



City of North Port

4970 City Hall Blvd
North Port, FL 34286

Meeting Minutes City Commission Joint Meeting

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

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

Monday, June 12, 2023

5:30 PM

City Commission Chambers

With Environmental Advisory Board

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Langdon called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

Also Present:

City Manager Fletcher, Assistant City Attorney Coughlin, City Clerk Faust, Police Chief Garrison, Acting Fire Chief Herlihy, and Development Services Director Alaina Ray.

Environmental Advisory Board Members: Honey D. Holland, Lola M. Robinson, Kathleen D. Therrien, Erin I. Hall and William A. English

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by citizen Edie Driest.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

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

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Edie Driest: land management funding and Warm Mineral Springs

Allain Hale: Tree Fund uses and tree replacement

3. GENERAL BUSINESS:

[23-0976](#)

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Approved Uses of the Tree Fund.

Mayor Langdon announced the item.

Mr. Fletcher introduced the item.

Advisory Board member comments took place regarding land conservation enhancements, tree canopy survey, long-term concept for saving percentage of city-owned lots with an "adopt a lot" option, purchasing vacant lots, Hurricane Ian impact on trees, benefits of tree survey, use of funds for salaries and vehicles, options for irrigation, renaming the Tree Fund to the Environmental Restoration Fund, establishing an Environmental Division, obtaining auctioned properties, property conservation, board duties, tree fund primary function, environmental land management, and board recommendations to Commission.

Mr. Fletcher spoke to new positions and vehicle purchases.

Commission questions and comments took place regarding pollinators, tree fund monies, N. Salford tree project, financial benefits of planting trees, Comprehensive Tree Planting program, tree canopy restoration, large scale development tree replacement, utilization of public spaces, importance of signage, community tree walk, tree giveaway, importance of replanting trees, impact of removing trees, natural habitat and growth, right-of-ways pilot program options, habitat replacement, wildlife islands, tax lien regulations, Environmental Land Manager position, concern with lack of tree replacement in developments, maximum use of city-owned land, saving mature trees, preservation of land and lots, land management, education, establishing a plan for fund utilization, tree canopy study, fruit trees, and community gardens.

Mr. Fletcher responded to questions regarding staffing needs.

Commission questions and comments continued regarding maintenance of publicly owned land, environmental restoration, creation of Environmental Division, defining fund purpose and priority list, approach of new position implementation, funding of positions and equipment, pilot programs, incentives, and focal point in City Hall.

Mr. Fletcher provided additional information regarding start date of new positions, number of vehicles and positions, funding options, and pilot program.

Ms. Ray spoke to prior environmental experience, intent of additional positions, use of tree funds, reoccurring costs, and measured approach to funding positions.

Recess was taken from 7:20 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.

Board member comments continued regarding enforcement of code requirements for plantings within developments, habitat restoration, city-owned sensitive lands, planning tools, restoration financial benefits, grants, staffing, plan for environmental preservation of land, board interest and participation, beautification of retention ponds, and revenue options.

There was no public comment.

Commission discussion took place regarding future recommendations and process for providing board feedback and suggestions to Commission.

Ms. Faust spoke to staff liaison role and process for providing information to Commission.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ms. Faust read the following eComment into the record:

Sean Kirkpatrick: expressed support of Comprehensive Tree Canopy Survey

5. ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Langdon adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

City of North Port, Florida

By: _____
Barbara Langdon, Mayor

Attest: _____
Heather Faust, City Clerk