

MINUTES OF THE BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING FOR THE BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS FOR THE CITY OF PORT ST. JOE FLORIDA, HELD IN THE COMMISSION CHAMBER AT CITY HALL, October 15, 2013, AT 5:00 P.M.

The following were present: Mayor Magidson, Commissioners Buzzett, McCroan, Patterson and Thursbay. City Manager Jim Anderson, City Clerk Charlotte Pierce and Attorney Tom Gibson were also present.

Commissioner Patterson requested a Workshop to discuss Boat Ramp Fees as he has been approached by people expressing the need for improvements to the Frank Pate Park Boat Ramp.

Mayor Magidson stated that he felt the major issues were: Whether to charge or not; how collection of the charge would be handled and what the money would be used for. Mayor Magidson is waiting to hear from Patricia Harrell of the Florida Wildlife Commission concerning the legalities of charging a fee.

Herman Jones spoke to the Commission about charging a fee and suggested that city residents be exempt; county residents should pay a minimal fee and out of county visitors should pay a higher fee. A fee hanger card can be placed on the dash of a vehicle or hung over the rear view mirror to show that you have paid to park at the boat ramp area.

Commissioner Buzzett noted that a tiered system would be workable and agreed with the rate structure Mr. Jones discussed.

Commissioner Thursbay stated that he did not want to harm the Commercial Fisherman with fees and thanked Mr. Jones for sharing his thoughts with the Commissioners.

Fred Cannon shared that the boat ramp is used by Commercial Fishermen in the fall and was concerned what impact a fee would have on them. He felt that a small fee would be reasonable.

Mark Howze shared his thoughts on the needs of the boat ramp; suggested improvements; offered thoughts on charging a fee and how to collect it; signage for the area; a fund raising campaign and volunteered to help with funding.

Mr. Anderson noted that grants have been applied for and a fee structure has been discussed previously.

Bill Bushue shared several concerns of residents regarding fees; public safety; collecting methods for the fees and that fees are just another word for taxes.

Judy Miick shared that in her travels, other areas use the honor system for fees and it works well. She also suggested stickers for vehicles.

Commissioner McCroan suggested that citizens 65 and over be exempt from paying a fee, that revenues are needed to maintain what we have, and that he would like to see the City provide signage explaining what we will be doing.

Each Commissioner reiterated that they do not support a City resident having to pay a fee to use the boat ramp; feel that a nominal fee for county residents would be acceptable and out of county residents should pay a larger fee.

Mayor Magidson adjourned the Workshop at 6:03 P.M.

Approved this 5th day of November 2013.


Charlotte M. Pierce, City Clerk


Mel C. Magidson, Jr., Mayor