



City of North Port

4970 CITY HALL BLVD
NORTH PORT, FL 34286

Meeting Minutes - Draft City Commission Special 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, City Clerk

Thursday, September 17, 2020

5:01 PM

CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS

Final Public Budget Hearing

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor McDowell called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.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, City Clerk Heather Taylor, Fire Chief Scott Titus, Police Chief Todd Garrison, Public Works Director Julie Bellia, Public Works Operator and Maintenance Manager Chuck Speake, Engineering Division Manager Gerardo Traverso

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Carusone.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Yes: 5 - Mayor McDowell, Vice Mayor Luke, Commissioner Hanks, Commissioner Carusone and Commissioner Emrich

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Greg Culy: expressed concern with City Manager investigation vote

Ms. Taylor read the following public comment into the record:

John Cook: spoke to City Manager investigation in regards to budget

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

ORDINANCE: Second Reading

A. [ORD. NO. 2020-30](#) An Ordinance of the City of North Port, Florida, Providing for Certification and Adoption of an Ad Valorem Millage Rate for the 2020-21 Fiscal Year; Providing for Levying and Assessment; Providing for Severability; Providing for Conflicts; and Providing for an Effective Date.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hanks, seconded by Commissioner Carusone to combine Ordinance Nos. 2020-30 and 2020-31 for discussion only. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Mayor McDowell, Vice Mayor Luke, Commissioner Hanks, Commissioner Carusone and Commissioner Emrich

Ms. Taylor read Ordinance No. 2020-30 by title and section 2.01 only and Ordinance 2020-31 by title only.

Mr. Lear introduced the item, read justification for increase, and responded to Commission questions regarding items to be discussed during district meetings, Mr. Miles salary, and update on COVID monies received.

Chief Titus spoke to current COVID monies received, future reimbursements, and grant submittals.

Discussion followed regarding Florida Retirement System (FRS) percentage retained, determination of amount received and city contributions into the FRS, millage rate of surrounding municipalities, and effective millage rate.

Ms. Bellia responded to questions regarding expected procurement date for Tropicare Boulevard sidewalk project, cost for sidewalk changing from asphalt to concrete, determining if funding would be available from Toledo Blade Boulevard to Van Camp Street with size and design modifications, resurfacing Capital Improvement Project (CIP) for Tropicare Boulevard base, ability to complete sidewalk in same fiscal year, revising the sidewalk project to have the ability to complete the project with the current funding, possible ability to bid both projects together, and installation of dark fiber with Frontier.

Mr. Traverso responded to questions regarding prior commission discussion regarding phase one and phase two, 5-foot concrete requirement per Unified Land Development Code (ULDC), and cost associated with updating plans.

Discussion continued regarding prior commission direction, estimated loss of revenue by sales tax, location of dark fiber installation by the City versus Frontier, extent of connectivity of service, cost for Sumter Boulevard to Van Camp Street using 6-foot asphalt, and current status of cable installation on the north side.

Mr. Lear responded to questions regarding funding related to neighborhood development services reorganization and new director position.

Public Comment:

Jeffery Scott: expressed concern with budget

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Luke, seconded by Commissioner Carusone, to

approve Ordinance No. 2020-30 as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Mayor McDowell, Vice Mayor Luke, Commissioner Hanks, Commissioner Carusone and Commissioner Emrich

B. [ORD. NO. 2020-31](#) An Ordinance of the City of North Port, Florida, Adopting a Non-district Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning October 1, 2020 and Ending on September 30, 2021; Adopting the Capital Improvement Budget and Program; Prescribing the Term, Conditions, and Provisions with Respect to the Items of Appropriation and Their Payment; Providing for Supplemental Appropriations and Re-appropriations; Providing for Conflicts; Providing for Severability; and Providing an Effective Date.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Luke, seconded by Commissioner Carusone, to approve Ordinance No. 2020-31 as presented. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Mayor McDowell, Vice Mayor Luke, Commissioner Hanks, Commissioner Carusone and Commissioner Emrich

RESOLUTION:

C. [RES. NO. 2020-R-26](#) A Resolution of the City Commission of the City of North Port, Florida, Repealing Resolution No. 2018-R-13; Adopting a Fund Balance Policy; Incorporating Recitals; Providing for Conflicts; Providing for Severability; and Providing an Effective Date

Ms. Taylor read the resolution by title only.

Mr. Lear introduced the item and responded to questions regarding additional requested change, the clause encompassing enough information, and including use to lower millage rate.

Ms. Slayton responded to questions regarding commissions ability to modify the policy in the future.

Mr. Lear responded to additional questions regarding recommended percentage for bond rate, reasonable fund balance, economic uncertainty reserve, replenishing funds, savings to be returned to fund balance, replenishment of disaster relief fund not having a when or how included, including an annual plan to replenish funds, simplifying the titles to Emergency Reserve Fund and the Stabilization Fund, purpose of stabilization fund, effect if there is a zero percentage in the stabilization fund, and spoke to section 4c regarding recovery of funds for replenishment of funds, justification of having a policy when there is not a minimum percentage, current average fund balance for stabilization reserve, possibly having a 1.5% minimum, and impact on bond rating by not following policy.

There was consensus to change the title to Emergency and Disaster Reserve for the 20%

There was consensus to change the title to Economic Stabilization Reserve for he 10%.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Luke, seconded by Commissioner Carusone to approve Resolution No. 2020-R-26 with the two consensus' changing the names.

Discussion followed regarding justification for not including a minimum.

Mayor McDowell stated she could not support the resolution due to concern with funds not being replenished and there not being a minimum for the economic stabilization reserve.

The motion carried on the following vote:

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

No: 1 - Mayor McDowell

4. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Conni Brunni: submitted verbal records request
Jeffrey Scott: expressed concern with budget

5. COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS:

Commissioner Hanks did not have a report.
Vice Mayor Luke did not have a report.
Commissioner Carusone did not have a report.
Commissioner Emrich did not have a report.
Mayor McDowell reported on COG meeting regarding students in school, online and home schooled, and CARES Act reimbursement for utilities.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE AND LEGAL REPORTS:

There were no administrative or legal reports.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor McDowell adjourned the meeting at 6:44 p.m.

City of North Port, Florida

By: _____
Debbie McDowell, Mayor

Attest: _____
Heather Taylor, City Clerk

Minutes approved at the Commission Regular Meeting this ____ day of _____, 2020.