



City of North Port

4970 City Hall Blvd
North Port, FL 34286

Meeting Minutes - Draft City Commission Joint 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

Thursday, February 27, 2020

6:00 PM

City Commission Chambers

with Environmental Advisory Board

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor McDowell called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: 3 - Commissioner Christopher Hanks, Mayor Debbie McDowell and Commissioner Pete Emrich

Absent: 2 - Vice Mayor Jill Luke and Commissioner Vanessa Carusone

Also Present:

Environmental Advisory Board Members: Chair Edie Driest, Vice Chair Lauri Fern, Carolann Palm-Abramoff, Allaine Hale, Tina Powell, and Nadine Baker

City Manager Peter Lear, Assistant City Attorney Michael Golen, Interim City Clerk Heather Taylor, Public Works Director Julie Bellia, Public Works Operator and Maintenance Manager Chuck Speake

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chuck Speake.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Yes: 3 - Commissioner Hanks, Mayor McDowell and Commissioner Emrich

Absent: 2 - Vice Mayor Luke and Commissioner Carusone

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chuck English: expressed concern regarding Heron Creek Scrub Jay Management Plan not being implemented and supported the need of a resource department

3. PRESENTATIONS: TIME LIMIT OF 15 MINUTES

[20-1861](#)

Chuck Speake: Spraying of Aquatic Plants and Stormwater Drainage System Maintenance Practices

Mr. Lear introduced the item.

Mr. Speake provided a presentation including stormwater drainage system components, retention ditch maintenance, drainage canals and waterways, maintenance of drainage canals and waterways, herbicide used to control aquatic vegetation, improving the drainage canal maintenance program, herbicide facts with emphasis on spray indicator dye, reduction in drainage canal spraying, possible alternatives to herbicide use, natural herbicide, biological controls, mechanical controls, aquatic harvesting, water control structures, and maintenance of water control structures, and responded to questions regarding use of glyphosate, amphibious work platform use to remove tree debris, budget spent on herbicide, use of amphibious work platform, impact of rain on spraying, prior budget for chemical sprays, number of staff being trained to use the amphibious work platform, hands on training with the equipment, and EPA release of glyphosate mitigation.

[20-1898](#)

Edie Driest: Goals, Objectives and Mission Statement for Future City of North Port Department of Natural Resources

Recess was taken from 6:29 p.m. until 6:35 p.m.

Mr. Abramoff reviewed the proposed goals, objectives, and mission with emphasis on sustainability.

Chair Driest spoke to land management being a priority and water quality.

Ms. Fern spoke to the importance of natural resources.

Discussion followed regarding concern with science and the natural resource department, funding the department, the need for more information on the proposed department, ways to confirm where contaminants are coming from, efforts to maintain the environment, grant funding options, reviewing workload, department involvement in the development review process, and potential incentives for developers.

Mr. Lear spoke to Human Resources Department evaluation of job duties to determine salary and number of staff needed and deadline for budget items, informed Commission what is needed in order to move forward, and replied to questions regarding departments being organized by ordinance.

Discussion continued regarding the possibility of not meeting the deadline for the upcoming FY budget.

Mr. Lear spoke to his recommendation of providing Commission multiple phases, short-term goals with potential growth, and prioritizing the goals.

Discussion ensued regarding staff experience playing a role in the further development of the department.

Ms. Bellia spoke to prior Environmental Advisory Board discussion, options to utilize the green team and existing staff, and determining staffing requirements at a later date.

Discussion continued regarding management of Myakkahatchee Creek Environmental Park, and the Environmental Advisory Board holding an additional meeting in March.

Public Comment:

Chuck English: facilitation of a Natural Resource Department and utilizing of existing personnel during the staff development review process, water quality being the foundation and should be a number one priority

Ms. Fern provided an overview of her recommendations.

Discussion continued regarding endorsing the supporting of environmental preservation, and long-term management.

Mr. Lear spoke to the process for the Board to provide information to the staff liaison to be forwarded to Commission.

Discussion followed regarding an agenda item at a future Commission meeting including final Board recommendations, timeframe to be on a Commission agenda, and topics for discussion.

There was consensus to have the Environmental Advisory Board move forward with bringing a presentation back to Commission as an agenda item in future with all information regarding what a Natural Resource Department would look like, and what the duty, roles, and responsibilities would entail.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

5. ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor McDowell adjourned the meeting at 7:26 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.