

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CITY  
COMMISSIONERS FOR THE CITY OF PORT ST. JOE, FLORIDA, HELD AT  
2775 GARRISON AVENUE, June 13, 2023, at Noon**

The following were present: Mayor Buzzett, Commissioners Hoffman, Langston, and Lowry. City Manager Jim Anderson, and City Clerk Charlotte Pierce were also present. Commissioners Ashbrook and Lowry were absent. Attorney McCahill joined the meeting at 1:20 P.M.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**June 6, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Langston, second by Commissioner Hoffman, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting on June 6, 2023. All in favor; Motion carried 3-0.

**Swearing In of newly Elected Officials, Mayor Buzzett, Commissioners Langston, and Kerigan by Judge McFarland**

Judge Timothy J. McFarland administered the Oath of Office to returning Mayor/Commissioner Rex Buzzett. Mayor Buzzett's wife, Nancy, held the Bible for the ceremony. Mayor Buzzett's sister, Barbara, her husband Jim, and their granddaughter, Meta, joined Mayor Buzzett for the ceremony.

Judge McFarland also administered the Oath of Office to Commissioner Eric Langston. City Clerk, Charlotte Pierce, held the Bible for Commissioner Langston's swearing in ceremony.

Jude McFarland administered the Oath of Office to Commissioner Kerigan. Commissioner Kerigan's wife, Kim, held the Bible for the ceremony and his daughter, Janel, and Marc Singer joined them.

At 12:05 P.M. Mayor Buzzett requested a five-minute recess for visitors that wished to leave the meeting an opportunity to do so.

Mayor Buzzett reconvened the meeting at 12:10 P.M.

**Gulf County Property Appraiser Mitch Burke**

Mr. Burke shared that the preliminary taxable value for the City is \$598,071 for 2023, which is an increase of 29.75% over last year. He noted that Gulf County and the School Board have significant increases as well.

**City Engineer Josh Baxley**

*Long Avenue Paving*

The paving is completed, but the walk through has not been completed. Mr. Baxley noted the issues with Long Avenue and offered several ways to resolve the issue.

After discussion, Commissioner Hoffman requested that the item be Tabled until a solution can be reached.

*First Street Paving*

The contractor is completing the final punch list items.

### *Beacon Hill Sewer*

The lift station has been set along with the manhole and the roof has been installed. The contractor will be back next week prepping for the wet well plumbing and beginning the line work. The low-pressure system is out for advertisement and has a bid date of June 30, 2023.

### *RFP 2023-07 Downtown Water Line Replacement Phase*

A Motion was made by Commissioner Hoffman, second by Commissioner Kerigan, to re-bid this project. All in favor, Motion carried 4-0.

### *Madison Street Paving*

A discussion was held as to the possibility of doing this work when school is out since it involves the road in front of Port St. Joe High School. Mr. Baxley will see if this will be an issue.

### **City Attorney**

Due to a prior commitment, Attorney McCahill joined the meeting at 1:20 P.M. at which time an update was given on the Parking ordinance.

### *Parking Ordinance Discussion*

Attorney McCahill has discussed the Ordinance with Judge McFarland. The City will need to establish a method for receiving the funds generated by a ticket and designate what the collected funds will be spent for.

Mr. McCahill anticipates having the demo information by the next meeting.

### **Old Business**

#### *City Projects*

Mr. Anderson shared that the parking lot by CVS has been finished, some retrofitting has been required for the fish cleaning station to work, and 3 replacement lights have been ordered for Reid Avenue. Merchants are wanting to put lights in the oak trees on Reid Avenue. Power is an issue, Duke Energy stated the sidewalks would have to be taken up to run the needed power, and thoughts are now being directed toward solar power. Joe Whitmer from the Gulf County Chamber of Commerce noted \$5,000 has been given toward the lights and others are checking with solar powered lighting entities to see if they have a solution.

#### *Resilient Florida Grant Program Update – Jeff Carney*

Mr. Carney participated by telephone. He provided an update of the project, invited everyone to their Workshop next week, and noted that funds for this project are provided by FDEP.

Christy McElroy requested that an overview of the project be given at the beginning of the Workshop to which Mr. Carney agreed they would do.

#### *RFP 2023-08 1979 Wheeled Loader*

A Motion was made by Commissioner Langston, second by Commissioner Kerigan, to accept the bid offer from Monolith Construction in the amount of \$750. All in favor; Motion carried 4-0.

### **New Business**

#### *Naming of Florida Forever Property on Highway 98 – Commissioner Hoffman*

Commissioner Hoffman requested that this be Tabled.

Mayor Buzzett reminded the Commissioners that a committee was to be appointed to establish criteria and review recommendations before any more City property is named after any one.

*Historic Cemetery Concerns – Nancy Jones*

Nancy Jones, Susan Wozniak, and Scott Davis shared their concerns about mowing and protecting the Euphorbia telephiodes in the area located across from the Old St. Joseph Historical Cemetery. A modified mowing program will be implemented of cutting twice a year with a higher cut.

*RFP 2023-05 Centennial Building Repairs and RFP 2023-06 Lighthouse Keepers Quarters*

A Motion was made by Commissioner Kerigan, second by Commissioner Hoffman, to reject and rebid with specific language addressing the priorities of each location. All in favor; Motion carried 4-0.

Linda Graham Wood, Operations Manager for the Lighthouse Complex, shared with the Commission her concerns about the Scope of Work for the Keepers Quarters not including some of the more pertinent repairs needed.

*League of Cities Annual Conference*

Consensus was for Commissioner Kerigan to be the voting delegate for the City at the annual conference.

*Planning Board Membership – Mayor Buzzett*

Due to the vacancy created by the resignation of Letha Mathews, there will be a 30-day advertisement for applications to fill the position.

**Public Works – John Grantland**

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

**Surface Water Plant – Larry McClamma**

Mr. McClamma was running the plant today. Mr. Anderson shared that the plant is running well.

**Wastewater Plant – Kevin Pettis**

In the absence of Mr. Pettis, Mr. Anderson updated the Commission on the meeting with FDEP last Thursday in Pensacola. He noted that it was a very productive meeting concerning the Consent Order and FDEP is requiring a Facilities Plan this month.

**Finance Director – Mike Lacour**

*FEMA Update*

Mr. Lacour has sent the contract to R. J. Gorman for work at Clifford Sims Park.

**Code Enforcement**

Mr. Anderson shared that, with the help of the county, two more unsafe buildings were taken down this week.

**Police Department – Chief Jake Richards**

Chief Richards has been working on the Reid Avenue parking issues and the Ordinance to add enforceable measures to correct the problems. He reiterated Attorney McCahill's comments of earmarking where the collected funds are to be spent.

**City Clerk – Charlotte Pierce**

*Grants*

*Clerk Pierce did not have any updates for the Commission.*

**Citizens to be Heard –**

*Christy McElroy* again questioned when, where, and what time the Port Authority meets as she has not been able to get any of this information from their website or other inquires. It was suggested that she contact Tom Gibson as he is the attorney for the Port St. Joe Port Authority and provides the notices.

She also shared that, in her opinion, the solar poles and panels along the bike path do not work and should be removed.

Ms. McElroy once again brought up the LNG Project, the need for an education program, and encouraged the Commissioners to attend the next meeting.

Mayor Buzzett asked if anyone with the LNG Project had reached out to the landowner to see if they were even willing to allow their land to be used for this project. Ms. McElroy responded that they were working on it.

**Discussion Items by Commissioners –**

*Commissioner Hoffman* asked that sails be replaced at Dr. Joe Park, trees be trimmed, and benches added because of the increased activity on Williams Avenue.

*Commissioner Kerigan* thanked the Commissioners for the opportunity to attend the Florida League of Cities Newly Elected Officials Conference last week. He shared that he learned a lot, classes began at 7:30 A.M. and finished at 6:30 P.M. and there was a lot of reviewing done.

He noted the need for infrastructure as our community is growing and that we need to lean on other communities that have been through this and learn from their experiences.

*Commissioner Langston* asked about the gates that are blocking the trail near the community garden. Mr. Anderson has spoken with representatives of the St. Joe Company, they will be sending staff to work on the area, but utilities need to be located before they can install new gates.

*Mayor Buzzett* expressed his appreciation to Melissa Watson for organizing a clean up committee for Reid Avenue last Saturday. He has spoken with John Parker, Salt Air Farmers Market, and Mr. Parker realizes they have outgrown their current location and need to relocate. It was suggested that the area behind Goodwill would be an ideal location as water, utilities, and ample parking exist there.

**Motion to Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mayor Buzzett adjourned the Meeting at 1:48 P.M.

Approved this 18<sup>th</sup> day of July 2023.

  
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Rex Buzzett, Mayor

7/18/23  
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Date

  
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Charlotte M. Pierce, City Clerk

7/18/23  
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Date