



City of North Port

4970 CITY HALL BLVD
NORTH PORT, FL 34286

Meeting Minutes - Final City Commission Special Meeting

CITY COMMISSIONERS

Linda M. Yates, Mayor
Vanessa Carusone, Vice-Mayor
Christopher B. Hanks, Commissioner
Debbie McDowell, Commissioner

APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Peter Lear, Interim City Manager
Mark Moriarty, City Attorney
Patsy Adkins, City Clerk
Kathryn Peto, Deputy City Clerk

Thursday, April 6, 2017

4:00 PM

CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS

Recognition

MINUTES APPROVED AT THE 07-11-2017 MEETING.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The North Port Commission Special Meeting was called to order in the City Chambers at 4:00 p.m. by Mayor Yates.

Present: Mayor Yates; Vice Mayor Carusone; Commissioners Hanks and McDowell; Interim City Manager Lear; City Attorney Moriarty; City Clerk Adkins; Deputy City Clerk Peto and Assistant Police Chief Pelfrey.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Commission.

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Carusone, seconded by Commissioner McDowell to suspend the rules for the Commission proceedings. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Mayor Yates, Commissioner Carusone, Commissioner Hanks and Commissioner McDowell

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – COMMISSION

Interim City Manager Lear requested that Agenda Item S be removed from the Agenda.

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Carusone, seconded by Commissioner McDowell, to approve Agenda Items A through R and Agenda Item T, removing Item S. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Mayor Yates, Commissioner Carusone, Commissioner Hanks and Commissioner McDowell

A. [17-0954](#) New Employee Acknowledgement

Human Resources Director McDade introduced the City's newest employees in the City

Clerk's Department; General Services; Neighborhood Development Services; North Port Police Department; Public Works; and Public Utilities.

- B.** [17-0908](#) Certificates of Excellence Students from Atwater Elementary School for winning the Sarasota Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Fair.

Mayor Yates read the Certificates of Excellence for the students from Atwater Elementary School for winning the Sarasota Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Fair.

Mr. Lord noted that this was first time Atwater Elementary School students won all three top awards at the STEM Fair and expressed his pride in the students for their work, and commitment and gratitude to the parents, the City Commission and Community for their support.

- C.** [17-0959](#) Appreciation for Emergency Life Saving Efforts

Public Works Director Bellia presented a Certificate of Appreciation for Life Saving Efforts to the North Port Medical Team of Station 85 for efforts in responding to an emergency call for former Public Works staff member Lisa Kersey.

Mayor Yates expressed gratitude to the North Port Emergency Medical Teams and expressed condolences to the family and friends of Ms. Kersey.

- D.** [17-0906](#) Greenest Citizen Award, presented by City Arborist, Ryan Pieper

City Arborist Pieper read the Greenest Citizen Award and presented it to Cheryl Lee who has been the recipient of the Greenest Citizen Award for the past 2 years.

- E.** [17-0839](#) Proclamation for National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week April 9 - 15, 2017.

Mayor Yates read the Proclamation recognizing April 9 through April 15, 2017 as "National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week" and presented it to Civilian Commander Fitzgerald and Telecommunication Supervisor Lorenz, North Port Police Department.

- F.** [17-0842](#) Proclamation for Gopher Tortoise Day, April 10, 2017 to be presented to Eric Sievers, Gopher Tortoise Conservation Biologist for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Southwest Regional Office and Edie Driest, Member of the North Port Friends of Wildlife.

Mayor Yates read the Proclamation recognizing April 10, 2017 as "Gopher Tortoise Day" and presented it to Eric Sievers, Gopher Tortoise Conservation Biologist for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Southwest Regional Office along with Edie Driest and Members of the North Port Friends of Wildlife.

- G.** [17-0810](#) Proclamation for the American Cancer Society Paint the Town Purple for North Port, FL.

Vice-Mayor Carusone read the Proclamation recognizing April 16 through May 1, 2017 as "Paint The Town Purple Days" bringing attention to the Relay for Life event supporting the efforts of the American Cancer Society and presented it to Accreditation Coordinator Jacobs, North Port Police Department and Relay for Life volunteers.

H. [17-0958](#) Proclamation for Regional Try Transit Day April 21, 2017

Vice-Mayor Carusone read the Proclamation recognizing April 21, 2017 as "Regional Try Transit Day" and presented it to Kendra Keiderling, Sarasota County Transit Authority (SCAT). Ms. Keiderling encouraged citizens to try SCAT and noted that rides will be free on April 21, 2017 in recognition of Try Transit Day.

I. [17-0809](#) Proclamation for Relay for Life of North Port, FL.

Vice-Mayor Carusone read the Proclamation recognizing April 29, 2017 as "North Port Relay for Life" and presented it to Accreditation Coordinator Jacobs, North Port Police Department and Relay for Life volunteers. The North Port Relay for Life event is being held on April 29, 2017 on the City Center Front Green and citizens are encouraged to attend.

J. [17-0897](#) Proclamation for Child Abuse Prevention Month to be presented to Shannon Cantalupo the Child Protection Center, Inc., Prevention Educator for Personal Safety and Community Awareness.

Commissioner McDowell read the Proclamation recognizing "Child Prevention Month" and presented it to Shannon Cantalupo, Prevention Educator for Personal Safety and Community Awareness, and a Representative, Child Protection Center, Inc.

K. [17-0894](#) Proclamation for Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month to be presented to Ms. Carisa Campanello, South Sarasota and Charlotte Counties Care Advisor, Neuro Challenge Foundation for Parkinson's.

Commissioner McDowell read the Proclamation and presented it to Clarisa Campanello and Liz Clark, South Sarasota and Charlotte Counties Care Advisors. Neuro Challenge Foundation for Parkinson's. Ms. Campanello provided an overview of the efforts of the Neuro Challenge Foundation for Parkinson's in assisting with those effected by this disease.

L. [17-0960](#) Proclamaiton for Sexual Assault Awareness Month, April 2017 to be presented to Cherie Heasley, Communications Maager, Safe Place and Rape Crisis Center, Inc.

Commissioner McDowell read the Proclamation and presented it to Shenna Kib on behalf of Cherie Heasley, Communications Manager, Safe Place and Rape Crisis Center, Inc. Ms. Kib provided an overview of the services available through the Safe Place and Rape Crisis Center (SPRCC) and thanked the North Port Police Department for accepting the training SPRCC was able to provide.

M. [16-0689](#) Proclamation for the City of North Port Volunteer Month April, 2017

Commissioner Hanks read the Proclamation recognizing the month of April, 2017 as the "City of North Port Volunteer Month" and presented it to Assistant Police Chief Pelfrey; Accreditation Coordinator Jacobs and Volunteer Service Aides. Assistant Police Chief Pelfrey thanked the Commission for recognizing the efforts of volunteers and noted that during the previous month the North Port Police Department Volunteer Service Aides provided 745 hours of volunteer time.

N. [17-0909](#) Proclamation for April 2017 as Water Conservation Month

Commissioner Hanks read the Proclamation and presented it to Tara Polton, Southwest Florida Water Management District. Ms. Polton provided an overview on water conservation and encouraged citizens to engage in water conservation efforts.

O. [17-0910](#) Proclamation of April 2017 as Florida Water Professionals Month

Commissioner Hanks read the Proclamation and presented it to Public Utilities Director Newkirk; Field Operations Manager Vuolo; Customer Service Coordinator Duffey and Public Utilities staff. Field Operations Manager Vuolo and Customer Service Coordinator Duffey provided an overview of the activities of the Public Utilities Department.

P. [17-0929](#) Presentation regarding the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council and services available to the City of North Port. Presentation by Margaret Wuerstle, Executive Director

Executive Director Wuerstle provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the 2016 SWFRPC Annual Report and how the SWFRPC assists Municipalities in Capital Improvement Projects; Social Services Programs; Transportation Planning; and Economic Development Opportunities.

Discussion ensued regarding: (1) addressing a question, Director Wuerstle noted that this year the Florida Legislature has not put forth legislation to decrease the capacity of SWFRPC. There has been no State funding for the past 5 years and every County within the State of Florida must be in a Regional Council. The Regional Councils are maintained through Federal and State Grants; (2) the SWFRPC is responsible for updating the Regional Transportation Plan and the Regional Economic Development Map. Currently there is staff available to update the Transportation Plan as needed but, it is unsure if the Transportation Plan and Economic Development Map can be maintained. SWFRPC is in contact with Florida Gulf Coast University to maintain either the Transportation Plan or the Economic Development Map. The Southwest Florida Economic Development Alliance has shown interest in assisting with this project; (3) how an updated Transportation Plan and the Economic Development Map could benefit North Port; (4) North Port staff from Social Services attending the SWFRPC Meetings regarding Social Services Programs such as affordable housing; work force housing; homelessness and other concerns; (5) contacting SWFRPC regarding grant funding for the Price Boulevard Widening Project and the River Road Project; (6) North Port staff involvement in the SWFRPC.

Following a suggestion, Interim City Manager Lear agreed to work with North Port Social Services to designate staff to attend the SWFRPC meetings regarding Social Service concerns and designate staff to attend the SWFRPC meetings with Commissioner McDowell.

Q. [17-0964](#) Presentation on Desoto East, Desoto West Mines and Big Slough Watershed - Mining and North Port's Water Supply

Mayor Yates noted that this Agenda item is addressing concerns from citizens regarding Desoto East, Desoto West and Big Slough Phosphate Mining and North Ports Water Supply.

Discussion ensued regarding: (1) the Interim City Manager to designate the appropriate staff to determine what impact Phosphate Mining would have on the City of North Port; (2) North Port lack of jurisdiction for mining outside North Port boundaries; (3) Sarasota County prohibiting Phosphate Mining; (4) North Port developing an Ordinance prohibiting Phosphate Mining within the boundaries of North Port; (5) providing information regarding Phosphate Mining and the potential impacts on communities; (6) staff providing updates on other entities and organizations involved in Phosphate Mining; (7) it was suggested that Interim City Manager Lear work with the City Attorney to bring back an an Ordinance banning Phosphate Mining within the boundaries of

North Port which would include language to sunset the Ordinance if necessary following the presentation of collected data regarding Phosphate Mining and designate appropriate staff to gather the data and provide to the Commission.

Public Comment was held from 5:39 p.m. to 6:06 p.m.

The Commission agreed to allow Andy Mele provide a presentation during public comment.

In the absence of Don Rice, Andy Mele provided his background information including a Master's Degree in Environmental Science and stated he is a representative of the Sierra Club and Suncoast Water Keepers. Mr. Mele provided a presentation of photographs and satellite photograph in Desoto County depicting the impacts of phosphate mining on the Florida landscaping and water shed. The process of phosphate mining was provided. Mr. Mele noted that the Manatee County prohibition for phosphate mining only covers mining in the Manatee River Shed. The Manatee Codes do not prohibit phosphate mining in other areas of Manatee County. Considering that the proposed mining in Manatee County is in the North Port Water Shed, Mr. Mele suggested the Commission issue a letter to Manatee County to prohibit phosphate mining in all of Manatee County.

Public Works Director Bellia reported that she contacted Sarasota County and requested a copy of their Ordinance prohibiting phosphate mining. Sarasota County reported that the prohibition of phosphate mining is through their Comprehensive Plan. The prohibition is located in Element 1, Environmental Systems, Chapter 1 of the Comprehensive Plan prohibiting phosphate mining in the Myakka River Water Shed. The Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan was provided to Director Bellia.

Public comment continued; Joan San Lwin effects of phosphate mining; Allain Hale phosphate mining.

Public Utilities Director Newkirk introduced Water/Wastewater Operations Manager Swartz who addressed concerns regarding phosphate mining effects on residential well systems and the North Port aquifer water source. The majority of residents obtaining their water supply from wells have wells that are typically between 80 and 120 feet in depth. The methodology of drilling a well was provided. The Public Utilities water supply wells are 340 feet deep. The majority of the aquifer which feeds the wells in Sarasota County come from Polk County. Domestic wells are re-charged from the north. For the east side residents and west side residents, the water sheds are collected from stormwater and runoff. The questions and concerns being expressed should be addressed by scientific data collected and correlated by hydrologist.

Discussion ensued regarding: (1) potential cost for the scientific data collected by a hydrologist; (2) Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWDWMD) model to show water flow; (3) regulating Agencies governing well construction; (4) the Big Slough Study focusing on flood reduction; (5) contacting USGS to conduct a water flow study; (6) the process for the SWFWMD dye studies for water flow; (7) requesting documentation submitted by Mosaic to SWFWMD and the Department of Environmental Protection for review of the Desoto/Manatee proposed phosphate mining; (8) available resources to research the effects of phosphate mining on North Port.

Public comment was held from 6:26 p.m. to 6:27 p.m.

Edie Driest: grant funding for a mining study.

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Carusone and seconded by Commissioner McDowell to direct Interim City Manager Lear to have the appropriate staff review

the Mosaic Permit, and to reach out to resources with the appropriate background to develop a presentation on the effects of the proposed phosphate mines on the City of North Port. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Mayor Yates, Commissioner Carusone, Commissioner Hanks and Commissioner McDowell

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Carusone, seconded by Commissioner McDowell, for staff to bring back an Ordinance with a sunset clause prohibiting phosphate mining within the city limits of North Port. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Mayor Yates, Commissioner Carusone, Commissioner Hanks and Commissioner McDowell

R. [17-0946](#)

**North Port Beautification and Tree/Scenic Highway Committee
2016-2017 Annual Report and Proposed Projects**

Commissioner Hanks left the meeting at 6:32 pm

Recess from 6:32 p.m. to 6:44 p.m.

Subsequent to introducing the Members present, City Arborist Pieper provided a Beautification & Tree/Scenic Highway Advisory Board Annual Report PowerPoint presentation. The goals for 2017 included: (1) sending a letter to Lou Shepherd, State Forester, to change the date of Florida's Arbor Day to sometime in April when the weather is more conducive to tree planting and outdoor public education; (2) plant a memorial tree honoring the winner of the Greenest Citizen Award; (3) develop a program to offer incentives to business/property owners to update older landscaping to fit the current code and model the program after the Facade Improvement Program; (4) extension of irrigation to the median at US 41 and Biscayne Drive intersection.

Discussion ensued regarding: (1) utilization of social media to promote the Tree and Bench Memorial Program; (2) National Arbor Day held on the last Friday of April; (3) US 41 and Biscayne Drive extension project; (4) addressing a concern, Arborist Pieper noted that the "Keep North Port Beautiful" initiative is on the Beautification & Tree/Scenic Highway Committee April 19, 2017 Meeting Agenda; (5) adding to the letter to the State Forester that the City Commission endorses the change of the State's Arbor Day and including Commission signature lines; (6) Assistant City Manager Schult suggested the drafting of a Resolution to include with the letter to the State Forester reflecting that North Port supports the change of the date for the Florida Arbor Day; (7) the reason for changing the Florida Arbor Day to April to coincide with Earth Day, National Arbor Day and enable the Arbor Day celebrations during school hours.

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Carusone, seconded by Commissioner McDowell, to approve the 2017 goals for the Beautification & Tree Scenic Highway Committee as presented in the 2016/2017 Annual Report and direct staff to draft a Resolution supporting the change of date for the Florida Arbor Day. The motion carried by the following vote with Commissioner Hanks absent:

Yes: 3 - Mayor Yates, Commissioner Carusone and Commissioner McDowell

S. [17-0939](#)

Police Department Presentation.

THIS ITEM WAS REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA.

T. [17-0941](#) Recommendation for Boundless Playground at the Garden of Five Senses

Parks & Recreation Manager Pfundheller introduced Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Chair Coble who provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the proposed Boundless Playground to be located at the Garden of the Five Senses. The goal of the Boundless Playground is to improve outdoor recreational activities for children with special needs.

Discussion ensued regarding: (1) proposed playground shaded areas; (2) conceptual design addressing safety issues with landscaped shading; (3) adding shaded areas over the playground equipment; (4) incorporating more swings in the design; (5) the possibility of input from the stakeholders and the Florida Center which would be utilizing a boundless playground; (6) possibility of future expansion; (6) researching grant opportunities for playground equipment addressing play activities for children with special needs; (7) playground design for individuals of all skills to be able to play together; (8) the final design required prior to the permitting process; (9) number of components and clarification in each age appropriate playground area; (10) the color theme of the playground equipment conceptual plan; (11) the possibility of increasing the budget for this project; (12) including benches, picnic tables and restrooms; (13) FY 2016/2017 budget allocation of \$220,000.00 for this project. Interim City Manager Lear noted that additional funding could be allocated in FY 2017/2018 for additional amenities in this project and recommended the City Commission determine what addition amenities would be included in this project and then direct staff to research the cost of those items; (13) researching the cost for additional amenities; (14) clarification on the proposed surfacing for the playground area and connectivity to the playground.

Public comment was held from 7:46 p.m. to 7:47 p.m.

Joan San Lwin, Boundless Playground and Warm Mineral Springs.

Staff was encouraged to contact the Florida Center and other stakeholders to provide input on the Boundless Playground project. Parks & Recreation Manager Pfundheller agreed to contact the playground vendor with the added amenities suggested by the Commission and bring an updated conceptual plan.

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Carusone, seconded by Commissioner McDowell to direct staff to contact the user groups of a Boundless Playground including the Florida Center and others to provide input on the design and available amenities; research creating the most shade possible for the project; research grant funding; utilize more vibrant colors in the design; the next design rendering to include benches, picnic tables and a restroom closer to the proposed playground; contact the wood working club which meets at the North Port VFW to assist in the design and installation of a gateway to the proposed playground; and to provide a cost estimate of additional amenities as suggested by the Commission and subsequent to input from user groups ;. The motion carried on the following vote with Commissioner Hanks absent:

Yes: 3 - Mayor Yates, Commissioner Carusone and Commissioner McDowell

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

Vice-Mayor Carusone requested that a Key to the City be given to former Commissioner Althea "Buddy" Hughes and a Proclamation be issued at the May 4, 2017 City Commission Special Recognition Meeting recognizing May 19, 2017 as "Althea "Buddy" Hughes Day" in honor of her 90th Birthday. As part of the recognition

ceremony, a small reception with a birthday cake should be held following the presentation of the Key to the City and Proclamation.

There was a consensus that a "Key to the City" be given to former Commissioner Althea "Buddy" Hughes and a Proclamation be issued at the at the May 4, 2017 City Commission Special Recognition Meeting recognizing May 19, 2017 as "Althea "Buddy" Hughes Day" in honor of her 90th Birthday. As part of the recognition ceremony, a small reception with a birthday cake should be held following the presentation of the "Key to the City" and Proclamation.

Vice-Mayor Carusone requested that a letter be written to the North Port Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to request an Economic Development Summit be scheduled away from government involvement. The summit would be focused on defining the goals and objectives to enhance the partnership between the North Port EDC and the City of North Port and define the roles of all stakeholders with a means to enhance those relationships. The participating stakeholders could include tourist development; Sarasota County; Charlotte County; property owners and residential and commercial developers.

Discussion ensued regarding: (1) the North Port EDC scheduling an Economic Development Summit at no cost to the City; (2) concerns expressed regarding scheduling an Economic Development Summit outside of Florida Sunshine Laws; (3) the City Commission receiving a report from the Economic Development Summit to enable the City to take action to enhance the relationships with all stakeholders in economic development including ways to utilize user groups for grant writing and other activities which could be accomplished with user groups to enhance the economic development; (4) the expectations of the North Port Economic Development Summit held February 16, 2017; (5) possible public record requests for an Economic Development Summit information held by an outside entity and providing the City Commission with a report from the Summit.

There was a consensus to direct the City Manager to write a letter to the North Port Economic Development Corporation regarding Economic Development to acquire information on types of Economic Development stakeholders are established, defining their roles and determining a means of enhancing our relationships and provide a report to the City Commission with no cost to the City.

Mayor Yates announced that the opening night for the North Port High School presentation of "Shrek the musical", is scheduled for 7:00 p.m., April 7, 2017 at the North Port Performing Arts Center.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Yates adjourned the North Port City Commission Special Meeting at 8:22 p.m.

City of North Port, Florida

By: _____
Linda M. Yates, Mayor

Attest: _____
Patsy C. Adkins, MMC, City Clerk

Minutes approved at the City Commission Regular Meeting this ____ day of _____, 2017