



# City of North Port

4970 CITY HALL BLVD  
NORTH PORT, FL 34286

## Meeting Minutes - Draft City Commission Workshop

### *CITY COMMISSIONERS*

*Debbie McDowell, Mayor*

*Jill Luke, Vice Mayor*

*Christopher Hanks, Commissioner*

*Pete Emrich, Commissioner*

*Vanessa Carusone, Commissioner*

### *APPOINTED OFFICIALS*

*Peter Lear, City Manager*

*Amber L. Slayton, City Attorney*

*Heather Taylor, Interim City Clerk*

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Tuesday, January 7, 2020

9:00 AM

City Hall, Room 244

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### Strategic Planning Session

#### CALL TO ORDER

Mayor McDowell called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

#### ROLL CALL

**Present:** 5 - Mayor Debbie McDowell, Vice Mayor Jill Luke, Commissioner Christopher Hanks, Commissioner Vanessa Carusone and Commissioner Pete Emrich

#### Also Present

City Manager Peter Lear, City Attorney Amber Slayton, Chief Scott Titus, Human Resource Director Christine McDade, Neighborhood Development Services Director Frank Miles, Planning Division Manager Nicole Galehouse, Police Captain Scott King, Public Utilities Director Rick Newkirk, Public Works Director Julie Bellia, Communications Manager Josh Taylor, Economic Development Manager Mel Thomas, Recording Secretary Susan Hale, and Presenter Christine Nolan.

**The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ms. Nolan.**

#### 1. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

#### 2. DISCUSSION

[20-1694](#)

Strategic Planning

Mr. Lear introduced Christine Nolan, presenter for the Strategic Planning process.

Ms. Nolan provided an introduction regarding municipal planning for the future.

Vision Statement: Vibrant desirable and sustainable city where people are proud to live,

work and play.

2040 DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES: safe/comfortable place, workable/attainable processes and procedures, streamlined, infrastructure in place, talented workforce to provide City services, accessible, connected walkable, I-75 connection -- people coming in vs. leaving to work and play, increased industry and commercial, hotels, restaurants, entertainment district, pride in neighborhoods, Warm Mineral Springs Master Plan completed, aesthetically pleasing City standards, high speed internet connectability, affordable City, willingness to support/value investments, improve developer accountability and commitment to the City, family friendly parks and recreation, affordable and accessible educational childcare, hospital, expanded/integrated public safety services, less "need" for social services and less reliance on City, a thriving community, vibrance, versatility, diversity, engaged community, green spaces preserved for future, historical preservation, museums to display, managed growth, well developed transportation, taking advantage of water access, greater cohesiveness between growth and areas, canal walk between Central Park and Dallas White Park, see activity downtown, patronizing businesses, citizens truly value City services, City increase in community involvement, skilled educated workforce, and older southwest areas revitalized.

Ms. Nolan spoke to coordinating with staff to develop and present a recommended course of action to Commission.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATES

CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT discussion regarding pursuing grant opportunities to increase levels of service.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT discussion regarding an update on moving forward for obtaining a community hospital, creating a hospital taskforce to make recommendations to the City, policy issues of what health-care providers to pursue, focusing on other health-related specialties, pinpointing North Port's needs, macro vs. major hospital/care center and what the market determines, a timeline and scope for the taskforce, and the taskforce being under the Economic Development Department.

FIRE AND POLICE DEPARTMENTS discussion regarding obtaining property to construct a fire and police training complex, local and State funding for the project, contemplating a regional training center, expanding the complex for driver-training testing, maintaining health and public safety services, firefighter training, West Villages growth and future station, sharing facility with Sarasota County at West Villages until future demands separate facility for North Port Police and Fire, adding a second ambulance at Station 82, upcoming Union Contract negotiations, and the Commission closed session union discussions.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT discussion regarding expanding blueways and greenways, Blueridge parking lot expansion, Canal and Myakkahatchee Creek Master Plan phase 2, Atwater Center Community Meeting details, Langlais Park funding postponed and reduced, and revisiting Dallas White campus expansion.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT discussion concerning Price Boulevard widening project update, stormwater pond acquisition funding, Price Boulevard funding details discussion scheduled at a forthcoming Commission discussion, reasoning for the present Price Boulevard stormwater design, flood reduction drainage improvements, financial impact of removing the suggested purchased properties within the Big Slough from the tax roll, update on the Dorothy Avenue area project, traffic preemption plan and retrofit update,

Florida Department of Transportation having no plans for a cross-town access parkway in North Port, Ortiz Boulevard added as an evacuation route by Sarasota County, crosstown access parkway update, the need for a connectivity study consultant was explained and anticipated time to finish, update on interchange discussions with the Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

Recess was held from 10:26 a.m. -- 10:49 a.m.

UTILITIES DEPARTMENT discussion regarding wastewater/water distribution improvement updates, neighborhood expansions update of phase 1, waterline looping project updates provided, San Mateo job 90% plans expected in March, identifying future targeted looping projects to be a budget discussion item, new administration warehouse facility and Talon Bay/La Casa "representatives" meeting update, plans for purchasing the warehouse property, when individual community meetings are mandatory, and a TrackIT update provided.

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES discussion concerning development of a main street option in activity centers, making urban design standards flexible, a study needed for activity center, job creation goals to develop Activity Center 6 Master Plan to accelerate business development, developing quality workforce and strong labor market, using strategic plan for a marketing study of targeted businesses to pursue, outreaching existing businesses and internships, networking home-operated businesses, business incubators hubs, optimizing land use in activity centers, design standard flexibility within commercial development, update on diverse economic development and mixed use opportunities including commerce parks, neighborhood commercial zoning update and pending workshop, purchase and use limitations of Little Salt Spring, disposition of Little Salt Spring by the University of Florida and City has the no future reversionary provision to purchase or re-obtain ownership, Ms. Slayton will provide another memo regarding Little Salt Spring, pursuing ownership of escheated lots, promotion of affordable housing options and incentives, tiny homes, neighborhood commercial enhancements update and forthcoming workshop, update on ownership of Little Salt Spring and further information to be researched by Ms. Slayton, pursuing ownership of escheated lots creating land banks, affordable housing developments under construction, neighborhood revitalization workshop and update, signage in neighborhoods to be included in the workshop, City's urban design standards updated with the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) to include signage, difference between the form-based codes and the ULDC, facilities strategic locations around the City and remodeling City Hall and creating a West Villages services center, best practices/current priorities/legal compliance in the ULDC, streamlines permitting process and reorganizing the Building department, a TrackIT legal review needed and a monthly update to be provided, feasibility studies and strategy planning, and announcing that the Sarasota County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) will have offices once a week in City Hall starting in January.

Ms. Thomas provided an update regarding the EDC Agreement.

Recess held from 11:52 a.m. to 12:21 p.m.

Commissioner Carusone was not present.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT discussion regarding progress and/or completion of various road/landscape/maintenance projects, owners clearing their own waterways, soil storage explained, identifying staging areas to reduce travel and response time, streamlined one-step permitting update, non-ad valorem assessment exemption discussion vs. services for plans review, interactive map regarding public works projects and transfer station progress, annual Road-E-O scheduled, mural to be refurbished, and methodology study completed.

Commissioner Carusone arrived at 12:54 p.m.

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER discussion included on-going marketing activities for City programs, refurbishing Mandalas for World Peace at Warm Mineral Springs, rebranding North RePort application, rebuilding City's website, ADA compliance, community calendar, video tour of the City, See-Click Fix process was explained, WKDW Ratio broadcasts regarding City issues, updating intermission video during Commission meetings, switching from the CodeRED emergency notification to Everbridge, challenges of ADA compliance, future overhaul of the City's website, and the myriad of information available to the public.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT discussion review included acquisition of additional lots along Myakkahatchee Creek, Warm Mineral Springs design phase approval and architecture to remain in compliance with State Historic Preservation guidelines, increased attendance at Warm Mineral Springs, continued "free admission day", park project completions and updates, establishing facilities strategically around the City, potential regional park locations, possible museums in City parks, interlocal agreement with Sky YMCA, use agreements with youth organizations changing from Sarasota County to the City, interlocal agreement with Sarasota County concerning a park transition plan, a recap regarding the Polar Plunge at the Aquatic Center, and security lighting at the Aquatic center.

Recess was taken from 1:51 p.m. to 2:10 p.m.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT discussion included enhancing service to internal customers with procurement, modifying the budget fund balance report, a finance review for agenda items having a financial impact, implementing GovMax, contracting a financial advisor, asset code changes, redeploying staff based on a needs analysis, meetings with department managers, determining additional training needed City-wide in procurement process, demo policy for vendors, using Sharepoint for the budget, future plans, and quarterly department business managers meeting.

FIRE RESCUE DEPARTMENT discussion included a door-to-door campaign regarding a neighborhood revitalization project partnering with Red Cross and citizen's responses, a home fire safety evaluation using GIS tracking showing completed areas, process for replacing smoke detectors explained, the volunteer program explained, establishing fire station facilities throughout the City, inspection forms now electronic, communication issues between agencies, fostering healthy work environment, firefighter fitness training, firefighter mentor program, current firefighter involvement after the emergency is over, constant activities of a firefighter, communicating with business owners, and internal fiscal sustainability.

POLICE DEPARTMENT DISCUSSION review included community outreach efforts at the Morgan Center, adding a homeless outreach case manager, future crime prevention practioner for businesses, possible expanded weekend coverage at the Aquatic Center, expanding facilities throughout the City, building a full-service substation in conjunction with the Fire Department in West Villages, body cams being fully deployed, social media outreach expansions, drone program update, researching automated vehicle locations, improved enforcement of false alarms, information regarding GPS tracking on an officer will be provided to Commission, fostering healthy work environment update, K-9 training will be ready for spring training at the stadium, and interagency partnership updates.

Mr. Lear spoke to scheduling a Commission Retreat.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT discussion review consisted of enhanced employee engagement activities, health-centered activities affecting City insurance premiums as well as general health of employees, measurable impacts with vendors and brokers, CIGNA out of network with Sarasota Memorial Hospital and next steps for the City.

Ms. Nolan provided a wrap-up of today's conversation and next meeting's issues for discussion, and agreed to review the structure of the strategic plan process and possibly modify the approach.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was no public comment.

**4. ADJOURNMENT:**

Mayor McDowell adjourned the meeting at 3:23 p.m.

City of North Port, Florida

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Debbie McDowell, Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Heather Taylor, Interim City Clerk

Minutes approved at the Commission Regular Meeting this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2020.