

# MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS FOR THE CITY OF PORT ST. JOE, FLORIDA, HELD AT 2775 GARRISON AVENUE, November 2, 2021, at Noon.

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

## CONSENT AGENDA

### Minutes

A Motion was made by Commissioner Ashbrook, second by Commissioner Langston, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 19, 2021. All in favor; Motion carried 4-0.

### City Engineer – Josh Baxley

#### *Maddox Park Gazebo*

Only one bid was received on October 29, 2021, in the amount of \$145,555.25 and it was an incomplete bid. The bid specs will be sent to our architect for his review and possible value engineering suggestions.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Hoffman, second by Commissioner Ashbrook, to rebid the project after a review by our architect. All in favor; Motion carried 4-0.

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

The project is under construction. The next progress meeting is scheduled for November 4, 2021.

#### *Clifford Sims Park Plan*

This is currently in design.

#### *First Street Sewer Repairs and Paving*

The paving is currently in design and its work is at 90% completion. Mr. Baxley anticipates that an extension of the contract will need to be requested.

Mr. Baxley shared that to video, clean, and bladder the pipes on 20<sup>th</sup> Street, it will cost approximately \$18,000. The Commission Tabled this item for further review. No action was taken.

Commissioner Hoffman shared his concerns about being able to pipe the water from Chicken House Branch to the Gulf County Canal.

Commissioner Langston asked about drainage at Forest Hill Cemetery. Mr. Baxley responded that a surface treatment in the form of a pond would not address the issue and would run the potential of creating a point discharge onto private property. Additionally, an underground drainage system would not be feasible as a means to lower the water table at the cemetery and would run the potential of discharging waste water generated by decay into the groundwater. He noted we have had rainfall events this year that exceed 100 year events, which have caused abnormally high ground water levels. Mr. Baxley suggested that the City work to ensure proper burial methods were followed.

### City Attorney –

#### *Ordinance 596 Commission Compensation; Second Reading and Adoption*

Christy McElroy shared her concerns about the Commissioners making \$1,000 per month in addition to receiving insurance and retirement. She noted that larger cities make only \$1,000 and does not feel that it is

the right way to spend tax dollars. She feels that Commissioners are Public Servants and reminded them that it was contentious when they voted themselves a raise.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Hoffman, second by Commissioner Langston, to have the Second Reading and Adoption of Ordinance 596. Voting to adopt Ordinance 596 were Commissioners Ashbrook, Hoffman, and Langston. Mayor Buzzett voted no. Motion passed 3-1.

Attorney McCahill read Ordinance 596 by Title only.

#### *Food Truck Ordinance Discussion*

Mayor Buzzett is concerned that there could be a food truck under a pole barn on every corner and they should not be competing with our local merchants.

Commissioner Langston agreed with Mayor Buzzett.

Commissioner Ashbrook feels that the trucks should be regulated, we need something on our books to regulate them, and that includes many restrictions.

Commissioner Hoffman stated that we need new language for food trucks and that he will not be voting on the issue because he does the books for his brother's food truck business.

### **Old Business**

#### *City Projects*

Mr. Anderson reviewed the projects, noted that they are moving along well, and that the Utility Mapping is at about 98% - 99% complete.

#### *Covid 19 Update, Mayor Buzzett*

Mayor Buzzett shared that booster shots for adults and kid shots are available and encouraged everyone to take advantage of the shots.

#### *RFQ 2021 – 01 Workforce Development Partnership*

*Christy McElroy* questioned the traffic route for the project.

Mayor Buzzett responded that there would be no entrance or exits from Garrison Avenue, and that entrance and exits should be on Highway 71. There is a possibility of a cul-de-sac, and that there should not be any new traffic in the residential area.

*Michael Sparks* asked about the size of the project. Mayor Buzzett shared that there are 65 Acres and the Density is capped at 172.

*Letha Mathews* shared that there continues to be problems at Gateway with mold and repairing the apartments. Mr. Anderson is to reach out to their management about these issues.

### **New Business –**

#### *RFP 2021-08 Maddox Park Gazebo (Handout)*

This was discussed earlier in the meeting under the engineer's report.

#### *RFP 2021-15 Monument Avenue Sidewalks (Handout)*

A Motion was made by Commissioner Ashbrook, second by Commissioner Hoffman, to approve RFP 2021-15 in the amount of \$63,880 and Mr. Grantland is to work on a Change Order to extend the project with the Dooder Parker Park and Washington Gym Disc Golf Pods contingent upon state approval. All in favor; Motion carried 4-0.

*SRF Long Avenue Drinking Water Loan Agreement DW 230111*

A Motion was made by Commissioner Ashbrook, second by Commissioner Langston, to approve the SRF Long Avenue Drinking Water Loan Agreement DW 230111. All in favor; Motion carried 4-0. The total amount will be \$1,778,485 with the grant being \$971,167 and the loan \$807,318 at a zero percent interest rate.

*Washington Gym – Historic Register Workshop*

There will be a Workshop on this Wednesday, November 17, 2021, at 10:00 A.M.

**Public Works – John Grantland**

Mr. Grantland did not have any updates for the Commission.

**Surface Water Plant – Larry McClamma**

Mr. McClamma shared that staffing levels are tough and he will be going on schedule because of the staff shortage.

Mayor Buzzett noted the need to acquire licensed operators and that bonuses may need to be offered to attract qualified individuals.

**Wastewater Plant – Kevin Pettis**

Mr. Anderson shared that Mr. Pettis will be out for a procedure and slight amounts of Algae have been seen, but feels it will subside with the cooler weather.

**Finance Director – Mike Lacour**

Mr. Lacour did not have any thing to update the Commission on.

**Code Enforcement –**

Mr. Anderson noted that the Special Magistrate continues to have hearings and progress is being made with repairs to houses.

Mayor Buzzett shared his concerns about Home Based Businesses being active in the residential area. He is receiving complaints about the businesses and asked that the Ordinance covering this be reviewed and enforced.

**Police Department – Chief Richards**

Chief Richards did not have any updates for the Commission.

**City Clerk – Charlotte Pierce**

*Grants Update –*

Clerk Pierce shared that meetings are continuing with our grant writers. She also reminded the Commissioners of the Christmas Parade on Saturday, December 11, 2021, beginning at 6 P.M.

Mayor Buzzett offered his thanks to City Staff and the Chamber for the success of Ghosts on the Coast, Sunday, October 31, 2021. He shared that he had received numerous comments on the event and thought it was very well attended.

**Citizens to be Heard –**

*Eddie Fields* asked for updates on Forest Hill Cemetery.

Mayor Buzzett responded that City Engineer Josh Baxley did not feel that there was a lot that could be done.

John Grantland noted that the grave is an issue because of an improper burial years ago. We are dealing with a sandy soil and property that is not owned by the City.

Clerk Pierce shared that the family has been trying to take care of the situation, but because of the unusually high amount of rain and a very high water table, no one can prepare the site.

Mr. Fields asked about Avenues C and D. Mr. Anderson responded that we are waiting on a response for CDBG-DR Funding and that the First Street Sewer repairs are being done by a SCOP Grant.

*Michael Sparks* thanked the Commission for the progress that is being made in the rerouting of water near his property at 1008 McClelland Avenue. He also asked about the drainage from 13<sup>th</sup> Street back to 10<sup>th</sup> Street on McClelland.

Mr. Sparks shared his concerns about food trucks and the need for restrictions for them.

Mr. Grantland shared that two pine trees have been removed and overflows from the water tower is not causing the issue.

*Warren Christian* thanked the Commission for the help with the water issue at his home at 1010 McClelland Avenue and feels that his front yard is sinking. He asked that the two storm drains in his yard be checked.

Mr. Anderson noted that the City has been working its way through town on the ditch system beginning with 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

*Chester Davis* shared his concerns about trailers on property, feels that food trucks should have bathrooms, and asked about water drainage to Chicken House Branch. Mr. Davis noted that he had moved here in 1954, water has always been a problem, and doesn't know if you can combat nature.

*Christy McElroy* reiterated her concerns about the bike path drainage, feels that the height of the path is causing the problem, and drainage is needed from 13<sup>th</sup> Street to Highway 71. She also noted that the ballfields need to be relocated to the Field of Dreams area and that will help eliminate the drainage issue.

Ms. McElroy asked if there was any legal action on the water issue with Gulf County. Mayor Buzzett responded that the City Ordinance defines the City's Water Service area. She also referenced a January, 2007, report from the Northwest Florida Water Management District stating why the City had to come off of the aquifer and that no one should have amnesia as to why this was done.

### **Discussion Items by Commissioners**

*Commissioner Langston* did not have anything else to share with the Commission.

*Commissioner Ashbrook* shared that the CRA is on track for a meeting the second Tuesday in December at 10 A.M. He asked that the Regular Commission Meeting scheduled for December 21, 2021, be moved to December 14, 2021, and have a CRA Workshop at 11 A.M. Consensus of the Commission was to move the meeting from December 21, 2021, to December 14, 2021.

*Commissioner Hoffman* expressed his concerns about the letter from Code Enforcement to two people regarding mechanical equipment at their residence. He feels that the language is vague, the letter needs to be reevaluated, work on more specific language for the Ordinance, and resend the letters. No action was taken by the Commission and the City Attorney will review the LDR.

Commissioner Hoffman also shared that he thinks Stop Signs should be added on Garrison Avenue and asked Chief Richards to do a study of the area to determine the need.

*Mayor Buzzett* stated that Commissioner Lowry was out today due to the death of his step-father.

Mayor Buzzett noted this is the time of year that Commissioners begin receiving requests to use the Cape San Blas Lighthouse Complex. He reminded everyone that the St. Joseph Historical Society has a lease on


the property, everything needs to go through the Historical Society, events are showing up and people asking for forgiveness rather than permission. The Mayor also noted that the lights on the lighthouse are to be up from Thanksgiving through New Year's.

Mayor Buzzett shared that he still wanted to consider lap tops for the Commissioners and asked that City Staff check to see what other cities are doing.

**Motion to Adjourn –**

There was no other business to come before the Commission and Mayor Buzzett adjourned the meeting at 1:33 P.M.

Approved this 16<sup>th</sup> day of November 2021.

  
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Rex Buzzett Mayor

11/16/21  
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Date

  
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Charlotte M. Pierce, City Clerk

11/16/21  
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Date