

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CITY
COMMISSIONERS FOR THE CITY OF PORT ST. JOE, FLORIDA, HELD AT
2775 GARRISON AVENUE, July 20, 2021, at Noon.**

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes

A Motion was made by Commissioner Ashbrook, second by Commissioner Langston, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 6, 2021. All in favor; Motion carried 5-0.

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

City Engineer – John Baxley

NRDA Stormwater Grant Master Plan

This project is on hold.

Maddox Park Gazebo

The plans have been revised to include steps around the perimeter. Dewberry will be meeting with SCE on July 20, 2021, to review the plan set and make final markups before providing to the City for review.

CDBG Project

Asphalt patching is complete. Manholes are scheduled to be rehabilitated on July 26, 2021.

First Street Lift Station and Long Avenue Water / Sewer Project

The Change Order for sewer rehabilitation of First Street has been executed and provided to FDEP. A preliminary schedule has been provided to the City for review. Mr. Anderson noted there is a possibility the State Revolving Fund may help with this project and the City could possibly receive an 80% grant.

Port City Trail

The trail construction is complete. Lighting is scheduled to be completed by July 23, 2021.

City Attorney –

Mr. McCahill is working on the Panhandling Ordinance. He will also be talking with the County about the possibility of levying a one cent Sales Tax for the City.

Old Business –

Current City Projects

Mr. Anderson shared that progress is being made on various City projects.

New Business –

Re-Finance of Current Regions Loan

Our Financial Advisor is checking with the State Revolving Fund and Regions Bank concerning pay off of this debt.

Budget 2021 / 2022

Mr. Anderson is waiting to hear from the County as to when they will be holding their Budget public hearings.

The City Commission will be holding the milage rate at 3.5914 again this year.

Mr. Anderson announced that there will be an Amnesty Day on October 23, 2021, in front of the Gulf County Court House.

Public Works – John Grantland

Mr. Grantland shared that the grants for the Beacon Hill Sewer and Septic to Sewer Program have been submitted.

Surface Water Plant – Larry McClamma

Mr. McClamma noted that Operator Justin Pierce is leaving the City and wished him well in his new endeavor.

Wastewater Plant – Kevin Pettis

A Motion was made by Commissioner Hoffman, second by Commissioner Ashbrook, to approve RFP 2021-07 Change Order #1 Sprayfield Sand with Monolith Construction Option Two in the amount of \$47,000. All in favor; Motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Pettis shared there is 1' 4" of freeboard in the pond and the plant is running well.

Finance Director – Mike Lacour

Mr. Lacour noted the state is waiving the 12.5% match on all FEMA Grants, and this should be a savings of \$100,000 - \$150,000 for the City.

He shared that both FRDAP Grants, Disc Golf at the Washington Site and improvement of the Disc Golf Course at Buck Griffin Lake, were approved.

Christy McElroy stated a bicycle cannot be ridden on the Port Trail / Bike Path. She asked that something be done to correct this situation.

Jai Bryant asked about North Port St. Joe and the Stormwater Master Plan. City Engineer Josh Baxley responded that this was a high level overview but issues can be looked into.

Code Enforcement –

Mr. Anderson shared that hearings had been held last week and will be continuing on compliance.

Police Department – Chief Richards

Chief Richards did not have anything to discuss with the Commission.

City Clerk – Charlotte Pierce

Grants Update

City Staff continues to work with our Grant Writers, the Ferguson Group, on grants for the City.

Citizens to be Heard –

Jai Bryant asked what FRDAP is, noted that North Port St. Joe is considered a blighted area and asked if left over budget funds could be used to improve the area and provide housing. She noted the needs of the community should be made known.

Letha Mathews asked for an update on the increase in COVID cases. Mayor Buzzett responded that there has been an upturn in reported cases but the individuals appear to be younger to middle aged persons that have not been vaccinated. He encouraged individuals to get vaccinated.

Christy McElroy encouraged everyone to get vaccinated. She thanked the Commissioners for the Fourth of July Fireworks, feels the County should contribute more of the Sales Tax money to the City, and suggested if the County will not cooperate, the City should establish their own TDC. Mayor Buzzett noted the City could establish a CDC, but it would have to be approved by the County.

She questioned the amount of money the City is receiving since the DRA was allowed to sun set. Mr. Anderson responded that it would be \$408,000 over three years. Ms. McElroy expressed her appreciation to Chief Richards for the help of Lt. Burch in removing the 6' alligator from Buck Griffin Lake. She also shared her concerns about safety issues at the marina, the unsightliness of the area there, and the lack of secured fencing around the area.

Ms. McElroy reminded the Commission of their commitment to the Field of Dreams and suggested using FRDAP Grants for the improvements to that area.

Eddie Fields shared his concerns about the condition of Avenues C and D to which Mayor Buzzett responded that funds were in the upcoming budget for road repairs. Mr. Anderson also explained how the City is working to secure major grants for road paving throughout the City.

He asked about bathrooms in various facilities, requested that this be kept on the radar, and mentioned the flooding of Avenue A. Mr. Fields questioned the safety of the meter near the museum. Mr. Grantland responded that it had been checked by the building inspector and meets all requirements.

Johnny Bryant questioned the use of sewer grinder stations. Mr. Grantland explained there was a CDBG Grant that provided these, that gravity sewer would not work at the time improvements were made, and these are used through out our service area.

Discussion Items by Commissioners –

Neither Commissioners Langston, Ashbrook, nor Lowry had any concerns to discuss.

Commissioner Hoffman shared of the phone calls, emails, pictures of the mold and mildew, increased rent, and request for rent compensation that he has been receiving concerning the problems at Gateway Apartments. He noted that until all questions asked by the City of the representatives when they appeared before the Commission were resolved, he would not support any additional expansion of the facility. He will be sharing what he has received with Mr. McCahill so he can make the owners aware of the issues.

Mayor Buzzett expressed his concerns about Scallop Season and the traffic problems associated with it. He asked that Attorney McCahill draft an Ordinance charging all out of county visitors \$20 per permit to offset the increased expense of providing security and traffic control, and include the ability to close the boat ramp if safety issues arise during the season. Mr. McCahill is to have the Ordinance for the August 3, 2021, meeting.

Chief Richards requested that the traffic pattern for unloading boats be redirected to Baltzell Avenue to relieve congestion on Highway 98.

Motion to Adjourn –

There was no other business to come before the Commission and Mayor Buzzett adjourned the meeting at 1:20 P.M.

Approved this 3rd day of August 2021.

Rex Buzzett
Rex Buzzett, Mayor

8/3/21
Date

Charlotte M. Pierce
Charlotte M. Pierce, City Clerk

8/3/21
Date