



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

Thursday, July 25, 2024

9:00 AM

City Commission Chambers

Employee Health Center

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor White called the meeting to order at 9:00 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.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Stokes, seconded by Commissioner Langdon, to accept 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, Deputy City Attorney Golen, City Clerk Faust, Police Chief Garrison, Fire Chief Titus, Human Resource Director McDade, Benefits and Wellness Administrator Witkosky, Assistant City Manager Bellia, Deputy City Manager Yarborough, Parks and Recreation Director Pfundheller, Assistant Development Services Director Barnes, and Finance Director Williams.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Human Resource Director Christine McDade.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor White requests a motion to approve the agenda.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Stokes, 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. [24-1098](#)**

Discussion and Possible Action to Move Forward with Preliminary Plans for the Establishment and Funding of an Employee Healthcare Center Utilizing Funds From Budgeted Savings in the Amount of \$1,124,773 for the Proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Budget.

Mayor White announced the item.

Mr. Fletcher introduced the item.

Ms. McDade introduced Shawn Fleming, Gehring Group and Gordon Burger, Charlotte County.

Mr. Fleming provided a presentation including items for discussion, the landscape, background and timeline, Employee Health Center (EHC) overview, considerations of EHC, benefits to the City, and entities with health centers.

Mr. Burger provided a presentation including health care system complexity, Charlotte County center locations, EHC benefits to employees, primary care, EHC history, health plan emergency room (ER) visits, gross medical costs, projected savings, and employer paid Rx costs, and on-site pharmacy.

Mr. Fleming continued his presenting including recommendations, clinic models, partnership with Charlotte County, estimated staffing and site needs, estimated first year expenditures, and next steps.

Commission questions and discussion took place regarding percentage of employee use as primary care, savings timeline, liabilities, non-health plan participants, automated patient records, pharmacy supply and availability, employee dependent access, transition in/out of plan, Cobra coverage, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Charlotte County number of employees eligible and usage, use of current Charlotte County locations, costs and savings, cost of rental space, wellness programs, cost to taxpayers, mandatory participation, cost savings and general health improvements, cost sharing, and needed direction.

There was no public comment.

Mayor White requested a motion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Langdon, seconded by Commissioner McDowell, to direct the City Manager to work with Staff to move forward with the preliminary plans for creating and implementing a Health Care Center for employees of the City of North Port. 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 10:50 a.m. until 11:00 a.m.

B. [24-0836](#)

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Approval to Transition the City of North Port Tribute Program Relating to Tree, Bench and Paver Donations from a City Commission Approved Program to an Administrative Regulation.

Mayor White announced the item.

Mr. Fletcher introduced the item.

Ms. Pfundheller provided a presentation including history of program.

Commission questions and discussion took place regarding average cost, initial cost coverage, fee structure, average staff time, monument versus tribute, contributed tribute placement, tree and bench 5-year period versus 10-year period, reason for transitioning to administrative regulation, average transactions per year, fee coverage, Commission approval for tributes outside of policy, and prohibiting alternate tributes.

There was no public comment.

Mayor White requested a motion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Langdon, seconded by Commissioner McDowell, to direct staff to work with the City Attorney to include language taking today's discussion into consideration and bringing it back to Commission for future discussion. The motion carried on the following vote with Commissioner Emrich dissenting due to the policy reading accurately as currently written:

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

No: 1 - Commissioner Emrich

C. [24-1001](#)

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Removal of the Single-Family (SF) Lots in the Constitution Drive Area From the Sarasota County Land Acquisition List in Order to Consider Properties That May be More Likely to be Acquired for Conservation Purposes (Requested by Mayor White).

Mayor White announced the item.

Mr. Fletcher introduced the item.

Mayor White spoke to the item.

Commission questions and discussion took place regarding purpose for removing from lists, paving, and future conversations regarding city-owned properties.

Public Comment:

Ms. Faust read the following eComment into the record:

Robin San Vicente: Expressed concern with this being an environmentally sensitive land.

No action was taken on this item.

D. [24-1070](#) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Approval of the June 27, 2024, Commission Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes

Mayor White announced the item.

Ms. Faust introduced the item.

There were no Commission questions or discussion.

There was no public comment.

Mayor White requests a motion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Langdon, seconded by Commissioner McDowell, to approve the June 27, 2024 workshop meeting minutes as presented with the recommended changes. The motion carried on the following vote:

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

E. [24-1078](#) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Approval of the June 24, 2024 Commission Workshop Meeting Minutes.

Mayor White announced the item.

Ms. Faust introduced the item.

There were no Commission questions or discussion.

There was no public comment.

Mayor White requests a motion.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Stokes, seconded by Commissioner McDowell, to approve the June 24, 2024 workshop meeting minutes as presented with the recommended changes. The motion carried on the following vote:

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

F. [24-1080](#) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Approval of the June 3, 2024 Commission Workshop Meeting Minutes.

Mayor White announced the item.

Ms. Faust introduced the item.

There were no Commission questions or discussion.

There was no public comment.

Mayor White requests a motion.

A motion was made by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Langdon, to approve the June 3, 2024 workshop meeting minutes as presented with the recommended changes. 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 11:57 a.m. until 12:45 p.m.

G. [24-1103](#)

Discussion and Possible Direction Regarding Amendments to the Development Review, Planning & Zoning, and Natural Resources Fees in City Code Appendix A – City Fee Structure, to Provide for Consistency with the Proposed Unified Land Development Code.

Mayor White announced the item.

Mr. Fletcher introduced the item.

Ms. Barnes provided a presentation including delay in presenting a resolution, included fees, and prior process for special district fees.

Commission questions and discussion took place regarding environmental protection mitigation fee, and code reference for tree survey mitigation and environmental mitigation fee.

There was no public comment.

Ms. Barnes spoke to fee criteria and independent fee study.

Commission questions and discussion continued regarding prior Commission direction regarding fee study and timeline.

No action was taken on this item.

H. [24-1108](#)

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding City Commission Policy #2021-01 - City Commission Travel Expense Policy and Consolidation of Commissioner Budgets for Expenses for Training Education and Travel and Per Diem (Requested by Commissioner McDowell).

Mayor White announced the item.

Mr. Fletcher introduced the item.

Commissioner McDowell spoke to the item.

Commission questions and discussion took place regarding transparency, prioritizing travel, and virtual attendance.

Commissioner McDowell clarified her request.

Commission questions and discussion continued regarding amending budget to accommodate needed changes and separated accounting lines.

Public Comment:

Ms. Faust read the following eComment into the record.

Robin San Vicente: Spoke to Florida Statute language regarding per diem amounts.

Mayor White requested a motion.

A motion was made by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Vice Mayor Stokes, to direct staff to bring back City Commission Policy No. 2021-01: City Commission Travel Expense Policy to permit a Commissioner to combine their individual training and travel accounts, not to exceed the \$9,200 budgeted threshold, without Commission approval. The motion failed on the following vote:

Yes: 2 - Commissioner McDowell and Vice Mayor Stokes

No: 2 - Commissioner Emrich and Mayor White

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Langdon

A motion was made by Commissioner McDowell, seconded by Vice Mayor Stokes, to approve Commissioner McDowell's request to combine her individual training and travel accounts for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, not to exceed \$9,200, following the standard training and travel funding/reimbursement procedures. The motion carried on the following vote with Commissioner Emrich dissenting due to the action conflicting with current policy.

Yes: 3 - Commissioner McDowell, Mayor White and Vice Mayor Stokes

No: 1 - Commissioner Emrich

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Langdon

Ms. Williams spoke to city-wide fee study timeline.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

5. ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor White adjourned the meeting at 1:22 p.m.

City of North Port, Florida

By: _____
Alice White, Mayor

Attest: _____
Heather Faust, City Clerk