



City of North Port

4970 CITY HALL BLVD
NORTH PORT, FL 34286

Meeting Minutes - Draft City Commission Regular Meeting

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

Tuesday, February 4, 2020

10:00 AM

City Commission Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor McDowell called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: 4 - Mayor Debbie McDowell, Vice Mayor Jill Luke, Commissioner Vanessa Carusone and Commissioner Pete Emrich

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Christopher Hanks

Also Present

City Manager Peter Lear, City Attorney Amber Slayton, Interim City Clerk Heather Taylor, Recording Secretary Susan Hale, Planning Division Manager Nicole Galehouse, Parks and Recreation Director Sandy Pfundheller, Police Chief Todd Garrison, and Public Works Director Julie Bellia.

The invocation was offered by Pastor Grigore Leordean followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by William English.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Carusone, seconded by Vice Mayor Luke, to approve the Agenda, moving the Ordinance No. 2020-04 immediately after Public Comment. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Mayor McDowell, Vice Mayor Luke, Commissioner Carusone and Commissioner Emrich

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Hanks

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

ORDINANCES - First Reading:

B. [ORD. NO. 2020-04](#) An Ordinance of the City of North Port, Florida, Establishing the Central Parc Community Development District, Pursuant to Chapter 190, Florida Statutes; Specifying General and Special Powers of the District; Describing the External Boundaries of the District; Providing for the Administration, Operation, Maintenance, and Financing of the District; Naming the Initial Members of the Board of Supervisors for the District; Providing for the Distribution of Facilities and Services; Providing for Conflicts; Providing for Severability; and Providing an Effective Date.

A motion was made by Commissioner Carusone, seconded by Vice Mayor Luke, to read the Ordinance by title only. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Mayor McDowell, Vice Mayor Luke, Commissioner Carusone and Commissioner Emrich

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Hanks

Ms. Taylor read the Ordinance by title only.

Michael Eckert, Hopping Green and Sams, introduced the court reporter.

Mr. Lear introduced the item.

Ms. Slayton spoke to State Statutes applying to Community Development Districts (CDD) providing findings and criteria that the Commission must consider.

Mr. Eckert, clarified requirements for a legal description of metes and bounds, noted a map could be added, construction can be done by the CDD, or a developer and the CDD use the bond money to acquire the property.

Ms. Slayton spoke to the petition not being required to be included in the Ordinance.

Mr. Eckert provided further clarification regarding the petition being a public record and is part of the agenda backup.

There was no public comment.

A motion was made by Commissioner Carusone, seconded by Vice Mayor Luke, to continue Ordinance 2020-04 for second reading on February 25, 2020.

After a suggestion to include a map, the majority of Commissioners would not support an amendment, but a map will be provided at some point.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Mayor McDowell, Vice Mayor Luke, Commissioner Carusone and Commissioner Emrich

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Hanks

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. [20-1770](#) Current Vacancies for Boards and Committees and Upcoming Expiration Dates for Boards and Committees.

Ms. Taylor read the Announcements into the record.

4. CONSENT AGENDA:

A motion was made by Commissioner Carusone, seconded by Commissioner Emrich, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Mayor McDowell, Vice Mayor Luke, Commissioner Carusone and Commissioner Emrich

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Hanks

- A. [19-1534](#) Approval to Award Agreement No. 2020-03, Financial Services Advisor to PFM Financial Advisors, LLC. in the Amount of \$6,000.00

This item was approved on Consent.

- B. [19-1542](#) Approve the Asset Disposition and Recommended Method of Disposal Dated February 2020 Pursuant to Chapter 2 Administration, Article VIII Procurement, Section 2-419, Disposition of City Assets and Property (d), (1) of the Code of the City of North Port, Florida

This item was approved on Consent.

- C. [19-1582](#) Approve the Memorandum of Understanding Between U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and the City of North Port for the Enforcement of Laws Relating to HSI Jurisdiction and a Memorandum of Understanding Between Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the City of North Port for the Reimbursement of Joint Operations Expenses.

This item was approved on Consent.

- D. [20-1750](#) Approve an Amendment to Community Development Block Grant Subrecipient Agreement Between Sarasota County, Florida, and the City of North Port, Florida, to Fund Surveying and Construction of Sidewalks in the Amount of \$110,050, Contract Number B-18-UC-12-0014

This item was approved on Consent.

- E. [20-1762](#) Cash Receipts Summary Report for December 2019

This item was approved on Consent.

- F. [20-1763](#) Approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between The Panama City Police Department and the North Port Police Department for the Traffic and Criminal Software (TraCS)

This item was approved on Consent.

- G. [20-1774](#) Appointment of Holly Loos as a Regular Member to the Art Advisory Board, to Serve a Two-Year Term from February 4, 2020 to February 4, 2022

This item was approved on Consent.

- H. [20-1789](#) Appoint David Wood to the Beautification and Tree/Scenic Highway Committee to Serve a Two-Year Term from February 4, 2020 to February 4, 2022

This item was approved on Consent.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS continued:

ORDINANCES - First Reading:

- A. [ORD. NO. 2020-09](#) An Ordinance of the City of North Port, Florida, Amending Section 2-54 of the Code of the City of North Port, Florida, Related to Proclamations at City Commission Meetings; Providing for Conflicts; Providing for Severability; Providing for Codification; and Providing an Effective Date.

A motion was made by Commissioner Carusone, seconded by Vice Mayor Luke, to read the Ordinance by title only. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Mayor McDowell, Vice Mayor Luke, Commissioner Carusone and Commissioner Emrich

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Hanks

Ms. Taylor read the Ordinance by title only.

Recess was taken from 10:22 a.m. to 10:31 a.m. to correct technical difficulties.

Ms. Taylor provided an overview.

There was no public comment and no questions or comments from the Commission.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Luke, seconded by Commissioner Emrich, to continue Ordinance No. 2020-09 for second reading on February 25, 2020. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Mayor McDowell, Vice Mayor Luke, Commissioner Carusone and Commissioner Emrich

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Hanks

6. GENERAL BUSINESS:**A. [19-1435](#) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Utility Service Partners Private Label, Inc. d/b/a Service Line Warranties of America Marketing Agreement**

Mr. Lear introduced the item, stating that staff does not recommend moving forward with this, anyone may purchase the warranty, the public being advised that the City has no objections to the private entity, and the company's next step is their choice but staff will be contacting them..

No action was taken.

B. [20-1786](#) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding a City of North Port Ad Valorem Tax Exemption for Persons 65 and Older

Mr. Lear introduced the item and noted some backup attachments were included by mistake.

Mayor McDowell suggested an additional qualification to receive a Homestead exemption for seniors.

Mr. Lear spoke to reviewing Sarasota County's Homestead Exemption requirements, 295 homes that presently qualify, and district assessments are unknown at this time.

Discussion ensued regarding the 10-year residency requirements not mentioned in the backup, adding another tax exemption for elderly caregivers, and the anticipated lost revenue in ad valorem taxes.

Mr. Lear clarified the change will require budget revenue being replaced elsewhere or another expense reduced to offset the exemption.

Discussion ensued to move forward with an ordinance with recommended dates and times in order to approve by March 1, 2020.

Ms. Taylor affirmed an ordinance requires a 10-day notice prior to second reading.

Ms. Slayton spoke to time necessary to prepare an ordinance and additional research needed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Carusone, seconded by Vice Mayor Luke, to bring back an Ordinance for an ad valorem tax exemption for persons 65 and older with a limited income with the amount of exemption of \$25,000. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Mayor McDowell, Vice Mayor Luke, Commissioner Carusone and Commissioner Emrich

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Hanks

Discussion ensued regarding all other exemptions or reductions in which North Port is not currently participating.

There was a consensus to direct staff to provide a memo with information regarding all other exemptions or reductions in which North Port is not participating and the financial impact on the City budget.

There was a consensus to provide a definitive answer showing the financial impact at \$10,000; \$20,000; and \$50,000 along with the financial impact, if any, to the Fire District Assessment.

C. [20-1756](#) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Deputy City Clerk Evaluation

Mr. Lear introduced the item, and spoke to the percent increase to Ms. Taylor's salary being a Commission decision, 4% increase has been the norm, the evaluation is based on the Deputy Clerk position, and if a new deputy clerk is hired the base pay would not be carried over to the new employee.

Ms. Taylor spoke to the trial position ending in April, and stated her plan is prepared and will be emailed to the Commission within two weeks.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Luke, seconded by Commissioner Carusone, to approve a 4% increase based on the Performance Evaluation of the Deputy Clerk.

Discussion ensued regarding scheduling an agenda item regarding the open City Clerk position.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Mayor McDowell, Vice Mayor Luke, Commissioner Carusone and Commissioner Emrich

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Hanks

There was a consensus to direct the Interim City Clerk to bring her plan to the Commission at the earliest possible convenience.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

8. COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS:

A. [20-1800](#) Commissioner Emrich's Report

Nothing to report.

C. [20-1802](#) Commissioner Hanks' Report

Not present.

D. [20-1803](#) Vice Mayor Luke's Report

Vice Mayor Luke reported the State voted to purchase the Orange Hammock Preserve.

Ms. Bellia spoke to potholes on private property behind Popeye's being addressed through Code Enforcement, and regulatory signage need updating which should come to Code Enforcement soon.

Mr. Lear confirmed City vehicles are at-risk from that road as well.

Ms. Bellia suggested meeting the City Attorney and involve Code Enforcement from a public health, safety and welfare aspect to compel upkeep to the road.

Discussion ensued regarding holding the owners financially accountable for vehicle damage from the road.

Ms. Slayton spoke to City's options available to take over the maintenance of the road.

There was a consensus to direct staff to provide ideas regarding assuming responsibility for the privately-owned alley behind CVS and to create an agenda item to be brought back the end of May.

Vice Mayor Luke continued her report concerning Veterans' Day not being a school holiday, inviting school children to City veterans' celebrations, IslandWalk video regarding recycling and Citizens' Emergency Response Team (CERT) program, Amazon building a distribution center in Venice, and the Atlanta Braves' minor team coming to Cool Today Park.

E. [20-1804](#)

Mayor McDowell's Report

Mayor McDowell reported an update on a policy to advertise non-City events.

Mr. Lear spoke to emailing an update to Commission.

Discussion ensued concerning placing those ads on the City's website until a policy is approved, and the community calendar on the City's Facebook as a calendaring resource.

Mr. Lear confirmed that the City is not a media outlet, and advertisements may be posted in City Hall upon approval.

Mayor McDowell continued her report concerning a bus transport for the City's July 4, 2020 celebration, and suggested additional parking on the State College of Florida (SCF) campus.

Ms. Pfundheller spoke to her contact with SCF and offering to clean up the parking lot afterward.

There was a consensus to direct staff to report back their review of bussing options from City Hall or the Morgan Center for the 4th of July celebration; as well as sending a letter to SCF requesting to use their parking lot, and asking Sarasota County to send a similar letter.

B. [20-1801](#)

Commissioner Carusone's Report

Commissioner Carusone voiced concern pertaining to what may happen to the Orange Hammock Ranch in the future and the Peace River Water Authority owning land adjacent to the conservation area, and requested that the conservation foundation consider the City's offer to purchase property rights.

Discussion ensued regarding being cognizant of the Orange Hammock Ranch future development, purchasing rights to the land, obtaining a vested interest in what happens to the land, a return on the City's investment, and questions still needing answers.

There was a consensus for staff to provide a memo to the Commission with answers after reaching out to the conservation foundation to determine the possibility for the City to invest (if it is not too late) in the Orange Hammock Ranch Conservation land, with negotiating rights to the water, a vote at the table or a veto right, how much, and what does it do for the City.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE AND LEGAL REPORTS:

There were no Administrative or Legal report.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor McDowell adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.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.