#)  
This item was discussed on Day 3 of the Workshop.
- 5.f** Hear the Police Department High Impact Plan and Police District Growth and Development Plan [2025-202](#)  
This item was discussed on Day 3 of the Workshop.
- 5.g** Discussion Regarding Golf Carts and Low Speed Vehicles. [2025-178](#)  
Review State Statue and Options for Implementing City Ordinances.  
  
(Clerk's Note: This item was heard after Item 5 e.)  
  
(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint was shown at this time.) Antonio Balestrieri, Transportation Engineer, provided an update on golf carts and explained the laws, the challenges and the opportunities available. The City Council and staff discussed the different types of vehicles for different paths within the City as well as the Mobility Plan. The City Council discussed whether multimodal pathways, according to the Mobility Plan, were to move people throughout the City versus moving them throughout a specific area. Ms. Larno-Sarno stated that the law changed after the Mobility Plan was established, therefore discussions were needed to sort out the details. Mary Savage-Dunham, Planning & Zoning Director, stated that the Mobility Plan was broad & did identify opportunities for intersection improvements & different types of pathways throughout the City, but the solution would be different depending on the location as some areas would not be safe for golf carts or low speed vehicles. Vice Mayor Caraballo requested a meeting to clarify the paths, vehicles, road rights-of-way, mobility plan, etc.  
  
Councilwoman Morgan inquired as to why the City was allowing golf carts without license plates to be driven, specifically in St. Lucie West, to which Mr. Balestrieri replied that staff did have safety concerns regarding that issue. Mayor Martin interjected that it was illegal but there were not enough officers to be seated at the various locations to catch the carts. Mr. Balestrieri stated that education was a key piece so he was working with the Police Department and enforcement would be forthcoming.
- 5.h** Hear a Review Regarding the City's Investment Portfolio. [2025-159](#)  
This item was discussed on Day 3 of the Workshop.
- 5.i** Provide a Review of the City's Debt Portfolio. [2025-158](#)  
This item was discussed on Day 3 of the Workshop.
- 5.j** Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 Budget Outlook [2025-191](#)
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(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint was shown at this time.) Caroline Sturgis, Director, Office of Management and Budget, provided an outlook on the 2025/26 Budget. Mayor Martin and Ms. Sturgis stated that project costs were rising and staff had to make difficult decisions, internally, because of limited funds. Vice Mayor Caraballo inquired about the Gas Tax discussion with the County, to which City Manager Merejo replied that they would most likely be using the state formula.

City Manager Merejo informed the City Council that the City would have to bond large stormwater projects as the fund could not sustain large amounts. He stated that within the next five years the City would need to incur about \$400 million of debt for Utility Services. Councilman Bonna inquired if the Crosstown Parkway debt could be reduced, to which Ms. Sturgis replied that their projection of reduction .0150 would bring in \$8.6 million to pay the debt. City Manager Merejo informed the City Council that FP&L wanted to install underground wires as opposed to poles, which would be an increase of cost for the City. There was City Council consensus to have a street lighting conversion in the near future.

Mayor Martin inquired about the CPI adjustment regarding Amendment #5, to which the City Council directed staff to contact the Property Appraisers Office to provide the amount of money the City would have received prior to the passing of Amendment #5. Vice Mayor Caraballo requested that technology gaps in certain departments be addressed within the budget. There was City Council consensus to have staff provide all funding options for Stormwater Fees as well as provide a project priority list to assist them in making milage decisions. Councilman Bonna stated that water, sewer & trash collection was at 4.4%, but there was a separate line item for garbage & trash collection which was at 3.8% and he advocated using the lower percentage if possible.

A break was called at 2:38 p.m., and the meeting resumed at 2:52 p.m.

**5.k** Project Updates on Community Redevelopment Areas

[2025-183](#)

(Clerk's Note: This item was heard after Item 5 g.)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint was shown at this time.) Jennifer Davis, Community Redevelopment Agency Director, provided CRA project updates. Vice Mayor Caraballo inquired as to how the artist cured the art on the bathrooms at Pioneer Park, to which Kelly Boatwright, Assistant Director, Parks & Recreation, stated that the artist had a meticulous and long process for all the art pieces. Mayor Martin and Vice Mayor Caraballo stated that maintenance of the pieces had to be a priority.

There was City Council consensus to provide a music program on the river when the tiki bar opens at the Port. Councilman Pickett stated that they had to pressure the TPO/DOT to install a second interchange into Southern Grove from the interstate. The City Manager stated that a developer was pushing the interchange issue as well and would likely set up one-on-one meetings with the City Council.

(Clerk' Note: A PowerPoint was shown at this time.) Kate Parmelee, Deputy City Manager, informed the City Council of Congressman Mast's interest in the federal appropriations and she provided staff's recommendations.

Vice Mayor Caraballo moved to approve the Federal Appropriation priority list. Councilman Pickett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by voice vote.

6. Adjourn

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

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Sally Walsh, City Clerk

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Shanna Donleavy, Deputy City Clerk