



City of North Port

4970 CITY HALL BLVD
NORTH PORT, FL 34286

Meeting Minutes - Final City Commission Special Meeting

CITY COMMISSIONERS

Christopher B. Hanks, Mayor
Debbie McDowell, Vice-Mayor
Vanessa Carusone, Commissioner
Peter Emrich, Commissioner
Jill Luke, Commissioner

APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Peter Lear, City Manager
Amber L. Slayton, City Attorney
Kathryn Wong, City Clerk
Heather Taylor, Deputy City Clerk

Monday, July 1, 2019

9:00 AM

CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS

MINUTES APPROVED AT THE 07-23-2019 MEETING.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hanks called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: 4 - Mayor Christopher Hanks, Vice-Mayor Debbie McDowell, Commissioner Jill Luke and Commissioner Pete Emrich
Absent: 1 - Commissioner Vanessa Carusone

Also Present:

Assistant City Manager Jason Yarborough, City Attorney Amber Slayton, and Deputy City Clerk Heather Taylor

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Yarborough.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

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

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Carusone

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

3. GENERAL BUSINESS:

A. [19-0651](#) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the City of North Port 2020 State and Federal Legislative Priorities

Commissioner Carusone arrived at 9:02 a.m..

Present: 5 - Mayor Christopher Hanks, Vice-Mayor Debbie McDowell, Commissioner Jill Luke, Commissioner Pete Emrich and Commissioner Vanessa Carusone

Mr. Yarborough introduced the item and suggested Commission consider supporting streamlining of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursements as a Federal priority.

Discussion followed regarding adding to both Federal and State priorities additional funds to assist in mitigating the additional costs associated with providing shelter to other municipalities.

Mr. Yarborough spoke to supporting Florida League of Cities (FLC) and National League of Cities (NLC) agendas as long as they do not conflict with the City's agenda.

Discussion continued regarding reimbursement for hurricane services, capital costs for additional services other than shelter and staffing, additional costs outside of services already provided and submitted requests for reimbursement from FEMA, streamlining the reimbursement process, stating that the priority is important because the City provides shelter to surrounding areas, abolishing taxation due to Sarasota Memorial Hospital through the legislature or having taxation continue but go towards a new hospital, and prior direction to the City Manager and City Attorney to get taxes removed and put in escrow account.

Ms. Slayton spoke to prior Commission direction of whether the City would have standing to dispute taxation and noted any changes would need to be made through Legislation.

Discussion followed regarding communicating with other municipalities about removing the taxation as a county as a whole or the City dissolving the district, request for joint meeting with the board of Sarasota Memorial Hospital (SMH), assisting future hospital in North Port, emphasizing the need for technology in the City, impact on schools and first responders, funding of infrastructure that includes technology, change in format for State priorities by adding bullets, removing certificate of need, removing first sentence under infrastructure, including catastrophes that have taken place on South River Road, adding city water/sewer funding of projects within the City, suggestion to add hospital or hospitals of choice funding based on services provided for indigent care, providing reimbursement of care based on services provided to citizens, FLC and NLC verbiage already included in State priorities, removing the last sentence under Public Safety and Wellness, reducing verbiage to key specific points, State priorities including FEMA reimbursement being streamlined, looking into mitigating costs, Federal priorities including reclassification of medical marijuana, importance of keeping infrastructure as a priority, appropriate number of priorities to provide, and combining priorities.

There was consensus for faster reimbursement from FEMA after disasters as a Federal priority and to have staff determine if there are any mitigated costs needed by providing shelters for overall region.

There was consensus for change classification for medical marijuana as a Federal priority.

There was consensus for infrastructure needs and supporting funding for needs but not limited to widening of local roads, interstate exchanges, water quality and health care services as a Federal priority.

There was consensus for internet access for all as a Federal priority.

Discussion took place regarding current bullet regarding services provided to all versus emphasizing Veterans, and including Veterans in Federal priorities and all citizens in State priorities.

Vice Mayor McDowell emphasized the need for these services to be a priority for all citizens.

There was consensus, with Vice Mayor opposed due to reasons stated, for addressing Veterans needs including sub-points currently listed as a Federal priority.

Discussion ensued on discussing in depth details when meeting with Legislators, adding last year's priority regarding opioid usage as a sub-point, nationwide crisis of certain health issues, benefits of having a simplified more focused list, desire to abolish or restructure hospital districts, continuing funding but being able to utilize towards health care needs for citizens, restructure the district hospital, addressing district hospitals and desire to have municipalities determine use of funding to best service their citizens, and amending the legislation that created the district to allow for more control within the municipality.

There was consensus for amending the legislation that created district to allow for more control within the municipality as a State priority.

There was consensus for addressing internet access including sub-points as a State priority.

Vice Mayor McDowell expressed concern with naming River Road and suggested removing it for a year or two.

There was consensus for funding infrastructure with sub-points to include but not limited to southern portion of River Road, water and sewer utilities, interchange, and local roads as a State priority.

There was consensus for public safety with sub-points including suicide prevention, homelessness, substance abuse, mental health, children's safety, affordable housing, and hurricane shelters as a State priority.

There was consensus for environmental with sub-points including water and sewer in addition to 2019 listed sub-points as a State priority.

Discussion took place regarding the need to shorten home rule section and making it top priority, placing it on the front where it talks about facts with bold print, placing it on both State and Federal, and placing on both sides.

There was consensus to place Home Rule on both sides for State and Federal priorities.

Discussion continued on communications service tax and zoning, and Community Development District (CDD) and Homeowners Association (HOA) state exemptions.

Ms. Slayton spoke to HOA's not being able to enforce or enact laws and noted the City can enforce state and local laws within HOA's.

Public Comment took place from 10:12 a.m. to 10:17 a.m.

Justin Willis: senior needs, hospital funding, opioid issues, and criminal reform

Discussion took place regarding criminal reform being addressed on both Federal and State priorities.

Chuck English: concern with shelter compacity, water quality, health, safety and welfare of citizens

There was consensus that criminal reform be a sub-point to public safety on State priority.

There was consesus that criminal reform with medical marijuana as a sub-point be a Federal priority.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

5. COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS:

Commissioner Luke reported on attendance at joint meeting between Senator Gruters and Congressman Buchanan regarding water quality discussions, and Island Walk Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) group.

There was consensus for staff to provide an updated list of State and Federal priorities to Commission at a July meeting.

COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor Hanks reminded everyone about the Freedom Festival.

Discussion took place regarding the need to have further discussion regarding neighborhood signage.

There was consensus to direct staff to provide Commission with photos of neighborhood signage.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE AND LEGAL REPORTS:

There were no administrative or legal reports.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Hanks adjourned the North Port City Commission Regular Meeting at 10:24 a.m.

City of North Port, Florida

By: _____
Christopher B. Hanks, Mayor

Attest: _____
Heather Taylor, Deputy City Clerk

Minutes approved at the City Commission Regular Meeting this ____ day of _____, 2019.