

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CITY  
COMMISSIONERS FOR THE CITY OF PORT ST. JOE, FLORIDA, HELD AT  
2775 GARRISON AVENUE, June 15, 2021, at Noon.**

The following were present: Mayor Buzzett, Commissioners Hoffman, and Langston. City Manager Jim Anderson, City Clerk Charlotte Pierce, and City Attorney Clinton McCahill were also present. Commissioners Ashbrook and Lowry were absent.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**Minutes**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Hoffman, second by Commissioner Langston, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 1, 2021. All in favor; Motion carried 3-0.

Mayor Buzzett moved the City Engineer's Report up in the Agenda.

**City Engineer – John Baxley**

*NRDA Stormwater Grant Master Plan*

This project is on hold.

*Maddox Park Gazebo*

Design is scheduled to be completed by June 18, 2021. Once the design is completed, Dewberry will send the plan set to the City for review by the Commission.

*Walking Path FDOT Grant*

Trail construction is complete. Lighting was scheduled to be installed the week of June 7, 2021; however, it appears that no installation has occurred.

*CDBG Project*

This project is complete except for the roadway patching.

*First Street Lift Station and Long Avenue Water / Sewer Project*

Mr. Baxley expects to issue the Notice to Proceed within the next week.

Mayor Buzzett requested that a time line be prepared for this project to be shared with residents when they call asking about the project.

**City Attorney –**

*Ordinance 589 Mobile Home on Avenue E; Second Reading and Adoption:*

It was noted that the recommendation from the PDRB was to remove the Sunset provision from the Ordinance. After discussion, Commissioner Langston requested that the Ordinance be changed to allow the property be left for a child or grandchild of Ms. Willie Mae Williams.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Langston, second by Commissioner Hoffman, to approve Ordinance 589 with the provision that the property could be left for a child or grandchild. All in favor; Motion carried 3-0.

Attorney McCahill read Ordinance 589 by Title only.

*Ordinance 590 Utility Service Area; First Reading:*

A Motion was made by Commissioner Hoffman, second by Commissioner Langston, to have the First Reading of Ordinance 590. All in favor; Motion carried 3-0. There will be a Special Meeting on Monday, June 21, 2021, at Noon for the Second Reading and consideration of adoption of Ordinance 590.

Attorney McCahill read Ordinance 590 by Title only.

*Ordinance 591 City Boat Ramp; First Reading:*

A Motion was made by Commissioner Langston, second by Commissioner Hoffman, to have the First Reading of Ordinance 591. All in favor; Motion carried 3-0.

Attorney McCahill read Ordinance 591 by Title only.

**Old Business –**

*Gateway Apartments Update Paces Foundation*

Michael Bauer, Director of Community Development, shared that their proposed Gateway Expansion project was \$1,200,000 over budget, and they have been able to reduce that amount to \$800,000. He attributed the cost increase to rising construction cost and stated they are reaching out to partners for their help in an attempt to continue reducing the overage. He asked if the City would help by waiving fees and giving a tax abatement.

The Commission expressed their continued concerns about unresolved issues at Gateway; ingress and egress to the facility, increased complaints from residents, drastic increase in monthly rent from \$665 to \$945 for some residents, no company person on site daily, AC issues, water bill charges, mold concerns, and missing funds attributed to a former employee of the company.

Mr. Bauer responded that the rent increases were not caused by the missing funds, but allowable by state and federal rules and they were following those. He noted criminal charges have been filed against the former employee, and that he would be looking in to the other issues.

Debbie Caldwell of UAC and Gateway Site Manager, stated the Commissioners were only hearing one side of the story and there is more to the issue than is being told by the residents. There is to be a meeting with all residents within 30 days.

*Current City Projects*

Mr. Anderson shared that all projects are moving along well. Bridges should be installed shortly, progress is being made on the Tennis and Pickle Ball Courts, and FEMA needs a plan for the fishing pier at Clifford Sims Park.

**New Business –**

*Re-Finance of Current Regions Loan*

Mr. Anderson noted that the current loan interest is 3.41% with a 15-year balloon payment due in 2028. There was a 7-year hard repay afforded on the \$12 Million loan balance. The Finance Committee recommends putting \$3 Million on the loan, refinancing the loan at a rate of 1.95% with a prepay for 9 years or a one way make whole provision. This would be a substantial savings to the City.

The hiring of a Financial Advisor was discussed, but consensus was that would be more costly and that rates, more than likely, will be on the rise in the new future.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Langston, second by Commissioner Hoffman, that with Bond Council approval, to refinance the loan at a rate of 1.95% and pay down the loan by \$3 Million. All in favor, Motion carried 3-0.

### *Landscape Buffer Easement*

A Motion was made by Commissioner Hoffman, second by Commissioner Langston, to approve the Landscape Buffer Easement with Arrazo on Madison, LLC. All in favor; Motion carried 3-0.

### *July 4<sup>th</sup> Events*

Mr. Anderson shared that fireworks would begin at 10 P.M. ET on Sunday, July 4, 2021, from Clifford Sims Park.

The Street Dance has previously been approved.

A request has been received from Joeboy Ent. to add a comedy act on Friday, July 2, 2021, a car show on Saturday July 3, 2021, and a concert on Sunday, July 4, 2021, lasting until 3 A.M. It was noted that an incomplete application has been received; only quotes, not contracts, have been received for security services; insurance, listing the City as an additional insured, has not been received; and the issue of alcohol being provided is not clear.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Langston, second by Commissioner Hoffman, to approve the request with the stipulations that a completed application and all signed contracts must be given to the City by June 25, 2021. All in favor; Motion carried 3-0.

Chief Richards requested that the person responsible for the car show make contact with him soon concerning right of way issues.

### *Budget 2021 / 2022*

Mr. Anderson asked that Commissioners get with him or Mike Lacour if they have projects for the upcoming budget.

### *FLC Voting Delegate*

A Motion was made by Commissioner Hoffman, second by Commissioner Langston, for Commissioner Ashbrook to be the FLC Voting Delegate. All in favor; Motion carried 3-0.

### *Boat Ramp Freezer – Commissioner Hoffman*

Commissioner Hoffman shared his concerns about the odor issues and the need for a cooler. It was noted that power will need to be run to the site for a cooler or grinder and John Grantland will check on the power. Mike Lacour is to contact Mexico Beach concerning their boat ramp cooler.

Mayor Buzzett expressed his concerns that passengers for the charter boats are taking up space for boaters trying to launch their boats. He asked that a parking fee be considered for them as the charter captains are not paying for anything and are trying up the docks preventing boaters from launching.

### **Public Works – John Grantland**

Mr. Grantland did not have anything to share with the Commission.

### **Surface Water Plant – Larry McClamma**

Mr. McClamma did not have any additional information to share.

### **Wastewater Plant – Kevin Pettis**

Mr. Pettis was off today and Mr. Anderson noted the plant is not spraying this month and they are doing plant maintenance.

### **Finance Director – Mike Lacour**

Mr. Lacour is waiting on audit information and is working with Auditor Ben Vance on this.

### **Code Enforcement –**

Mr. Anderson noted that the Figueira Property at 103 Monica Drive has sold and City Liens should be recovered from the sale.

It was noted that several vehicles have accumulated in the back yard of 113 Monica Drive and this needs to be addressed by Code Enforcement.

Mayor Buzzett requested that code violations be addressed at 1507 Monument Avenue.

### **Police Department – Chief Richards**

The Chief shared that there is an ongoing investigation with the Gateway issue that involves numerous victims, multiple cases, there is no overnight resolution of the issue, and the PSJ PD goes by rules also.

Chief Richards noted that the biggest complaint his department receives is about speeding and he has requested a grant for speed measurement devices.

The Chief also shared there have been problems with boat ramp permits being taped on the rear vehicle window rather than the designated driver's side rear window on the permit holder's vehicle. Some launchers are leaving their trailers and removing their vehicles which is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Commissioner Langston requested that "Slow" and "No Through Trucks" signs be considered for Avenue A.

### **City Clerk – Charlotte Pierce**

#### *Grants Update*

Clerk Pierce shared that City Staff is working with our grant writer on possible funding for a new City Hall.

She also reminded the Commissioners of the invitation to the Grand Opening of the Eastern Shipbuilding Group Port St. Joe facility on Thursday, July 8, 2021 at 10 A.M.

### **Citizens to be Heard –**

Marvin Davis shared a picture of the Jones Museum and asked about repairing it. Mr. Anderson noted that the picture was of a walkway that joins the buildings. An engineer will need to look at this and we have discussed adding the repairs in the upcoming budget. He also asked about repairs to the gazebo in front of the building.

Tan Smiley retorted that Public Works can make the repairs and having to have an engineer review this issue means it will not get done. John Grantland advised Mr. Smiley that the Florida Building Code requires engineers review issues of this type before any repairs are made.

Mr. Smiley also asked about restrooms in Nathan Peters Park and why they are locked. Commissioner Langston responded that they are locked because of what is being found in them. Mr. Anderson shared that the Workforce group has a key for the bathrooms and could open them in the morning and close them in the afternoon.

Commissioner Hoffman shared that the County did not follow through on their promise of \$75,000 towards improving the bathroom facilities. Chairman Quinn had stated they are applying for a grant to help with funding, but have not received anything on it yet.

Mr. Smiley also accused the City of abandoning the property where the old baseball field was on Avenue A. He was advised that the City did not own that property when the baseball field was there, but it was a holding of the St. Joe Company.

**Discussion Items by Commissioners –**

*Commissioner Hoffman* shared that he has received several calls about there being too much trash left on Highways 71 and 98. These are FL DOT roads and are maintained by them. He did ask that if employees see eye sores along the roadway to pass the location on to John Grantland.

*Commissioner Langston* updated the Commissioners on the Community Garden. He stated that boxes are being built, the ladies from the Garden Club are very excited about the project, asked that citizens come out to help with the project, and noted that people are needed to serve on committees. He feels the overall project is looking good. The next meeting will be at the Farmacy, formerly the Starlight Restaurant, on Avenue A.

Commissioner Langston shared that he had spoken with Gulf County School Superintendent, Jim Norton about the school zones signs and Mr. Norton would like to have a Workshop on the topic.

*Mayor Buzzett* noted that the Tennis and Pickle Ball Courts will have lights and would like to get that on our social media pages so citizens will know they are available. He noted there continues to be a parking issue downtown and has spoken with George Duren about the possibility of using his lot on Monument for parking. He would like to see a letter sent to the businesses asking that they be more courteous and try to help solve the parking problem.

Mayor Buzzett also applauded the City of Marianna's recognition in the QC Magazine for receiving the Environmental Protection Agency's 2020 PISCES Recognition for Excellence in Problem Solving for the City's Solar Array project. He also encouraged the Commissioners to read the article in the QC Magazine titled "Council's Risk Management Role."

**Motion to Adjourn –**

There was no other business to come before the Commission and Mayor Buzzett adjourned the meeting at 2:05 P.M.

Approved this 6<sup>th</sup> day of July 2021.

*Rex Buzzett*  
Rex Buzzett, Mayor

7/6/21  
Date

*Charlotte M. Pierce*  
Charlotte M. Pierce, City Clerk

7/6/21  
Date