



# City of North Port

4970 CITY HALL BLVD  
NORTH PORT, FL 34286

## Meeting Minutes City Commission Workshop

### **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*

---

Monday, April 22, 2024

9:00 AM

City Commission Chambers

---

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor White called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and provided required notifications regarding conducting a hybrid meeting.

### **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, Board Specialist Bodmer, Police Chief Garrison, Deputy Fire Chief Herlihy, Development Services Assistant Director Barnes, Development Services Director Ray

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Director Ray.

### **1. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Ms. Faust played the following voicemail into the record:

Evelyn Emrich: Expressed support of event signage.

In person:

Bob Burkart: Expressed opposition of development in Activity Center 2.

Deborah Plasencia: Expressed opposition of development in Activity Center 6.

Commissioner Emrich stated he will be attending the hybrid meeting via Communication Media Technology (CMT) due to experiencing a medical condition.

Mayor White requested a motion to approve the use of CMT for a hybrid meeting.

***A motion was made by Commissioner Langdon, seconded by Vice Mayor Emrich, to accept the use of CMT for a hybrid meeting.***

In response to Commission questions, Ms. Faust clarified the ability to vote on administrative items.

***The motion carried on the following vote:***

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

In person continued:

Ariana Campbell: Expressed opposition of rezoning in Activity Center 6.

Julia Sytsevich: Expressed opposition of rezoning in Activity Center 6.

Josh Smith: Spoke to experience with permitting.

Mr. Fletcher spoke to rezoning in Activity Center 6.

***There was consensus to discuss Activity Center 6 prior to Sign Regulations.***

## **2. GENERAL BUSINESS:**

### [24-0590](#)

Discussion and Possible Direction Regarding (1) the Draft of the Unified Land Development Code Chapter 5 -- Sign Regulations and Discussion and (2) Possible Direction Regarding Single-Family Development in Activity Center 6 (Yorkshire)

Mayor White announced the item.

Mr. Fletcher introduced the item.

Ms. Barnes provided a presentation regarding Activity Center (AC) 6 including Policy 2.18, 2008 Comprehensive Plan, previous AC boundary, current Comprehensive Plan, interim guidelines, Unified Land Development Code (ULDC), current AC boundary, current zoning, state law requirements for conflicts, and considerations.

Commission questions and discussion took place regarding responsibility to protecting established areas, possible fourth option, permit restrictions, balancing tax base, number of permits pulled and/or existing homes, opportunity for expansion of AC on north or south side, financial impacts of not rezoning, areas along Yorkshire, permissible use, potential redevelopment, non-residential percentages by allowing single-family residential, Comprehensive Plan Amendment requirement, educating new residents of future zoning, current Sarasota County Property Appraiser zoning, AC 10 plans, vesting, educating current property owners, and vested right versus entitlement.

Public Comment:

Deborah Plasencia: Expressed support of finding a compromise.

Consensus was requested to select a modified Option 2, allowing single-family homes on all areas in Activity Center 6, South of I-75, except for the two areas on either side of Yorkshire Street.

Recess was taken from 10:48 a.m. until 10:58 a.m.

Ms. Barnes provided a presentation regarding sign regulations including review by outside legal counsel, Supreme Court ruling, Chapter Articles including administration

and enforcement, sign types, sign standards, and variances, and consensus regarding sunset date for nonconforming signs.

Commission questions and discussion took place regarding reasonable sunset timeframe, number of nonconforming signs, temporary versus permanent signs, hurricane damaged signs, personal expression signs, sign maintenance, annexation, and maintenance code.

***There was consensus to not require removal of nonconforming signs.***

Ms. Barnes continued the presentation regarding outdoor advertising signs (billboards) including existing billboards, concerns, signage examples, staff recommendation, and Planning and Zoning Advisory Board (PZAB) recommendation.

Commission questions and discussion took place regarding sign ownership, provisions for annexed properties, sign regulation authority, billboard property ownership, residential property along I-75, and change in billboard content.

***There was consensus to allow no more than the 15 existing billboards on I-75.***

Commission questions and discussion took place regarding agenda backup, temporary signs in rights-of-way, legal opinion for issuing permits for special events, signage requirement criteria, equal protections, city advertisement of events, free speech zone, cost for pickup of signs, and equal consideration and restrictions.

***There was consensus to direct the City Attorney to perform a legal opinion to allow issuing permits for signs in the right-of-ways when the applicant has a special event.***

Mr. Golen spoke to subject matter expert.

Commission questions and discussion continued regarding additional options.

***There was consensus to direct the City Attorney and staff to work together to provide other viable options to allow these kinds of event signage to be able to be placed within the City.***

Public Comment:

Josh Smith: Expressed opposition to eliminating signage.

Recess was taken from 12:50 p.m. until 1:00 p.m.

Commission questions and discussion continued regarding definitions, vehicle signs, accessory to legally improved site, setbacks, pattern book, prohibited uses, snipe signs, election signs, certificate of zoning compliance, and fence signs.

***There was consensus to allow fence signs on private property.***

Commission questions and discussion continued regarding approval of sign variances, major/minor variance, and zoning hearing officer considerations and process.

Consensus was requested to have Commission approve variances/modifications versus zoning hearing officer.

Commission questions and discussion continued regarding review by advisory boards and stakeholders.

Mr. Fletcher spoke to discussion with Bill Gunnin.

### **3. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was no public comment.

Commission discussion took place regarding wildlife signs.

**4. ADJOURNMENT:**

Mayor White adjourned the meeting at 2:02 p.m.

City of North Port, Florida

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alice White, Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Heather Faust, City Clerk