

April 24, 2023

Amber Slayton, City Attorney's Office
Christine McDade, Human Resources Department
City of North Port
4970 City Hall Blvd.
North Port, FL 34286

*** HAND DELIVERED -- ^{am} ~~Email to follow~~ ***

City Attorney Slayton and Director McDade:

The Commission, by majority rule, is tasked with giving the City Manager directives so he can fulfill his obligations to ensure the day-to-day operations of the city are carried out. The following are excerpts from the City Manager's employment contract, which includes following ICMA Code of Ethics, and the City Charter.

"City Commission policy directives, goals and objectives as communicated to him by the City Commission and provide the Commission with all information and recommendations that allow for fully informed policy decisions that both address immediate needs and anticipated future conditions". Employment contract

"Employee (Jerome Fletcher), must comply with all lawful City Commission directives; state, local and federal laws and employer's policies, rules, ordinances and City Charter" Employment contract

"Perform such duties as may be prescribed by general law, by this Charter, by ordinance or resolution of the City or by direction of the City Commission as a whole" City Charter

"Submit policy proposals to elected officials; provide them with facts, and technical and professional advice about policy options; and collaborate with them in setting goals for the community and organization".
Tenant 5 – ICMA Code of Ethics

"Submit policy proposals to elected officials; provide them with facts, and technical and professional advice about policy options; and collaborate with them in setting goals for the community and organization."
Tenant 6 – ICMA Code of Ethics

In the past, I have expressed my concerns with the City Manager through emails, one-on-one discussions, performance reviews and at the dais. Today, I am outlining eight scenarios which show a factual, collective pattern when the City Manager either bypassed the Commission's decision-making authority and made decisions which was outside of his authority to make, disregarded the direction/will of the Commission body, and/or acted in concert with the Mayor without the Commission's approval. In my opinion, these actions are a violation of the City Charter and/or his employment contract. The only process for me to bring these scenarios to light, is to follow Resolution 2019-R-07 and file this formal complaint against North Port City Manager, Jerome Fletcher. The City Attorney or HR Director determine if the scenarios in this complaint rise to the level of warranting an investigation and/or Commission attention.

1. December 13, 2022, through April 18, 2023 – **Resolution #2022-R-75 requesting the State of Florida designate Warm Mineral Springs (WMS) and Little Salt Springs (LSS) as an Outstanding Spring.** In December 2022, the City Commission adopted RES #2022-R-75. This Resolution was sent to eleven entities including the Sarasota County Legislative Delegation touting the benefits the

City would realize with the state's approval of this designation and requested their support. On March 29, the Commission received a memo giving a broad overview of implications this designation could have on the city, if it was signed into state law. While attending the Florida League of Cities conference, on April 3 and 4, the Commission met with several of our state elected officials. During these brief meetings, I learned the Resolution for the WMS and LSS Outstanding Spring designation was placed on hold pending the Public Private Partnership of WMS redevelopment to be completed. The Mayor was well versed and spoke about this topic as I sat in silence (I was hearing this news for the first time). When I returned from the conference, I sent an email to the City Manager requesting additional information about how and when this decision was made. Since I did not receive a response, I sent a follow up email on April 18, to which CM responded, "we'll discuss this during our next one-to-one meeting", which was later that afternoon. In the 1-1 meeting, the CM stated he made the decision to place this designation request on hold. I stated he had no authority to undermine the City Commission's approval of RES #2022-R-75 and sent a follow up email to that effect. On April 25, the PIO provided talking points regarding the time-sensitivity of the City Manager's decision. Between the memo distributed on March 29 and the start of the conference on April 3, there was plenty of time to call or email each Commissioner of his decision.

The City Manager also did not advise all the commissioners of this decision. However, the Mayor had full knowledge of the designation being paused. The Mayor is a ceremonial title only and holds the same office rank as the other four commissioners. We are to be given the same information and treated equally.

Additional materials include: Resolution #2022-R-75, memo outlining the implications of this designation, email thread between me and the City Manager (April 2 through April 18), and PIO WMS talking points.

2. April 11, 2023 - Commission Meeting --**Agenda item #23-0570 Submittal of Federal Appropriations**
During the commissioner discussion time, I asked if this request was already submitted to Rep. Steube's office? The answer was YES. During the meeting, City Manager said this would turn into "a grant", however, the word "grant" was never mentioned in the back up material. By submitting the federal appropriations request PRIOR to commission's discussion and vote it undermined the commission's ability to add/delete projects and rendered the Commission's approval pointless.

Additional materials include: the agenda item's legislative text and the verbatim from the commission discussion of the topic

3. March 30, 2023 – During public comment portion of the WMS soft opening agenda item, our citizen Ms. Gastony, mentioned the **WMS passes were being discontinued**. I asked the CM if what the public commenter said was accurate and when/why was the decision made. The City Manager agreed the decision was made to discontinue selling the passes for a variety of reasons. This decision was made PRIOR to any commission discussion, which was eventually held on April 11.

Additional materials include: Verbatim of commission discussion after the public comment

4. Ongoing – **North Port Squared (NP2) Program** – This program was initially disclosed by the City Manager with the presentation of the FY 2022/23 budget. A workshop was held on September 6 to discuss the program and commission meeting was held on December 13, 2022, to discuss the concept of the program. On March 21, 2023, I submitted an email to all charter officers outlining my concerns about the committee selection process. On March 24, the City Attorney stated a

resolution will be coming to Commission for consideration. As of today, there has been no Commission consideration on the resolution mentioned, although the program went “live” on March 1, 2023.

Additional materials include: March 1 roll out of the NP2 program and the email thread I sent to all charter officers (March 21 through March 24)

5. Ongoing -- **North Port United Tour in sponsorship with North Port Forward.** Sponsorship agreements use a Commission approved template and are generally reserved for city events, activities programs and other areas. Partnership agreements with non-profits always come before the Commission for approval (i.e. the Chamber logo swap, Kiwanis Clothing Closet etc.). These agreements serve a public purpose, without the agreement(s) it can be construed as favoritism. The policy requires an agreement for all partnerships or sponsorships. Currently, NO partnership or sponsorship agreements are in place with North Port Forward; although the relationship between the City and North Port Forward is well established. This is another example of the City Manager not following established policies.

Additional materials include: April 11, 2023, City of North Port social media post advertising the North Port United Tour, the event calendar taken from the North Port Forward website and the confirmation there are no agreements in place

6. Ongoing – **Incubator or Entrepreneur Program.** Over the past several months, during Commission Comments, the Mayor mentioned working on some type of incubator program for local small businesses. Not knowing anything about this I assumed this was something she was working on independently. On April 18, after my Town Hall, a citizen asked me about the Young Entrepreneur Program the Mayor is instituting with the CM and wanted to know more about it. I had no knowledge of this program. I asked the CM during my 1-1 meeting and he said it was like the Hive co-sharing workspace to fulfill the small-business needs in the city. City Manager also disclosed the Mayor, Chamber, SCORE, and himself are working with other entities to ensure it is successful. Citizens informed me, the Mayor was a guest speaker on the John Rawlings Show on February 20, 2023, where she spoke about this program’s goals and objectives and the city’s involvement. Any commissioner can request authorization from the Commission to work with the CM on more time-consuming endeavors. However, no request was made, therefore, no vote taken on this subject. It could be perceived the Mayor individually directed the CM to work with her on this project and the CM willing obliged, although the project is quite extensive. On April 21 the Commissioners received a memo, prepared by the EDC Division; this memo was my first official notification about the details of the program. This is another example of the City Manager not sharing information equally with the Commissioners or seeking Commission approval.

Additional materials include: April 21, 2023, memo provided to Commissioners and the link to the John Rawlings show <https://www.facebook.com/1054608679/videos/2381173995356996/>

7. July 7 and 8, 2022 -- City Manager publicly rolled out the “**Good Neighbor**” Program without commission discussion, in a public meeting. On July 7, I sent an email questioning the logistics and lack of Commission discussion. After being rolled out in the morning of July 8, the program was eventually pulled that afternoon from all social media platforms. Again, the City Manager approved a program without commission direction – especially when individual commissioner participation

was an integral part of the program. A commission workshop was held on September 6, 2022, with no action taken.

Additional materials include: July 7 email thread from City Manager to Commission with my response, another July 7 email I sent to the City Manager and City Attorney and the July 8 roll-out of the program

8. November 21 and December 6, 2021 – **City-wide Pay Study** - During my 1-1 with our newly appointed City Manager, he mentioned he was conducting a pay study for all employees. I advised him of the commission's previous directive during FY 21/22 budget workshop removing the pay study from the budget with the intention of including it in FY 22/23 budget. I also suggested he create an agenda item for the Commission to give us an opportunity to reconsideration. Nothing more was mentioned about the pay study until he disclosed it in his April 2022 self-evaluation. He proceeded with the pay study without obtaining the commission approval.

Additional materials include: June 15, 2021, meeting minutes, my notes from the 12/6/21 city manager one-to-one meeting and the April 6, 2022, request for authorization documents and costs of the study and the furnished documents

Sincerely

Debbie McDowell

Commissioner, City of North Port

4970 City Center Blvd.

North Port, FL 34286

Office: 941.429.7071

City Cell: 941.628.0486

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CommissionerMcDowell

Scenario #1
Page 1 of 12



City of North Port

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-R-75

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF NORTH PORT, FLORIDA, SUPPORTING THE IDENTIFICATION OF WARM MINERAL SPRINGS AND LITTLE SALT SPRING AS FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION'S OUTSTANDING FLORIDA SPRINGS; URGING MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL DELEGATION OF THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO SUPPORT THESE SPRINGS FOR FUNDING OF SPRINGS PROTECTION; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION OF RECITALS; PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, in 2014, Florida voters adopted Amendment 1, guaranteeing revenues dedicated to Florida springs; and

WHEREAS, more than \$154,000,000 has been generated within the Sarasota Soil and Water Conservation District by way of one-third of collected documentary stamp fees that has been sent to the State of Florida; and

WHEREAS, more than \$11,500,000 would have been available to benefit Warm Mineral Springs and Little Salt Springs if allocated for the local springs; and

WHEREAS, Florida's springs are essential to the environment, economy, citizens, and visitors of this state; and

WHEREAS, Florida has one of the most productive aquifers in the world, which supports more than 1,000 natural springs and gives this state one of the world's highest concentrations of springs; and

WHEREAS, Florida is home to more first-magnitude and second-magnitude springs than any other state in the nation; and

WHEREAS, the groundwater supply is vital to the state's economy and approximately 90 percent of Florida residents rely on it for their drinking water; and

WHEREAS, Florida's springs reflect groundwater conditions and provide an important habitat for wildlife, making the springs a natural resource that must be protected; and

WHEREAS, springs provide important recreational resources and opportunities that are enjoyed by citizens and visitors of this state; and

WHEREAS, Florida's springs discharge nearly 8 billion gallons of water each day, and healthy springs reflect the State of Florida's commitment to sustainable groundwater and surface water resource protection; and

WHEREAS, Warm Mineral Springs and Little Salt Spring are located within the boundaries of the City of North Port and the County of Sarasota; and

WHEREAS, Warm Mineral Springs and Little Salt Spring are among the state's most unique ecological, hydrological, archeological, and paleontological geologic features; and

WHEREAS, Warm Mineral Springs and the related environs both possess profound therapeutic, historic, architectural, and artistic features; and

WHEREAS, the Warm Mineral Springs creek is among the most significant natural warm water winter refugia for manatees on Florida's Gulf Coast; and

WHEREAS, these two springs are irreplaceable and act as a natural treasure for all citizens of the State of Florida; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission seeks support for the identification of Warm Mineral Springs and Little Salt Spring as Outstanding Florida Springs and maximum funding for preservation and protection.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF NORTH PORT, FLORIDA:

SECTION 1 – INCORPORATION OF RECITALS

1.01 The above recitals are true and correct and are incorporated in this resolution by reference.

SECTION 2 – RESOLUTION

→ 2.01 The City Commission hereby urges members of the local delegation of the Florida Legislature to support the identification of Warm Mineral Springs and Little Salt Spring as high priority for listing as Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Outstanding Florida Springs and to support the maximum funding for preservation and protection.

SECTION 3 – TRANSMITTAL

→ 3.01 The City Clerk is directed to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the Florida League of Cities, the Sarasota County Legislative Delegation, and any other interested parties.

SECTION 4 – CONFLICTS

4.01 In the event of any conflict between the provisions of this resolution and any other resolution, in whole or in part, the provisions of this resolution will prevail to the extent of the conflict.

SECTION 5 – SEVERABILITY

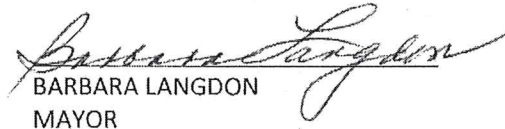
5.01 If a court of competent jurisdiction finds that any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or provision of this resolution is for any reason invalid or unconstitutional, that provision will be deemed a separate, distinct, and independent provision and will not affect the validity of the remaining portions of the resolution.

SECTION 6 – EFFECTIVE DATE

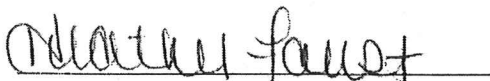
6.01 This resolution takes effect immediately upon adoption.

ADOPTED by the City Commission of the City of North Port, Florida, in public session on December 13, 2022.

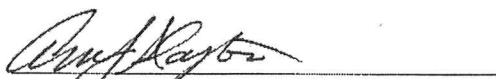
CITY OF NORTH PORT, FLORIDA


BARBARA LANGDON
MAYOR

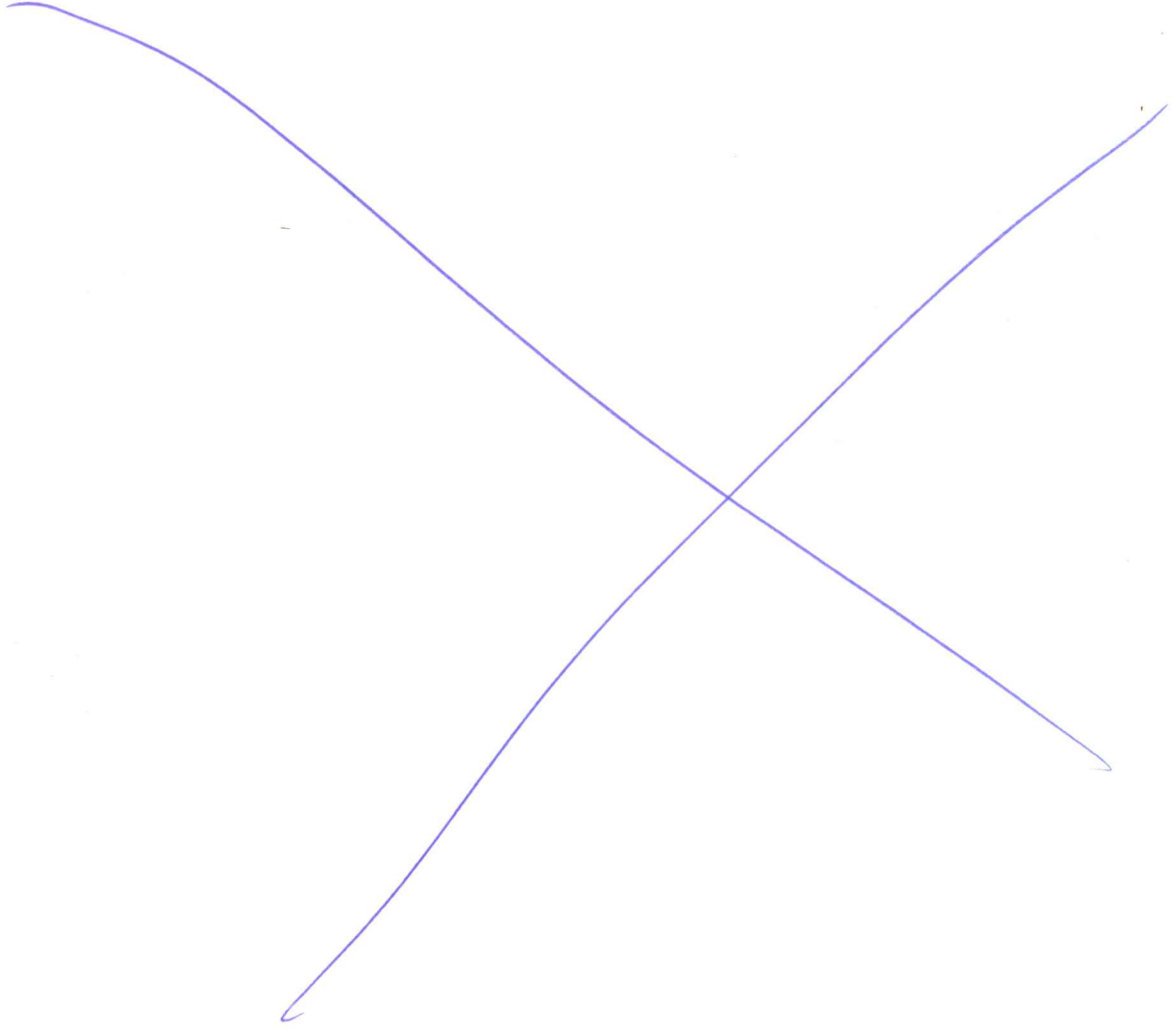
ATTEST


HEATHER TAYLOR, MMC
CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND CORRECTNESS


AMBER L. SLAYTON, B.C.S.
CITY ATTORNEY

Scenario #1
page 4 of 12





City of North Port
NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
DEPARTMENT
Planning & Zoning Division
941-429-7156



Scenario #1
Page 5 of 12

MEMORANDUM

TO: A. Jerome Fletcher II, ICMA-CM, MPA, City Manager **A. Jerome Fletcher**
Digitally signed by A. Jerome Fletcher
 DN: cn=A. Jerome Fletcher, o=City of North Port,
 email=jerome.fletcher@cityofnorthport.com
 Reason: I am the author of this document.
 Location: my signing location here
 Date: 2023.03.24 09:45:51-0400
 PDF Reader Version: 11.1.0

THRU: Jason Yarborough, ICMA-CM, Assistant City Manager *Jason Yarborough* **Date:** 2023.03.24
 15:19:55 -04'00'

THRU: Alaina Ray, AICP, Neighborhood Development Services Director *AR*

FROM: Lori Barnes, AICP, CPM, Planning & Zoning Manager **Lori Barnes**
Digitally signed by Lori Barnes
 Date: 2023.03.09 13:22:34
 -05'00'

SUBJECT: Implications of Designating Warm Mineral Springs as an Outstanding Florida Spring

DATE: March 9, 2023

HB 1505, which is being considered in the 2023 Florida legislative session, if passed, would designate Warm Mineral Springs (WMS) as an Outstanding Florida Spring (OFS) under Chapter 373, Part VIII of the Florida Statutes (attached). This memo is intended to provide a broad overview of the implications associated with an OFS designation.

If HB 1505 is signed into law, WMS would be subject to assessment by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) pursuant Chapter 403, Section 403.067 of the Florida Statutes (attached). An impairment determination would be made under the numeric nutrient standards for spring vents. A nutrient total maximum daily load would be adopted for the spring and the FDEP, in conjunction with Southwest Florida Water Management District, would initiate development and adoption of a Basin Action Management Plan (BMAP).

According to FDEP, "A basin management action plan (BMAP) is a framework for water quality restoration that contains local and state commitments to reduce pollutant loading through current and future projects and strategies. BMAPs contain a comprehensive set of solutions, such as permit limits on wastewater facilities, urban and agricultural best management practices, and conservation programs designed to achieve pollutant reductions established by a total maximum daily load (TMDL). These broad-based plans are developed with local stakeholders and rely on local input and commitment for development and successful implementation. BMAPs are adopted by Florida Department of Environmental Protection Secretarial Order and are legally enforceable;" designed to be implemented in 5-year phases over a 20-year time frame.

A WMS BMAP would establish a priority focus area. The priority focus areas for existing springs designated as OFS vary, with the smallest comprising 3,089 acres (Gemini) and the largest 395,764 (Troy Peakcock Lafayette Blue Falmouth, which includes three river basins). In the case of WMS, the BMAP could include all or part of the Lower Myakka River basin (14,017-acres), or could encompass more than one basin, as determined by FDEP. Due to the area and location of the basin(s), Charlotte and Sarasota County participation would be required in addition to the City's.

In conjunction with BMAP adoption, City compliance with which is mandatory, multiple comprehensive

plan amendments and code amendments, including but not limited to the following, would be required to address agricultural best practices, conservation/limitations on development intensity and impervious surfaces, erosion control, fertilizer, stormwater and pollution control, reclaimed water, recharge areas, prohibition of septic tanks on smaller lots (as determined by FDEP; the plan for Deleon Springs only allows septic on lots 2.5-acres or larger), and water quality monitoring.

Perhaps the most substantial of the BMAP requirement would involve a wastewater treatment plan to provide for construction, expansion, or upgrades necessary to achieve the total maximum daily load requirements applicable to the domestic wastewater treatment facility. A wastewater remediation plan to provide for elimination of existing onsite wastewater management systems would also be mandatory.

While the recognition of Warm Mineral Springs as an Outstanding Florida Spring may be desired, it is important for the City Commission to be aware of the long-term commitments, both budgetary and manpower related, associated with the designation and subsequent BMAP adoption. Similarly, the City Commission should consider the associated impacts to the City's growth and economic development potential in the area surrounding WMS.

Debbie McDowell

From: Debbie McDowell
Sent: Tuesday, April 18, 2023 3:40 PM
To: Jerome Fletcher
Subject: RE: Memo - Warm Mineral Springs Outstanding Florida Spring Designation
Attachments: FW: Memo - Warm Mineral Springs Outstanding Florida Spring Designation

Scenario #1

Page 7 of 12

City Manager –

During our 1-1 today, you accepted responsibility for making the decision to pause this designation was because “it hamstrung the potential for development”. Thank you for accepting this responsibility. Yes, I received the memo on March 29, 2023 (the same one your forwarded to me after today’s 1-1) showcasing the budgetary constraints and long term commitments this designation would cause. Why wasn’t the commission informed of these constraints and commitments prior to adopting the Resolution in December 2022; after all the P3 process was well underway when the resolution was adopted.

Nowhere in the March 29 memo does it reflect your decision to ask the state legislators to pause the commission’s request to designate WMS and LSS as an Outstanding Spring, according to RES #2022-R-75.

At the end of the day, it is disappointing you made the decision to pause this designation. You had a responsibility to inform the entire commission body. In my opinion, the decision you made exceeded your authority.

Sincerely,
Commissioner McDowell

From: Jerome Fletcher <jfletcher@northportfl.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 18, 2023 9:01 AM
To: Debbie McDowell <dmcdowell@northportfl.gov>
Cc: Jason Yarborough <jyarborough@northportfl.gov>; Julie Bellia <jbellia@northportfl.gov>
Subject: RE: Memo - Warm Mineral Springs Outstanding Florida Spring Designation

Good Morning Commissioner, happy to discuss these items with you during your next one on one meeting. Thank you.

A. Jerome Fletcher II, ICMA-CM, MPA

City Manager of North Port
4790 City Hall Boulevard
North Port, FL 34286
Office: 941.429.7076
Cell: 941.224.5402
www.cityofnorthport.com

From: Debbie McDowell <dmcdowell@northportfl.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 18, 2023 8:58 AM
To: Jerome Fletcher <jfletcher@northportfl.gov>

Cc: Jason Yarborough <jyarborough@northportfl.gov>; Julie Bellia <jbellia@northportfl.gov>

Subject: RE: Memo - Warm Mineral Springs Outstanding Florida Spring Designation

City Manager – I'm following up to see if you or staff have formulated a response to my questions?

Debbie

From: Debbie McDowell

Sent: Wednesday, April 5, 2023 4:47 PM

To: Jerome Fletcher <jfletcher@northportfl.gov>

Cc: Jason Yarborough <jyarborough@northportfl.gov>; Julie Bellia <jbellia@northportfl.gov>; Todd Miles <tmiles@northportfl.gov>; giseleluke <giseleluke@gmail.com>

Subject: RE: Memo - Warm Mineral Springs Outstanding Florida Spring Designation

I have a few follow up questions to this memo --

1. When the commission initially discussed WMS and LSS becoming an Outstanding Spring we discussed the pros and cons -- we were told the benefits outweighs the minimal cons of this designation. We enacted Resolutions 2022-R-75 and 2021-R-26, which boasts about the importance of this designation and the resources the city could receive if we had this designation. I'm perplexed at the sudden shift and learning the budgetary and long term commitments this designation would require. Why weren't these implications shared in 2021 or December 2022? Three months after the last resolution, I'm curious who and what prompted this memo?
2. While at the FLC Conference and meeting with Rep Buchanan and later with Rep Grant, Mayor Langdon thanked the state legislators for placing this designation on hold pending the P3 process completion. The Mayor was well versed in the subject to hold the conversation with the legislators. Todd Miles was active in the conversation too. During the conversation, there was confirmation former Commissioner Luke was agreeable with the designation being placed on hold until after the P3 process. You can imagine my frustration upon hearing this revelation for the 1st time, in Tallahassee. Who made the decision to request our state legislators place this designation on hold? When was the decision conveyed to our state elected officials? May I have a copy of the correspondence? The decision to place this long-awaited designation on hold was nobody's decision to make but the COMMISSIONS, at the dais.
3. Why is the Mayor receiving information that other commissioners did not receive?

I look forward to your response to my questions.

Debbie McDowell

Commissioner, City of North Port

4970 City Center Blvd.

North Port, FL 34286

Office: 941.429.7071

City Cell: 941.628.0486

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CommissionerMcDowell

From: Anna Duffey <aduffey@northportfl.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, March 29, 2023 4:31 PM

To: Commissioners <commissioners@northportfl.gov>

Cc: Jerome Fletcher <jfletcher@northportfl.gov>; Julie Bellia <jbellia@northportfl.gov>; Jason Yarborough <jyarborough@northportfl.gov>; Alaina Ray <aray@northportfl.gov>; Lori Barnes <lbarnes@northportfl.gov>; Sandy Pfundheller <spfundheller@northportfl.gov>; Tricia Wisner <twisner@northportfl.gov>; Todd Miles <tmiles@northportfl.gov>

Subject: Memo - Warm Mineral Springs Outstanding Florida Spring Designation

Scenario #1
Page 9 of 12

PLEASE DO NOT REPLY TO ALL.

Good afternoon. Attached please find the referenced memorandum.

Thank you,

Anna M. Duffey

Senior Executive Assistant

City of North Port

Office of the City Manager

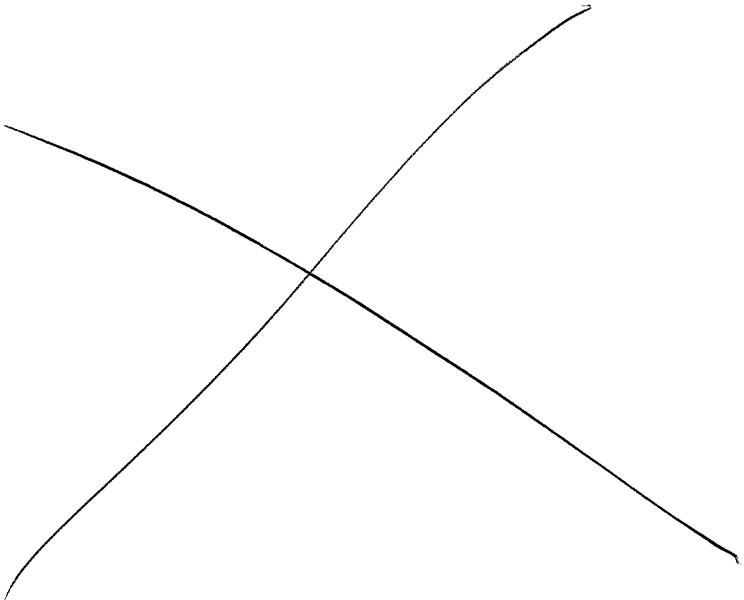
Ph: 941.429.7077, C: 941-356-9896

Fax: 941.429.7079

aduffey@northportfl.gov

www.northportfl.gov

E-mail messages sent or received by City of North Port officials and employees in connection with official City business are public records subject to disclosure under the Florida Public Records Act.



Resolution for Outstanding Springs designation

The \$11.5 million figure in the resolution was a speculative number based on the \$154 million in collected documentary stamp fees that had been sent to the state of Florida since 2014, when voters adopted Amendment 1 to guarantee revenues dedicated to Florida springs.

This was only intended to represent potential money that could have been applied for in the past if the Springs had been designated as an Outstanding Florida Spring. In no way does it represent any money that the City has missed out on, unless this had been adopted many years prior.

I determined it would be best to pause the pursuit of the designation as an Outstanding Spring based on two concerns:

- The uncertainty of the impact on prior approved exploration of a P3 partnership for Warm Mineral Springs
- The unintended consequences it could have on future development in other areas of the city based on regulations for septic systems and wastewater treatment.

We recognize the importance of the springs and are still committed to preserving its environmental, cultural and historic importance.

→ This was a time sensitive decision based on the commission's pending visit to Tallahassee.

Debbie McDowell

From: Jason Bartolone
Sent: Tuesday, April 25, 2023 2:40 PM
To: Commissioners; Jerome Fletcher; Jason Yarborough; Julie Bellia
Cc: Madison Heid; Laura Ansel; Sandy Pfundheller; Trish Sturgess
Subject: Media Contact: Warm Mineral Springs, SNN
Attachments: 042523 Warm Mineral Springs - talking points.docx

Scenario #1
Page 12 of 12

PLEASE DO NOT REPLY TO ALL

Date	04/25/23
Reporter/Media Outlet	Briana Bozkurt, SNN
Contact Info	briana.bozkurt@snnv.com ; 978-877-1267
Contact Type	Inquiry
Query	Reporter requested an interview with the City Manager about the status of the Warm Mineral Springs Park P3 proposal; how it differs from the 2019 Master Plan; and the status of the community survey. She also spoke with a resident who is claiming the City Manager decided to pull the City out of a potential designation of the park as an Outstanding Florida Spring, costing the City \$11.5 million for the park. Why did he do this and not inform the City Commission?
Response	Communications facilitated an on-camera interview with the City Manager, who discussed the negotiation phase the City has entered with the developer and the desire to hear feedback from the community through our survey and community engagement opportunities. He also addressed the misinformation about the decision to pause the Outstanding Spring designation request. Reporter was provided the attached background information.
Coordination	Communications, City Manager
Note	Story is expected to air during this evening's broadcasts.

Jason Bartolone
Communications Manager/PIO
City of North Port
jbartolone@northportFL.gov
Office: 941-429-7165
Cell: 941-302-9634



City of North Port

4970 CITY HALL BLVD
NORTH PORT, FL 34286

Legislation Text

Scenario #2
Page 1 OF 4

File #: 23-0570, Version: 1

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the North Port Commission

FROM: A. Jerome Fletcher II, ICMA-CM, MPA, City Manager

TITLE: Authorize the City Manager to Submit Improvements to Sumter Boulevard/I-75 Interchange and New Police Headquarters Projects for Consideration Under the Fiscal Year 2024 Federal Community Projects Funding Request.

Recommended Action

Authorize the City Manager to Submit Improvements to Sumter Boulevard/I-75 Interchange and New Police Headquarters Projects for Consideration Under the Fiscal Year 2024 Federal Community Projects Funding Request.

Background Information

Congressman Greg Steube's Office began accepting Federal Community Project Funding requests for federal earmarks (appropriations) for the Fiscal Year 2024 budget on March 1, 2023.

City Management staff met and selected the following two projects for submission:

- > Sumter/I-75 Interchange Improvements: \$2 million
- > New Police Headquarters land/design/construction: \$5 million

If the requests are supported by Congressman Steube, they will be heard and recommended by different Legislative Committees during the budget session. If the appropriations request is approved, it will be included in the President's Budget on October 1, 2023.

If funding is awarded, contracts will come back to the Commission for consideration and approval.

Strategic Plan

Infrastructure & Facilities Integrity
Safe Community
Environmental Resiliency & Sustainability

Financial Impact

Not applicable.

Procurement

If funding is awarded and accepted by the Commission, the City's Procurement Code, policies and procedures will be followed when the purchase is made.

Attachments: None.

Scenario #2
Page 2 of 4

Prepared by: Valerie Malingowski, Grant Division Manager

Department Director: A. Jerome Fletcher II, ICMA-CM, MPA, City Manager

April 11, 2023 Commission Meeting
Agenda item #23-0570 – Authorize CM to submit improvements to Sumter Blvd/I-75 Interchange and new policy HQ projects for consideration under the FY 2024 Federal Community Projects Funding request

1:02:51

BL – Item L - commissioner that's you as well

DM - thank you ma'am um I am curious has representative Steube's office already received this list of Appropriations?

Val M. - he has

DM - yes he has?

Val M. - yes and he supports them both so he's

DM - so if he's received the list why are we approving it after the fact

Val M - so I can still withdraw it,

DM – I'm not asking you to withdraw it

Val M - so it's informative in nature to let you guys know that we've what we've uh submitted so and and I

DM - I appreciate that it's informative in nature but had we had the opportunity I would have liked to have added another item for consideration and now we don't have that opportunity. and and I'm sorry this is not a director or our Charter officer's decision as to what these priorities should be, this is a commission Direction. This is so frustrating for me, I would have liked to have added the I-75 and Toledo Blade interchange improvements because both interchange improvements are equally important and now that they have received these appropriation requests already, it's too late and you acted in my opinion without the authority. mayor I'll make a motion

1:04:35

CM – Mayor, mayor

BL - city manager just just to clarify this funding request was handled in the same way as other grants are handled and it would turn into a grant if we received it and other Grant um applications I believe the commission has given the go ahead and the Authority for staff to move forward and as those grants are brought back to you once they are awarded for your consideration then that's where you approve them and so this right here should all align in that sort of same format

DM - the Word grant is not in the legislative text so

BL - um commissioner I'm happy to give you the floor to make a motion

City Clerk - but ummmm

BL - oh sorry, yes public comment. but I do want to admonish you to re to retain a respectful tone when you're speaking with staff. go ahead city clerk who

DM – that was directed to the city manager not staff

BL - city manager of Staff

DM - no he's a charter officer that we appoint
BL - go ahead city clerk
CC - (called public commentor) Jeffrey Scott

1:07:46

BL - City Clerk is there any more public comment on this item

City Clerk - No there is not requests to speak here we go go ahead vice mayor sorry

AW - I just want to clarify this is for a grant correct this is for Appropriations for a grant money this is not something we approve

BL - go ahead City Manger

CM - correct yes it is going to request that I believe according to our grants manager say it will turn into a grant so it will come back before you

BL - Miss malinowski do you have something to add

Val M - no that's so correct okay

AW - all right thank you that that's it

BL - I'm looking for a motion

PE - I make a motion to approve item #23-0570

AW - I'; second

BL - motion on the floor made by commissioner emrich seconded by vice mayor white to authorize the city manager to submit Sumter Boulevard I-75 interchange and new police headquarter projects for consideration under the fiscal year 2024 Federal Community projects funding request. let's vote

BL - I'm last to the party. and that motion fails four to zero. excuse me four to one math challenged, commissioner McDowell do you care to comment

DM - I will um I would have agreed to the Appropriations. I do not disagree with the Appropriations. I disagree with how this was handled and that the commission did not get an opportunity to weigh in and that is why I dissented.

March 30, 2023

Commission meeting

Public Comment During Item #23-0592 – Discussion and possible action regarding the implementation of WMS park soft reopening event

4:47 (grancius)

Susan Gastoney – public comment read into the record

4:48:23–

BL- Commissioner McDowell

DM – In light of that public comment, is that accurate, we're not going to be issuing any passes

Sandy P – Our intent was not to issue any new passes. We're taking existing passes, we're transferring them to our system. With the recreation software that we use for the visits that are remaining and extending them the number of days we're closed which is 191 is based on the April 7 day, but we're not intending on selling any passes. The passes are good for a year. If we do that we're going to be back in the same boat. If we end up going the a partner that may take over the operations then we have to refund all those passes the same process that we're going throu now. We we're not intending to do that because it's a very .. our intent this is a temporary situation where operating the Springs that's how we've hired the staff as well, under a temporary status.

DM – I didn't know that there was no intention of selling passes. That is concerning to me, I mean a lot of residents use these passes. So why can't we just issue like 14 day passes and then not have it good for a year, have it good for 30 days or you have 14 day increments. I understand that we don't know what the agreement looks like but at the same time, this is not something that going to be done next in I guess the next 2 months or 3 months or so, why can't we find a different work around?

BL – City Manager

CM – Thank you madam mayor, we would ask that as we chose not to issue the passes based on the reasons that the direction said, that you allow us the flexibility to make sure that we put in a system that works well for use to manage keep track of and they can make accurate purchases and provide accurate services to the public without putting an arbitrary limit on it today on this dais

DM – I recognize that I am looking for some kind of amenable compromise to no passes verses some kind of passes and whatever it looks like I would hope it's going to come back to Commission for discussion and a blessing.

BL – Director what the difference in price if you fly on a daily basis versus an annual pass if you could break it out

Sandy P – I don't have the annual pass. but daily is \$15 for all residents and \$20 for all non-residents

PE - But Mayor, Yes, I just want to say that we're here for the soft opening, it's not the passes should be on a another agenda okay.

BL – Okay, we've done public comment, I'm requesting a motion

The City of North Port Social Services Division is now accepting applications for the North Port and Nonprofits United (NP2) Program. The program is open to all North Port nonprofits that serve North Port citizens. Agencies can apply for up to \$2,000 for a mission support item that enhances a nonprofit's level of service to the North Port community. (The funding does not cover operational expenses, program costs, or salaries.) Applications will be accepted from March 1 through March 15. Please visit NorthPortFL.gov/SocialServices for more information.



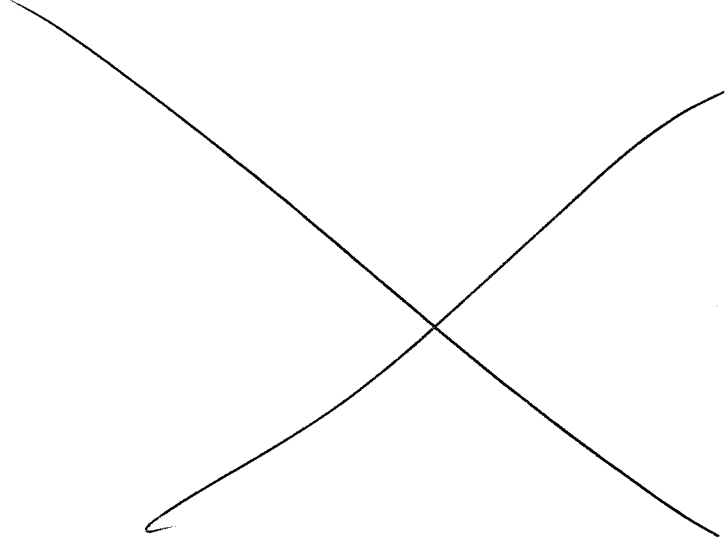
NP²
NORTH PORT
NONPROFITS
UNITED

Applications Being Accepted
March 1 - 15, 2023



Scenario #4
Page 1 of 4

Scenario #4
Page 2 of 4



Debbie McDowell

From: Debbie McDowell
Sent: Friday, March 24, 2023 8:31 AM
To: Amber Slayton
Subject: RE: NP2 committee formation

Scenario #4
Page 3 of 4

Wow, I'm really behind on reading my emails!
Thank you for letting me know the resolution is back on the table!

Debbie

From: Amber Slayton <aslayton@northportfl.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2023 5:16 PM
To: Debbie McDowell <dmcdowell@northportfl.gov>
Cc: Michael Golen <mgolen@northportfl.gov>; Jerome Fletcher <jfletcher@northportfl.gov>; Heather Faust <hfaust@northportfl.gov>
Subject: RE: NP2 committee formation

Good evening, Commissioner McDowell. My legal analysis remains the same as when we discussed this matter previously. However, I spoke with the City Manager, and he said he will be submitting a resolution regarding the committee's creation for the Commission's consideration. The draft resolution will go through legal review, as per the standard process.

Have a good evening!

Thanks,

Amber L. Slayton, B.C.S.
City Attorney
Board Certified City, County and Local Government Lawyer
941-429-7253
aslayton@northportfl.gov



From: Debbie McDowell <dmcdowell@northportfl.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2023 4:12 PM
To: Amber Slayton <aslayton@northportfl.gov>; Heather Faust <hfaust@northportfl.gov>
Cc: Michael Golen <mgolen@northportfl.gov>; Jerome Fletcher <jfletcher@northportfl.gov>
Subject: NP2 committee formation

Once I received ACA Golen legal opinion confirming NP2 Committee MUST operate in the Sunshine, it immediately raised another question relating to how the committee was being formed. I met with the City Attorney and City Clerk to get their perspective. Both are subject matter experts on interpreting the Charter and forming advisory boards and committees, yet I received differing opinions and interpretations. About two weeks ago, the City Clerk advised me a Resolution, regarding the formation of the committee. would be coming to commission for approval. The news of a

pending resolution immediately put my concerns to rest. However, during my last conversation with the City Clerk, I was advised a resolution is no longer coming to the Commission. Therefore, I am compelled seek clarity on this matter.

The City Charter, Section 5.06(a) states: *The City Commission may appoint advisory boards and committees composed of citizens qualified to act in an advisory capacity to the City Commission, City Manager or any department of the city government, with respect to conduct and management of any property or institution or the exercise of any public function of the city. The members of any such board or committee shall serve without compensation and at the pleasure of the City Commission. Their duties shall be to consult and advise with appropriate municipal officers and make written recommendations which shall become part of the records of the city.*

I asked myself simple questions and used only the Charter Section 5.06(a) for the answers:

- Who appoints advisory boards and committees? The City Commission
- Who sits on the advisory boards and committees? Citizens
- Who do advisory boards and committees give their advice and recommendations to? the City Commission, the City Manager or any department of the city government
- Do advisory board and committee members get paid? No
- Who do advisory boards and committees serve at the pleasure of? The City Commission
- How will their recommendations be given? In writing, as part of city records

I fail to be able to answer the original question:

- Where in the Charter or possibly in City Code is the City Manager granted the authority to create a committee comprised of citizens?

If legislation doesn't exist granting him the authority, then in my opinion, there is no authority. If there is no authority and the committee proceeds without commission oversight, could the city be subjected to a lawsuit and possibly void any decisions the committee makes?

Since there is a lack of any agreement and clarity on how this committee should be formed, in my opinion, the prudent thing to do is to err on the side of caution. There is no harm in creating a resolution to form the NP2 Committee, just like the Veteran's Ad Hoc Committee and Medical Task Force Committee were formed. There also is no harm for me to create an agenda item requesting a legal opinion on this subject, since I cannot direct the CA individually. Ultimately, I'm sure you'll agree, a resolution would be the easier route.

One final thought -- during previous workshop or commission meeting, I asked who the chair and vice-chair of the committee will be. I was told staff will be chair and vice-chair and they will select the other 3 committee members to make the entire 5 member committee. If staff are two of the committee members, they must live in North Port and they cannot be paid, therefore, can staff be on this committee without jeopardizing their employment?

Thank you for hearing me out. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Debbie McDowell

Commissioner, City of North Port

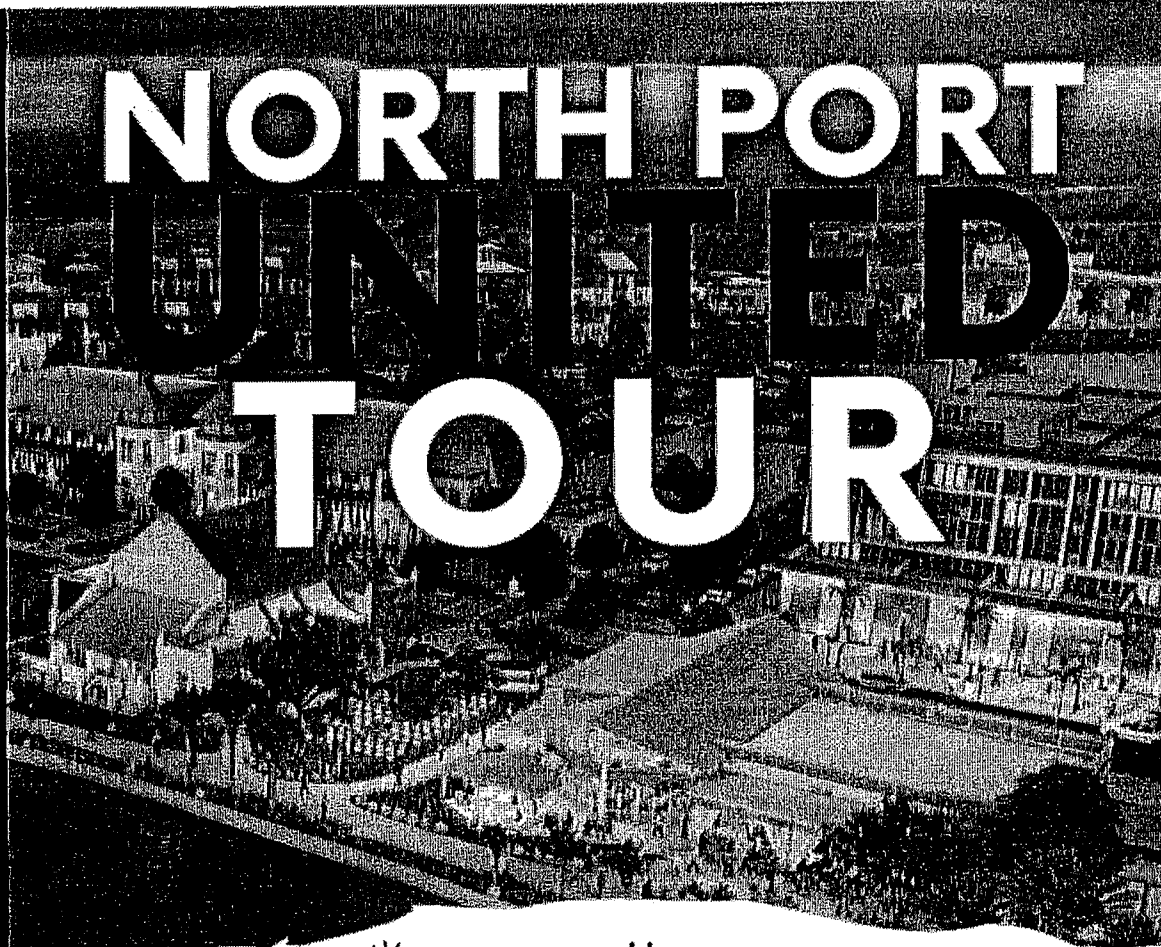
4970 City Center Blvd.

North Port, FL 34286

Office: 941.429.7071

City Cell: 941.628.0486

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CommissionerMcDowell



sponsored by



The City of North Port - Government

April 11 at 1:00 PM

City Manager Jerome Fletcher's "North Port United" Tour, a series of community engagement and discussion sessions, is coming to the Shannon Staub Public Library at 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 18.

"North Port United" is aimed at bringing together City leadership and North Port residents to discuss the future of our growing city. A kickoff session was held in late February at the North Port Public Safety Building in Welles Park, where a standing-room-only crowd discussed hot topics including de-annexation, City finances and Hurricane Ian recovery.

The tour is sponsored by North Port Forward, a nonprofit organization that encourages dialogue and civic involvement. The April 18 event will include a brief presentation and an opportunity for citizens to have their questions answered by City staff.

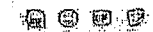
- Read more: <https://loom.ly/eMhahQ>
- Register to attend: <https://loom.ly/nrC-3kc>
- Get the facts: NorthPortFL.gov/Facts See less

Larry Grant, Jill Luke and 4 others 5

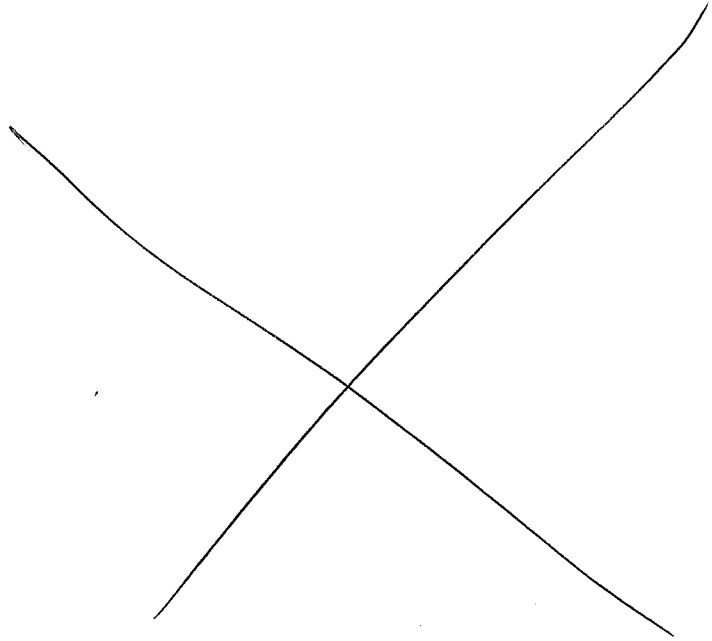
Like Comment Share



Write a comment...



Scenario #5
Page 1 of 5



North Port Port Forward Events:

April 18, 2023

North Port United' Tour comes to Shannon Staub Public Library

When: April 18, 2023 at 6:00pm.

City Manager Jerome Fletcher's "North Port United" Tour, a series of community engagement and discussion sessions, is coming to the Shannon Staub Public Library at 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 18.

"North Port United" is aimed at bringing together City leadership and North Port residents to discuss the future of our growing city.

A kickoff session was held in late February at the North Port Public Safety Building in Wellen Park, where a standing-room-only crowd discussed hot topics including de-annexation, City finances and Hurricane Ian recovery.

"These events are an opportunity for residents to hear directly from City officials about local issues that impact their lives," Fletcher said. "We're looking forward to sharing more information and continuing the conversation."

The April 18 event will include a brief presentation and an opportunity for citizens to have their questions answered by City staff.

The "North Port United" Tour is sponsored by North Port Forward, a nonprofit organization that encourages dialogue and civic involvement.

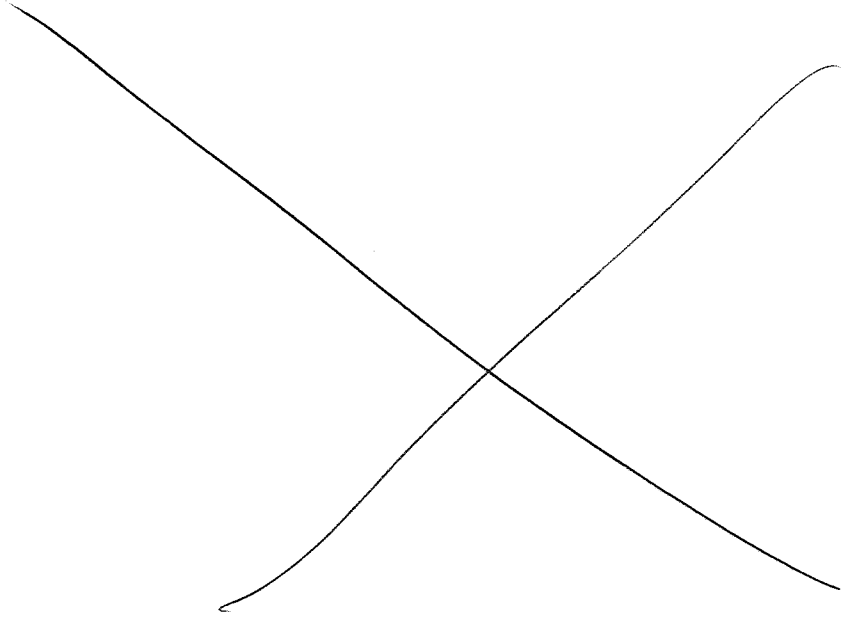
Sponsored by North Port Forward, a 501.C.3 Non-profit Community Organization.

Light Refreshments will be served.

Scenario # 5
Page 3 of 5

Scenario #5

Page 4 of 5



Debbie McDowell

From: Debbie McDowell
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2023 2:52 PM
To: Heather Faust
Subject: RE: North Port Forward

Scenario #5
Page 5 of 5

Thank you for the confirmation.

Debbie

From: Heather Faust <hfaust@northportfl.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2023 2:51 PM
To: Debbie McDowell <dmcdowell@northportfl.gov>
Subject: RE: North Port Forward

There are no agreements regarding the below. Thanks.

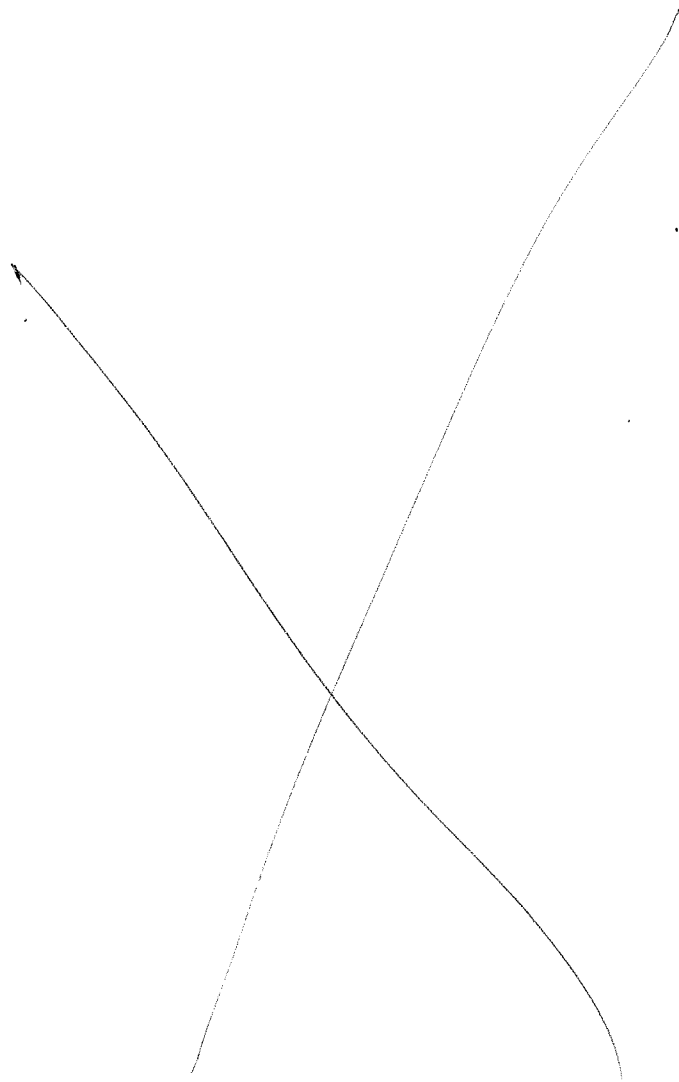
Heather

From: Debbie McDowell <dmcdowell@northportfl.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2023 2:30 PM
To: Heather Faust <hfaust@northportfl.gov>
Subject: North Port Forward

May I have a copy of the sponsorship and/or partnership agreement the city has with North Port Forward?

Thanks

Debbie





City of North Port
Economic Development Division

Interoffice Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor and City Commission

Through: A. Jerome Fletcher II, ICMA-CM, MPA, City Manager *JBF for AGF*

From: Vinnie M. Mascarenhas, Interim Economic Development Manager *Vinicia Mascarenhas*

Date: April 21, 2023

RE: North Port Entrepreneurship Center Updates

Digitally signed by Vinicia Mascarenhas
Date: 2023.04.21 14:23:05 -0400

The purpose of this memorandum is to update the City Commissioners on the Economic Development Division's (EDD) research and outreach efforts surrounding the need for a Business Incubator or Entrepreneurship Center in North Port.

Hurricane Ian destroyed the only cooperative workspace available in the City, called Co-Work Hive, which was located on Tamiami Trail near the intersection of North Port Boulevard, and housed about 30 businesses. There has been a growing need in our growing City to seek out immediate and long-term solutions that will increase the successful development of new businesses in our City, and create jobs, and employment opportunities in specific sectors that are aligned with North Port's targeted industries through a business incubator.

The Economic Development Division (EDD), through the City Manager's Office, has convened a group of partner organizations and stakeholders which include – the North Port Area Chamber of Commerce (NPACC), Port Charlotte SCORE, Small Business Development Center (SBDC), State College of Florida (SCF), Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County CareerSource Suncoast, Suncoast Technical College (STC), the former owner of Co-Work Hive (co-workspace) in North Port, and an interested entrepreneur/developer, Brad Baker, that has provided a proposal to build a business incubator on a piece of city-owned property.

This group has met three (3) times (January 20, February 28, and April 10, 2023) to assess needs and develop a strategy for immediate and long-term solutions to the City's lack of an Entrepreneurship Center. The EDD has also gone into the field to meet with and tour successful business incubator and entrepreneurship models in our region, including the 26 West Center at SCF-Bradenton and the University of Tampa's Lowth Entrepreneurship Center. This has helped staff gather useful information on best practices to report back to our North Port business

incubator group, helping to guide thinking about how to meet our City's needs while looking through a 'North Port lens'.

On March 10, 2023, City staff met with the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and learned about disaster relief funding available. The EDA can fund up to \$10M for a business incubator and has done this a few times in Florida. In order to apply for funding with the EDA, a business incubator feasibility study must first be conducted in the City.

On March 30, 2023, staff met with the Florida Business Incubator Association (FBIA), to learn more about conducting a Business Incubator Feasibility Study. This Study would establish the level of market demand for an incubator in North Port, provide potential locations, size, and scope, indicate a break-even cost for the facility, and potential partners, and help the City identify how an incubator could provide the following:

- **Economic Development:** A Feasibility Study would identify the most promising industries and niches with high-growth potential for North Port's economy. This information could then be used to attract and incubate startups and entrepreneurs in those fields.
- **Job Creation:** An Entrepreneurship Center has the potential to create jobs within the local community. By providing entrepreneurs with the resources and support necessary to launch and grow their businesses, a business incubator could attract talent and professionals to North Port.
- **Increased Tax Revenue:** As businesses grow and generate revenues, they will contribute to the local tax base. This could help support the city's infrastructure, schools, and public services, strengthening the overall community.
- **Community Development:** An Entrepreneurship Center could help generate a sense of community among entrepreneurs and residents. By sharing ideas and networking, the incubator could foster innovation and collaboration, leading to long-term growth and development.

Overall, a Feasibility Study for a business incubator will identify potential opportunities and challenges for fostering local entrepreneurship and economic development in North Port. Coupled with the steady and rapid growth our City is facing, the EDD is looking to move forward with a business incubator feasibility study and has funds available in our Fiscal Year 2022-2023 budget to do so. This is an important first step towards creating a more vibrant and sustainable economy for the City.

Attached, for your reference, is a DRAFT Case for Support, which the EDD is working to finalize within the coming weeks by adding input from our partner organizations.



Scenario #6
Page 3 of 7

Entrepreneurship Center | Case for Support

The City of North Port ranked in the top 3% or 38th on WalletHub's 2023 Best Small Sized Cities to start a business, when compared to 1,300 small-sized cities across the nation. The City is home to 1,722 small businesses that employ over 12,000 individuals. Residents are employed in businesses located in North Port in industry sectors that include service, retail, construction, and manufacturing.

Home based businesses entrepreneurs account for about 50% of all businesses.

The City of North Port, and Sarasota County, have supported entrepreneurship with strategic partnerships across government, workforce development, education, and private industry. In September 2022, category five Hurricane Ian, hit the City of North Port, causing severe damages and flooding. This included the destruction of the City's only cooperative workspace, Co-Work Hive, which housed about 30 small businesses.

Given the many assets and opportunities found in North Port, there is still work to do in fostering Entrepreneurship, growing companies, and empowering business owners through an Entrepreneurship Center located in North Port.

Workforce and Growth:

The City of North Port encompasses 104 square miles of land in Southwest Florida and is the largest municipality in Sarasota County. Strategically situated between Tampa and Fort Myers, the City of North Port has the assets and amenities well-suited to a variety of commercial needs.

North Port is not only proximate to five airports and four seaports, but directly adjacent to I-75. Much of the City is undeveloped, with somewhere between 12 and 30 million square feet of buildout potential located in the City's major development areas alone.

This year, The City of North Port which has a population of 82,000 residents and a 5.5% year-over-year population growth, was ranked as the second-fastest growing city in the U.S. in a report by Quicken Loans. The same study revealed North Port has the 10th highest employment increase at nearly 8%.

If year-over-year population growth continues at the current rate, North Port will have over 100,000 residents in 3-5 years, and it is expected to have 250,000 residents at full buildout.

A 2021 Market Feasibility Study indicated nearly 90% of North Port's workforce commutes to other locations in the region for work. This ratio is not conducive to creating a dynamic community. The proportion of outmigration is extremely high compared to other communities. The workers leaving North Port every morning represent business potential and unique talent and skillsets that could be fostered within the city if the commercial or industrial density existed to support these jobs.

A recent report by Smartest Dollar showed that 46.6% of teenagers age 16-19 in the North Port-Sarasota-Bradenton metro area are in the workforce, ranking 20th nationally among midsize markets.

North Port's businesses continue to grow, in October, November, and December of 2022, following the devastation of a category 5 Hurricane Ian and over a holiday season, North Port had 28 new businesses

file for business tax receipts (BTR) and open up in the City. In January, February, and March of this year, North Port welcomed in 106 new businesses that filed BTRs. It is also important to note that over half of North Port's small businesses are home-based.

Workforce and Growth Key Takeaways:

North Port's population grew by 46,200 residents (a 213% change) from 2000 to 2020 while North Port added 2,000 jobs over that same time (a 25% change). Population growth has significantly outpaced job growth in North Port over the last two decades. In 2000, North Port had about 3 residents to every 1 job, while in 2020 that number increased to 7 residents to every 1 job. That's over twice the rate of Sarasota County and the Regional Study Area.

Existing jobs in North Port are primarily concentrated in the Government, Retail Trade, and Construction industries. These industries are key contributors to North Port's gross regional product and economy.

North Port has seen job growth of approximately 8% over the last five years.

With a median age of 45 years, North Port has a younger population than Sarasota County, 57 years.

North Port is a net exporter of jobs and has over 10 times as many workers commuting in-or-out of the City, compared to those that both live and work in North Port.

Future Growth:

- Sarasota Memorial Healthcare System (SMH) hospitals on Sumter Boulevard and in Wellen Park
- HCA Healthcare hospital in Wellen Park
- Acadia Healthcare behavioral health facility on Cranberry Blvd.
- Suncoast Technical College Phase II
- Benderson North Port Business Park Phases II, III, IV, V
- 320 Toledo Blade – 55 acres of planned industrial space
- Utility Expansions, water and sewer extended through I-75 corridors at Sumter, and Toledo Blade Boulevards.
- 10+ years development, interchange, and utilities at I-75 and Yorkshire Street.
- Potential for a Public Private Partnership (P3) to develop area around Warm Mineral Springs, Federal Opportunity Zone

Community Partners:

- North Port Area Chamber of Commerce (NPACC)

The North Port Area Chamber of Commerce (NPACC) was established in 1982 and since that time, the Chamber of Commerce and the City of North Port have experienced a tremendous growth in businesses either moving or establishing their business in North Port. The Chamber has had to relocate our offices multiple times over the years to meet the growth of our businesses and community.

The Mission of the North Port Area Chamber of Commerce is to promote and to encourage business prosperity and to enhance economic development through advocacy, engagement, and cooperation.

The North Port Area Chamber of Commerce has over 650 members which represents an 8% growth over the past year and a 25% growth over the past five-years. Additionally, 55% of our businesses are storefront or warehouse while 22% of businesses are home-based, and 77% of our businesses

represent less than 10 employees at their workplace. Of our total Chamber membership, 54% of the membership are based in North Port.

North Port is a very diverse and young community that is home to many small and home-based businesses that experience the need for their business to expand in order to meet the growth and need of our growing community. With limited turn-key storefront and warehouse space available, an Entrepreneurship Center is greatly needed to allow for new businesses to flourish and to attract new businesses and the entrepreneurial spirit to our community.

The North Port Area Chamber of Commerce has worked closely with the City of North Port to help promote North Port as a great place to work, play, and live. As the population of North Port continues to grow at a rapid pace, it is imperative that we work together to attract businesses to our community to offset the tax base placed on our residents and to enhance the level of City services and quality of life.

➤ Port Charlotte, SCORE

Formed in 1964 as a resource partner of the U.S. Small Business Administration, SCORE's mission is to help aspiring and existing businesses succeed by drawing upon the knowledge, talents, and experience of a large network of experienced entrepreneurs, senior executives, business owners and professionals. Since its inception the organization has helped more than 11 million people in pursuit of their business goals. In a typical year SCORE helps create more than 45,000 new businesses and more than 120,000 jobs in dozens of industries.

SCORE provides free, confidential advice and mentoring to clients at every stage of the small business cycle. This includes early stage entrepreneurs who are considering starting a business but need help defining their ideas, building their plan, and obtaining financing; start-up businesses seeking to establish their brand and operations and manage their finances; established businesses seeking to grow their revenues or reach new customers; and transitioning businesses planning to sell, or otherwise transition business ownership. SCORE mentoring services are complemented by a deep set of resources for clients, including live and recorded webinars, local workshops, and a very large and continuously updated library of on-line training courses.

The local chapter of SCORE actively supports more than 100 businesses in North Port and other communities in southern Sarasota, Charlotte, and portions of DeSoto counties. The growing chapter team of 20 mentors are part of a national network of more than 10,000 volunteers – mentors and designated subject matter experts- who represent an extremely broad range of backgrounds in many industries and business sectors. Our local team also brings unique value for this effort including knowledge, skills, and experience critical for building an entrepreneurship center and a larger entrepreneurial ecosystem that will ensure its sustainability: business model, strategy, planning, promotion, recruitment, and sponsorship development.

The local SCORE team will focus its full range of capabilities to support the Entrepreneurship Center and its clients across the target industry sectors.

- SBDC at University of South Florida
- State College of Florida (SCF)-Venice
- The Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County

The Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County, a nonprofit, public-private partnership serves to connect entrepreneurs, business leaders and major corporations to new and existing development opportunities. The EDC works to market and attract businesses into Sarasota County,

in addition to assisting local businesses navigate business growth potential and connecting with area partners to advance economic development potential and workforce development.

The EDC's vision is to be the organization that is the catalyst for creating a vibrant economy that is sustainable and competitive globally. The EDC's mission is to grow, diversify and sustain the economy of Sarasota County while enhancing our unique natural and cultural environment.

The EDC and the City of North Port are strategic partners where the EDC provides a variety of economic development services to enhance the City's offerings to the local business community while attracting and growing targeted industries. Recent EDC activities to facilitate entrepreneurship in Sarasota County including a Business Ecosystem Portal found on the EDC website and launching the EDC Technology and Entrepreneurship Network, a collection of entrepreneurs, lenders-private capital, government, and education partners focused on facilitating business ecosystem growth.

➤ Suncoast Technical College (STC)

Suncoast Technical College (STC) provides quality career and technical education to meet workforce development and community needs. Adults and dual-enrolled high school students participate in over forty programs at the North Port and Sarasota locations.

On average, STC enrolls over 1,200 adults and 600 dual-enrolled high school students at their Sarasota and North Port campuses. Many continue to a four-year college. STC holds 70 – 90% placement rates among their students entering the workforce. They also host Apprenticeship programs and provide Adult General Education to the community for those preparing for their GED or those that need to learn the English language (ESOL).

STC North Port currently offers nine programs and has reached its program capacity. The City of North Port is growing exponentially and requires more skilled training opportunities to support the economic and workforce growth. In order to meet this demand, there are plans for an expansion of the North Port branch to increase pathways for health sciences, automotive, construction trades, manufacturing, and other technical programs that align with local workforce needs.

➤ CareerSource Suncoast

CareerSource Suncoast is the state-designated provider of workforce services in Manatee County and Sarasota County, their primary focus is to help businesses grow by offering proven solutions for talent recruitment and development.

Over 2022 -23, CareerSource Suncoast is serving 448 clients from the City of North Port and expecting to serve more as they are reopening the Goodwill North Port location to distribute Hurricane Ian funding and support the City's businesses and residents. CareerSource Suncoast provides business development resources for new businesses, second-stage businesses, and those looking for an exit strategy. They are member-based small business accelerator that supports the regional entrepreneurial community. Their classes, workshops, conferences, memberships, and networking events are free. They worked with and assisted hundreds of individual entrepreneurs. Their drop-in co-work center offers tech-centric tools and an environment where small businesses can receive expert-guided solutions to today's challenges. These Entrepreneurial Services are through their THRIVE program.

THRIVE provides business development resources for new businesses, second-stage businesses, and those looking for an exit strategy. THRIVE is a member-based small business accelerator that supports the regional entrepreneurial community. Classes, workshops, conferences, memberships, and networking events are free. THRIVE has worked with and assisted hundreds of individual

entrepreneurs. Our drop-in co-work center offers tech-centric tools and an environment where businesses can receive expert-guided solutions to today's challenges.

North Port Entrepreneurship Center:

Mission: Reason for an entrepreneurship center

To increase the successful development of new businesses, job creation, and employment in specific sectors that are aligned with North Port's unique areas of opportunity.

Goals: Broad, long-term achievable outcomes

- Create local value-added jobs to boost the local economy
- Foster North Port's entrepreneurial community
- Leverage target industries & technologies
- Diversify North Port's economy and grow target industries
- Build/accelerate local industry growth
- Retain businesses in North Port
- Nurture development and innovation in North Port's small & medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

Objectives: Short-term, measurable actions to achieve Goals

- Create jobs to boost the local economy
- Business retention
- Nurture development and innovation in North Port's small & medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
- Strengthen relations between postsecondary education and local businesses
- Build/accelerate local industry growth
- Foster the entrepreneurial climate in North Port
- Technology commercialization

Debbie McDowell

From: Debbie McDowell
Sent: Thursday, July 7, 2022 3:37 PM
To: Jerome Fletcher
Cc: Amber Slayton
Subject: RE: The G.O.O.D. Neighbor Program! (Volunteers Requested for Pilot Program)

Scenario #1

Page 1 of 5

I never thought this was "giving me a job". I like as many opportunities to be able to interact with North Port citizens as possible. I would have preferred to learn more about it BEFORE it actually was rolled-out to the citizens – not the day before either!

You know I like the details! How will your staff be supporting my group of volunteers? Once my group of volunteers come up with ideas they want to have implemented with staff assistance, it could be perceived I am giving your staff directions. That is the part I have the most concern with. I understand this is uncharted territory; I want to make sure it doesn't land you, your staff or myself in hot water.

Debbie

From: Jerome Fletcher <jfletcher@cityofnorthport.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 7, 2022 3:22 PM
To: Commissioners <Commissioners@cityofnorthport.com>
Cc: Amber Slayton <aslayton@cityofnorthport.com>; Anna Duffey <aduffey@cityofnorthport.com>; Julie Bellia <jbellia@cityofnorthport.com>; Jason Yarborough <jyarborough@cityofnorthport.com>; Madison Heid <mheid@cityofnorthport.com>
Subject: The G.O.O.D. Neighbor Program! (Volunteers Requested for Pilot Program)

PLEASE DO NOT REPLY TO ALL

Good Afternoon Commissioners, over the last few months I have shared with many of you a community engagement strategy of uniting our community by creating a citizen volunteer program that would be organized by districts to improve our neighborhoods. The goal of the program was to provide resources to the commissioners to help improve our entire community by creating a team to clean up our neighborhoods, beautify our streets, have fun contests, as well as gather and fellowship to help those need in our neighborhoods, etc.

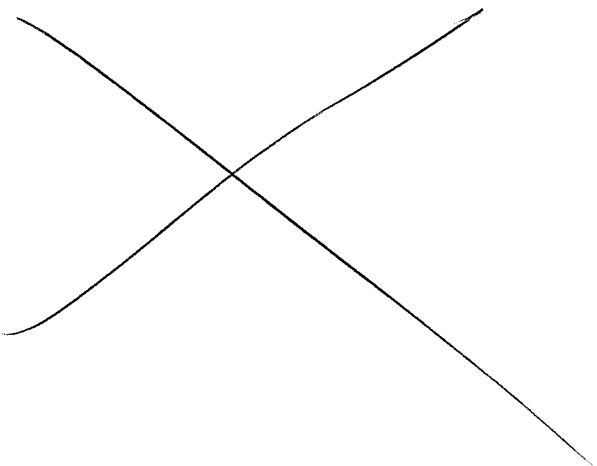
I never intended for this to be perceived as me giving a commissioner a job to do. That is not my role and I apologize if anyone felt that way. Therefore, I am asking all of you if you would like to lead your district volunteer group with support from city staff. We will help you organize your volunteer teams, create a calendar of district events/activity, create a master calendar of all activities, and help coordinate the logistics of your activities. My thought was it would be good for the commissioners to be the face of improvement of our neighborhoods while strengthening relationships.

Please let me know if you would like to volunteer to be included in this program and lead your district team. We will only include and circle back to those commissioners who choose to participate with more details and use your district as part of the "pilot" program.

I will await your response, once again my apologies for the confusion, and thanks for your consideration.

A. Jerome Fletcher II, ICMA-CM, MPA
City Manager of North Port

*- during 1-1
Never at the table*



Debbie McDowell

From: Debbie McDowell
Sent: Thursday, July 7, 2022 10:45 PM
To: Jerome Fletcher; Amber Slayton
Subject: Good Neighbor program

Scenario #7

Page 3 of 5

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Jerome -

I believe our team is like a three legged stool. One leg is the commission body and our citizens. Another leg represents the various levels of staff. The third leg are all of the charter officers. The seat part of the stool is the idea/budget/program/workload. When one leg is missing, the seat may be uncomfortable but it's still useable. If two or more legs are missing, the seat is rendered useless. However, when all three legs are working in unison, the seat works perfectly.

After learning more about the program during today's agenda briefing and being rolled out tomorrow, I agree (in theory) with the intent of the Good Neighbor Program. I would like to participate but I have some additional questions and concerns now that I've had a chance to give this some more thought ...

1. I already shared, the biggest concern I have — the perception of a commissioner giving your staff any type of direction, on any aspect of this program. How will that really work? It can become a slippery slope.
2. A district is not the same as a neighborhood. My district is about 5 miles long and about 4 miles wide. Any neighborhood is less than 2 square blocks. I can only imagine how this would work in D5 or the various gated communities in the city. I assume a district volunteer will offer suggestions on how this program would benefit their neighborhood. After all, mowing a yard doesn't benefit the entirety of D3, only that specific neighborhood. What criteria will be used for revitalization (mow, paint, shop, litter removal, etc etc). How will it be determined who gets 'served'? It seems like a no-win situation trying to decide who is more deserving of the volunteer's efforts.
3. Will this only apply to homeowners or renters too?
4. What is the financial impact for this program? There is nothing in the budget for shirts, supplies and other unknown expenses.
5. Districts only apply to a candidate. Each commissioner represents the entire city and participates in things city-wide. This could become even more confusing to the citizens and the purpose of districting. How can D5 be included when Commission Luke leaves office in 3-4 months? Shouldn't this begin with all 5 districts at the same time. Optics are important and I wouldn't want anyone in D5 thinking they aren't worthy.
6. In a previous email, you said you will work towards answering my questions - IMO, that should have been completed prior to setting a roll-out date. I am disappointed you did not consider bringing this idea as an agenda item, for a commission discussion. You mentioned it during a 1-1, but that was barely a 5 minute conversation and more than three months ago. Staff already spent a lot of time for tomorrow's roll-out, yet you have ZERO input from the commission body even though each commissioner will be directly involved in the program. As you know, I am required to seek commission approval for you to proceed with my ideas to ensure "the will of the board is upheld", I would have expected the same courtesy in return. After all, staff's time is precious regardless of who is making the request. I

assume, at least 3 commissioners give you the stamp of approval or else you wouldn't have proceeded. That stamp of approval is only valid when it comes from the dais, at a public meeting. It appears the commission body and citizens are being bypassed — which has been a sticky-wicket between us in the past.

7. Has the City Attorney weighed in on this program? If not, tomorrow's rollout really needs to be postponed.

In closing, while it seems a bit backwards, I do look forward to learning more about the program, the logistics for implementation and the answers/concerns to my questions. By the way, it's not too late to bring this forward as an agenda item! :)

Debbie

Sent from my iPad

ebbie McDowell

Scenario #17
Page 5 of 5

From: no-reply@cityofnorthport.com on behalf of City of North Port <no-reply@cityofnorthport.com>
Sent: Friday, July 8, 2022 9:02 AM
To: Commissioners
Subject: [EXTERNAL] North Port, FL: Are you a G.O.O.D Neighbor?

This email is from an external source! Be careful o

Are you a G.O.O.D Neighbor?

Post Date: 07/08/2022 9:00 AM

Are you a G.O.O.D (Growing Our Own District) Neighbor? The City is launching the G.O.O.D Neighbor Program to get our residents involved in their respective district. From district clean-ups to neighborhood block parties, our goal is to create a Community of Unity by heightening community pride. Want to volunteer and get involved? Head to www.CityOfNorthPort.com/GoodNeighbor to find out your district and sign up! There will be more details to come.

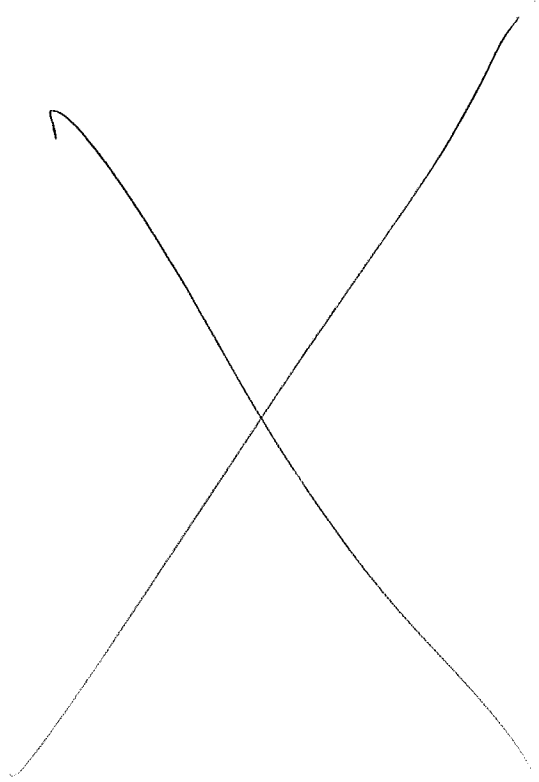
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Mr. Yarborough introduced the item.

Mayor Luke gave a reminder that consensus during budget is based on majority vote of the Board not the unanimous vote of the Board.

Ms. Ferrell provided a presentation to include assessed value, millage rate and Ad Valorem collections, ten-year taxable value history, millage rates of local municipalities, effective millage rates of comparable cities, total budget per capital and per square mile of comparable cities, total capital funds budget of comparable cities, major general fund revenues, proposed change of electrical utility tax, electric utility service tax, general fund change in fund balance, roll over's, budget amendments, general fund revenue, CARES Funding, City-Wide staffing, eliminating Planning Director position, general fund overview, breakdown by department budget proposal assessment increase for each district, Road & Drainage Fund, Fire District Fund, Solid Waste District Fund, Building Fund, rate increase for the Utilities Fund, Fleet Management Fund, Capital Improvement Project (CIP) overview, Surtax proposals, minimum wage increase legislation, and recommendations, and requested direction regarding minimum wage proposal.

Staff answered questions on millage rate and electrical bill, utility tax, rollback rate, and including fund balance reports, CARES Act funding with a list of approved funds including the Fire District, and copies of comparable municipalities in the budget.

21-0915 City Attorney Department

Mayor Luke announced the item.

Ms. Slayton provided a presentation to include office composition, six full-time employees, hours logged for legal work, request for an additional Assistant City Attorney, North Port Police Department (NPPD) legal services, potential enhanced services to NPPD, basis for request, benefits and request for office improvements, and answered questions on cost of outsourcing, professional and contracted services, estimated budget approval for FY2021, litigation increases, continuing education, vacancy rate, and minor operating expenses.

There was consensus to reduce Proposal 1844, Assistant City Attorney Continuing Education, from \$2,000.00 to \$1,000.00.

21-0916 Human Resource Department (Time Certain 10:00 a.m.)


Mayor Luke announced the item.

Mr. Yarborough introduced the item.

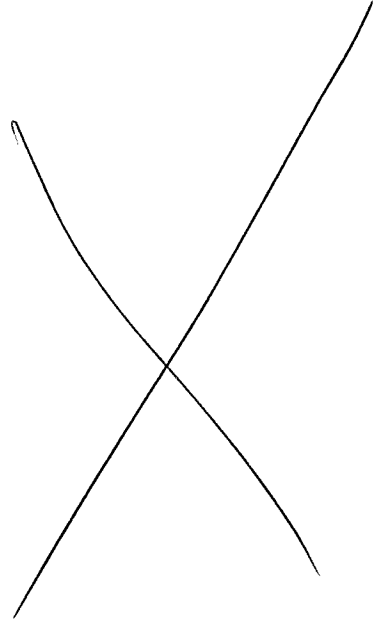
Ms. McDade provided a presentation to include personnel expenditures, priorities, enhancements, and tent rental for annual employee luncheon.

Staff answered questions on purchasing a tent vs. rental, labor relations, compensation study, monitor purchases, professional services, and labor attorney.

There was consensus to keep Professional Services as is.

 ***There was consensus to not fund a compensation study this fiscal year.***

There was consensus to direct staff to rent a tent for the Annual Employee Luncheon.



CM 1-1

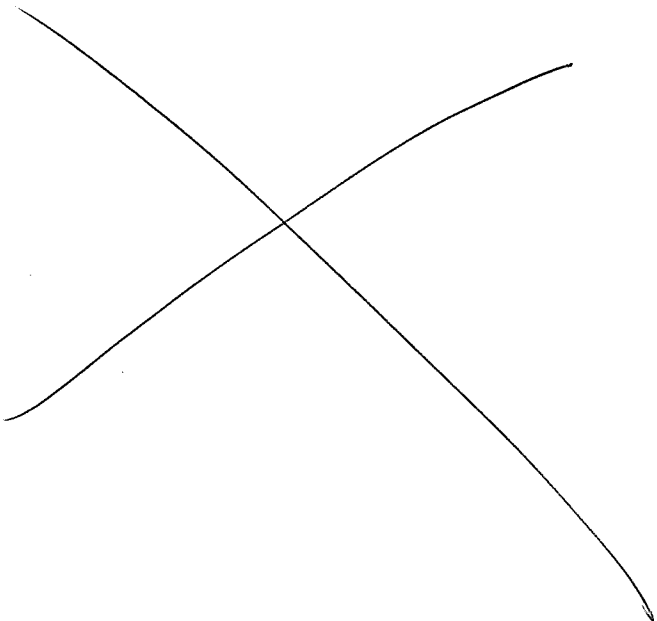
12/16/21

Pay stubby - using Recovery Savings
to conduct.

WMS Phase 1 short fall in \$

WMS connect to Legacy Trail

Nothing Closet - YMCA
AR Soil Bldg



Debbie McDowell

From: Heather Taylor
Sent: Wednesday, April 6, 2022 12:53 PM
To: Debbie McDowell
Subject: RE: request
Attachments: Scan_04-06-2022.pdf

Scenario #8
Page 5 of 8

Commissioner,

Please see attached. Thanks.

Heather Taylor, MMC
City Clerk
Office: 941 429 7056 Cell: 941 223 5041

From: Debbie McDowell <dmcdowell@cityofnorthport.com>
Sent: Monday, April 4, 2022 4:39 PM
To: Heather Taylor <htaylor@cityofnorthport.com>
Subject: RE: request

Thank you for sharing that. Please focus primarily on the authorization and costs documents. I'll let you know about the emails!

Thanks
Debbie

From: Heather Taylor <htaylor@cityofnorthport.com>
Sent: Monday, April 4, 2022 4:35 PM
To: Debbie McDowell <dmcdowell@cityofnorthport.com>
Subject: RE: request

Commissioner,

Good afternoon. I will work on this request. Authorization documents and cost of the study should be relatively quick to obtain. Email search might provide a large number of emails.

Thank you.

Heather Taylor, MMC
City Clerk
Office: 941 429 7056 Cell: 941 223 5041

From: Debbie McDowell <dmcdowell@cityofnorthport.com>
Sent: Monday, April 4, 2022 3:35 PM
To: Heather Taylor <htaylor@cityofnorthport.com>
Subject: request

In the city manager's self-evaluation he stated "he began a compensation pay study". Could I have a copy of all documents including emails, authorization documents and costs of this study? If you need clarification, please don't hesitate to ask.

Thanks

Debbie

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December 15, 2021

Evergreen Solutions, LLC
2878 Remington Green Circle
Tallahassee, Florida 32308

Request for Quote

The City of North Port utilized your services in 2017 for our most recent Classification and Compensation Study. It is the intent of the City of North Port to perform a current market study to assess the existing compensation plan. We are hoping to partner with Evergreen Solutions, LLC to complete the update to our plan.

At this time, we are requesting for a quote to update our compensation plan to ensure that we are aligned with the market. Please provide a quote for the requested services as described in the following Scope of Services for an update to the City of North Port compensation plan.

For questions regarding the Scope of Services, please contact Yvonne Gibson at 941-429-7133 or ygibson@cityofnorthport.com. Your quote for services may be submitted via email to Yvonne Gibson at ygibson@cityofnorthport.com or via fax to 941-429-7135.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christine McDade", written over a circular stamp.

Christine McDade
Human Resources Director



Achieve Anything

www.cityofnorthport.com

Human Resources: 941.429.7200
4970 City Hall Boulevard, North Port, FL 34286

Yvonne Gibson

From: Yvonne Gibson
Sent: Thursday, December 16, 2021 4:13 PM
To: info@consultevergreen.com
Subject: Request for quote of services
Attachments: Request for Quote.pdf

Good afternoon.

Please find a request for quote for an update to our compensation plan. As your organization completed our most recent compensation study we are hoping to work with you once again.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions. I will be out of the office beginning December 20th and returning on the 27th. I look forward to working with you.

Thank you,

Yvonne Gibson

Human Resources Coordinator

City of North Port

4970 City Hall Blvd

North Port, FL 34286

Ph: 941-429-7133 Fax: 941-429-7135

ygibson@cityofnorthport.com