

City of Port St. Lucie

Citizen's Advisory Committee

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

Meeting Minutes - Final

Michael Bernard, Chair
Lynette Lockwood, Vice Chair
Jack Jennings, Chair Pro-Tem
Raymond Pezzi, Member
Christy Romano, Member
Melony Zaravelis, Member
Ingrid Sarmiento, Member
James Abbott, Alternate Member
Danielle Eber, Alternate Member

CAC

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

1:30 PM

City Hall, Room 366

Addition of Item 4A

1. Call to Order

A Regular Meeting of the CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE of the City of Port St. Lucie was called to order by Chair Bernard on April 17, 2024, at 1:30 p.m., at Port St. Lucie City Hall, Room 366, 121 Port St. Lucie Boulevard, Port St. Lucie, Florida.

2. Roll Call

Members Present:

Michael Bernard, Chair
Lynette Lockwood, Vice Chair
Jack Jennings
Raymond Pezzi
Christy Romano
Melony Zaravelis
Ingrid Sarmiento
James Abbott, Alternate

3. Determination of Quorum

4. Approval of Minutes

4.a March 27, 2024, Meeting Minutes

[2024-372](#)

It was the consensus of the Committee to move the approval of the March meeting minutes to the May agenda.

5. Public to be Heard

There was nothing heard under this item.

6. New Business

6.a Oath of Office for the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

[2024-368](#)

The Deputy City Clerk swore in Melony Zaravelis and Christy Romano.

6.b Septic to Sewer Project Update

[2024-370](#)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Jenny Tomes, Assistant Manager – USD Community Outreach, presented to the Committee and discussed the various treatment plants throughout the City, and gave a history of the development of the land and systems. She discussed the public health and economic concerns, grinder vs. gravity systems, multi-phased expansion program, connection fees, and conversion fees. She also provided information on installations, microbial tracking study, grant funding, and the number of conversions since 1999.

(Clerk's Note: At this time Mr. Abbott made an inquiry that was inaudible.) Mr. Pezzi stated that there used to be septic systems that leached into the St. Lucie River so it would be in the best interest of the community to figure out how to stop that from happening, and that it seemed to be the same information every year. He inquired as to what could be done to make it go away. Regarding Mr. Abbott's inquiry, Utilities Director Kevin Matyjaszek clarified that the grant program was a 50/50 split. Regarding Mr. Pezzi's inquiry, he stated that if the tank was leaking, it was on the preventative measure side of things, and he described the process. He discussed the silver-linings of a grinder system and stated that they were trying to avoid failing and leeching from the systems. He discussed that the residents' concern was for the expenses, and that there was more funding becoming available for grants. Mr. Matyjaszek and the Committee further discussed the components of the systems and the past situations of the City.

Chair Bernard noted that if a resident had a problem with their septic tank, they could not get it fixed anymore so they had no choice but to convert. Mr. Jennings inquired if the Committee members could have individual meetings with staff for follow-up questions, and Chair Bernard suggested having the Committee members submit all of their questions for staff to review and go over all of those questions at a future special meeting. Attorney Fabien advised that if they were to hold the meeting, it would need to be publicly noticed.

Chair Bernard discussed new residents moving to Port St. Lucie and having a bill for this, and that he believed there was a rule in place that you could not sell a home without having a new system put in. Mr. Matyjaszek clarified that there was a statutory requirement that if the system was

failing, it must be replaced, and with the new program, it would not prevent the sale of a home.

Ms. Tomes addressed the inquiry regarding whether other types of community outreach were being implemented besides letters that were sent out, stating that they were working on broadening the scope of the outreach. Mr. Matyjaszek added that they also provide outreach at public events such as the Citizens Summit.

Upon further discussion, Donna Rhoden, Special Assistant to the Assistant City Manager, explained that in the last group of State-funded grants that became available, the State is now putting a requirement that if you notify someone of the availability of the money, they are mandated to take it and make the system connection, whereas in the past, there was no State mandate, nor did Council make it a mandate. She also discussed grant funding through the City's Neighborhood Services Department's programs.

Vice Chair Lockwood inquired as to what the \$577 on the septic abandonment was, to which she was advised that it was a labor cost since the original septic system tank was required to abandon it per State Statute and the City takes responsibility, not the owner. She then inquired about education for Real Estate Agents, to which Mr. Matyjaszek informed that they actively engage with them, and a lot of them are already aware. Vice Chair Lockwood also expressed support for the Q&A suggestion. The Committee and staff then further discussed the fees and electricity within the pumps during power outages and hurricanes.

6.c St. Lucie County Landfill Tour Download and Raftelis Scope of Work Overview

[2024-371](#)

(Clerk's Note: A PowerPoint presentation was shown at this time.) Executive Assistant Jasmin Padova clarified that the St. Lucie County Landfill was owned and operated by St. Lucie County, and the City had an Interlocal Agreement with them. Mr. Pezzi suggested having education within schools and having a recording available for residents. Mariana Feldpausch, Solid Waste Director, discussed a new campaign and developing a program for the younger generation.

Ms. Padova then discussed the in-house study by Raftelis and discussed the timeline for the City's research on Solid Waste, the next steps that had been needed such as hiring a consultant and issuing an RFP (Request for Proposal). She highlighted the tasks that would be completed by Raftelis and noted that the Committee would assist starting from Task 5 – Executive Summary Report Documenting Key Findings. She stated that the Committee would receive a draft report prior to the September Citizen's

Advisory Committee meeting and have an opportunity to review it and provide feedback, which would be added to the final report.

Mr. Abbott inquired if it costs more to go in-house, to which Ms. Feldpausch replied that she would find the information and get back to him, but that it was a small lower cost and a huge up-front investment. Mr. Abbott suggested that the City speak to the City of Cape Coral for information. The Committee then discussed the land within the City and County, population, and the process of the Committee getting a report to Council. Vice Chair Lockwood encouraged the Committee to do a Google Search for the feasibility studies and research on their own time because they were public record.

6.d 2024 CAC Assignment Project Tracker.

[2024-369](#)

Ms. Padova discussed the Project Tracker for the new members and advised that she would begin introducing this at each meeting in the event that the Committee would like to make suggestions. She added that they could also email suggestions to her as well. Vice Chair Lockwood suggested that the Committee review the projects section of the City's website.

7. Unfinished Business

There was nothing to be heard under this item.

8. Adjourn

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 2:58 p.m.

Michael Bernard, Chair

Shanna Donleavy, Deputy City Clerk

Typed by: Jasmin De Freese, Deputy City Clerk