



City of North Port

4970 CITY HALL BLVD
NORTH PORT, FL 34286

Meeting Minutes City Commission Special Meeting

CITY COMMISSIONERS

Alice White, Mayor
Phil Stokes, Vice Mayor
Pete Emrich, Commissioner
Barbara Langdon, Commissioner
Debbie McDowell, Commissioner

APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Jerome Fletcher, City Manager
Amber L. Slayton, City Attorney
Heather Faust, City Clerk

Wednesday, June 26, 2024

10:00 AM

City Commission Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor White called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and provided required notifications regarding conducting a hybrid meeting.

Commissioner Emrich stated he will be attending the hybrid meeting via Communications Media Technology (CMT) due to experiencing a medical condition.

Commissioner Langdon arrived at 10:02 a.m.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Stokes, seconded by Commissioner Langdon, to approve the use of CMT for a hybrid meeting. The motion carried on the following vote:

- Yes:** 4 - Commissioner Emrich, Mayor White, Vice Mayor Stokes and Commissioner Langdon
- No:** 1 - Commissioner McDowell

ROLL CALL

- Present:** 5 - Commissioner Pete Emrich, Commissioner Debbie McDowell, Mayor Alice White, Vice Mayor Philip Stokes and Commissioner Barbara Langdon

Also Present:

City Manager Fletcher, City Attorney Slayton, City Clerk Faust, Police Chief Garrison, Fire Chief Titus, Deputy City Attorney Golen, Assistant Public Works Director Wisner, Assistant City Manager Bellia, and Assistant Finance Director Kukharensko

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Assistant Public Works Director Tricia Wisner.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor White requested a motion to approve the agenda.

A motion was made by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Langdon, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried on the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Emrich, Commissioner McDowell, Mayor White, Vice Mayor Stokes and Commissioner Langdon

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

3. GENERAL BUSINESS:

A. [24-0914](#) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Charter Amendment Language Related to the City's Bonding Authority.

Mayor White announced the item.

Mr. Fletcher introduced the item.

Ms. Wisner provided a presentation including recap, Debt Management Policy motions and objectives, proposed Charter language, language regarding emergency response, safety or public health, draft proposed ballot language, alternative Charter amendment language, and draft proposed ballot language with cap.

Commission questions and discussion took place regarding ad valorem debt requirements, language regarding repayment of debt, educating public, general fund revenue sources, language regarding use of non-ad valorem funds, language regarding emergency disaster, option 3, including imminent infrastructure or system failure, non-ad valorem assessment increases, revenue replenishment, debt restructuring, single-project cap, language regarding project types, inclusion of a cap, emergency ordinance versus ordinance adoption, Surtax project debt, government trust, determining caps by project/situational type, cap language placement, cap amount, project examples, leasing versus bond, interest on debt, and principal amount.

A motion was made by Commissioner Langdon, seconded by Commissioner McDowell, to direct staff to insert referendum language establishing a \$15 million principal cap per non-emergency project. The motion carried on the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Emrich, Commissioner McDowell, Mayor White, Vice Mayor Stokes and Commissioner Langdon

A motion was made by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Vice Mayor Stokes, to direct staff to add Mr. Miller's language regarding payable from funds other than property taxes. The motion carried on the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Emrich, Commissioner McDowell, Mayor White, Vice Mayor Stokes and Commissioner Langdon

Recess was taken from 11:40 a.m. until 11:50 a.m.

Commission questions and discussion continued regarding bond counsel presence at first reading, and general obligation bonds.

A motion was made by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Vice Mayor Stokes, to rescind prior direction given regarding bond counsel presence at first reading of the Charter Referendum. The motion carried on the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Emrich, Commissioner McDowell, Mayor White, Vice Mayor Stokes and Commissioner Langdon

Commission questions and discussion continued regarding Debt Management Policy language including debt services limitations, general obligation debt approval language, process for Commission approval of incurring debt, not including process language within the Code, super majority votes, emergency meetings, language stating debt issuance by super majority vote, by ordinance, and not at an emergency meeting, emergency meetings, assessment of emergency damages, and emergency ordinance language within the Charter.

A motion was made by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Vice Mayor Stokes, to direct the City Attorney to include language to the Charter ordinance that the issuance of debt cannot be conducted using an emergency ordinance.

Commission questions and discussion continued regarding debt issuance type.

A motion to amend was made by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Vice Mayor Stokes, to include "non-emergency debt." The motion to amend carried on the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Emrich, Commissioner McDowell, Mayor White, Vice Mayor Stokes and Commissioner Langdon

The main motion as amended carried on the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Emrich, Commissioner McDowell, Mayor White, Vice Mayor Stokes and Commissioner Langdon

Commission questions and discussion continued regarding the Debt Management Policy including approval by ordinance, ordinance versus resolution, creating processes that are not consistent with State Statute, resolution with two readings, and adoption/effective date prior to November.

A motion was made by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Langdon, to include Charter language to state the Debt Management Policy will be adopted by Commission via Resolution with two readings.

Commission questions and discussion continued regarding process for approval of amendments.

The motion carried on the following vote with Commissioner Langdon dissenting due to creating a different process for one resolution.

Yes: 4 - Commissioner Emrich, Commissioner McDowell, Mayor White and Vice Mayor Stokes

No: 1 - Commissioner Langdon

Commission questions and discussion took place regarding draft Debt Management Policy review, adoption time frame, contingency on referendum passing, questions to staff and outside counsel, possible workshop, financial aspect, and legal review.

A motion was made by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Vice Mayor Stokes, to direct the City Manager and City Clerk to schedule debt policy workshop in September with the final adoption to be held prior to the November referendum. The motion carried on the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Emrich, Commissioner McDowell, Mayor White, Vice Mayor Stokes and Commissioner Langdon

Public Comment:

Ms. Faust read the following eComment into the record:

Krystina Smith: Expressed the need for further clarification of referendum language.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

5. ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor White adjourned the meeting at 1:08 p.m.

City of North Port, Florida

By: _____
Alice White, Mayor

Attest: _____
Heather Faust, City Clerk