



**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**  
**CITY OF NEW PORT RICHEY**

NEW PORT RICHEY CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
5919 MAIN STREET, NEW PORT RICHEY, FLORIDA

August 15, 2023

7:00 PM

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**ORDER OF**  
**BUSINESS**

1. Call to Order – Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Chopper Davis at 7:00 p.m. Those in attendance were Deputy Mayor Matt Murphy, Councilman Peter Altman and Councilman Mike Peters. Councilwoman Kelly Mothershead was excused.

Also in attendance were City Manager Debbie L. Manns, City Attorney Timothy Driscoll, City Clerk Judy Meyers, Finance Director Crystal Dunn, Fire Chief Chris Fitch, Public Works Director Robert Rivera, Police Chief Bob Kochen, Library Director Andi Figart, Community and Development Director Dale Hall, Technology and Innovations Director Robert Greene, and Human Resources Director Jill Sassone.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Moment of Silence

4. Approval of August 1, 2023 Work Session and Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion was made to approve the minutes as presented.

Motion made by Matt Murphy and seconded by Pete Altman. The Motion Passed. 4-0. Ayes: Altman, Davis, Murphy, Peters Absent: Mothershead

5. Vox Pop for Items Not Listed on the Agenda or Listed on Consent Agenda

Mayor Davis opened the floor for public comment. The following people came forward to speak:

- Leonard Barry Biagi, 5743 Montana Ave., NPR spoke regarding things being built not up to code.
- Judith Allen, 5940 Grand Blvd., NPR spoke regarding her criminal arraignment.
- Marlowe Jones, 6141 Pine Hill Rd., PR spoke regarding his board and committee application.

With no one else coming forward for public comment, Mayor Davis closed Vox Pop.

6 Consent Agenda

Motion was made to accept the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Matt Murphy and seconded by Pete Altman. The Motion Passed. 4-0. Ayes: Altman, Davis, Murphy, Peters Absent: Mothershead

a Cultural Affairs Committee Minutes - April 2023

b Purchases/Payments for City Council Approval

c Budget Amendment

d Budget Amendment

7 Public Reading of Ordinances

a First Reading, Ordinance No. 2023-2281: Lease Agreement w/Edward J. Campbell

City Attorney Driscoll read the proposed ordinance by title only. Upon opening the floor to public comment, the following people came forward to speak:

- Marlowe Jones, 6141 Pine Hill Rd., PR spoke regarding giving decisions to Council.

With no one else coming forward Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Motion was made to approve the ordinance upon its first reading.

Motion made by Mike Peters and seconded by Matt Murphy. The Motion Passed. 4-0. Ayes: Altman, Davis, Murphy, Peters Absent: Mothershead

8 Business Items

a Acceptance of Donation from the New Port Richey Elks Lodge 2284

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to accept a donation in the amount of \$2k from the New Port Richey Elks Lodge 2284 and approve the corresponding budget amendment. The Lodge held a fundraiser on June 10, 2023 for local first responders and wished to donate part of the proceeds to our police and fire departments. Upon opening the floor to public comment, no one came forward Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Motion was made to accept the donation and approve the corresponding budget amendment as requested.

Motion made by Pete Altman and seconded by Mike Peters. The Motion Passed. 4-0. Ayes: Altman, Davis, Murphy, Peters Absent: Mothershead

b Board Re-Appointment: Richard Melton, Cultural Affairs Committee

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to approve the re-appointment of Richard Melton to the Cultural Affairs Committee. Mr. Melton has been a member of the Cultural Affairs Committee since 2017 and currently serves as chairman for the committee. Mr. Melton's term expired on August 5, 2023 therefore he has submitted his application for re-appointment. If approved, Mr. Melton's term will be for two years and will be up for renewal on August 15, 2025. Upon opening the floor to public comment, Marlowe Jones, 6141 Pine Hill Rd., PR came forward to state his support for the item. With no one else coming forward Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

Motion made by Pete Altman and seconded by Mike Peters. The Motion Passed. 4-0. Ayes: Altman, Davis, Murphy, Peters Absent: Mothershead

c Appeal of Variance #2023-05-0012; Reduction in Required Parking for 5314 Linder Place

City Manager Manns introduced Development Director Dale Hall who then presented the item to Council. He stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to consider an appeal for a parking variance for 5314 Linder Place. The applicant wishes to reduce the required number of parking spaces from 14 to seven. Mr. Hall stated that the DRC denied the request as it did not meet the hardship requirements outlined in the LDC. The LDRB approved the request.

Upon opening the floor to public comment, the following people came forward to speak:

- Mitsch Beague, 5314 Linder Pl, NPR, the property owner, came forward to state the building would primarily be used for record keeping.

With no one else coming forward Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Motion was made to approve the LDRB's recommendation to allow for the reduction of parking from 14 spaces to 7. Motion did not pass due to 2-2 tie vote. Mayor Davis tabled the item until the next regular Council meeting.

d RFQ23-021 Engineering Continuing Service Agreements – Consideration for Approval

City Manager Manns introduced Public Works Director Robert Rivera who then presented the item to Council. He stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to approve staff's evaluations for professional engineering consulting services for continuing services agreements. Mr. Rivera stated that all 15 firms that submitted proposals met the criteria. Upon opening the floor to public comment, Marlowe Jones, 6141 Pine Hill Rd., PR came forward to ask about the names of the firms. Mayor Davis stated the information is in the agenda packet. With no one else coming forward Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

Motion made by Matt Murphy and seconded by Mike Peters. The Motion Passed. 4-0. Ayes: Altman, Davis, Murphy, Peters Absent: Mothershead

e 2024 Aspen St., Pine St., High St., and School Rd. Drainage Improvements - Engineering Services

City Manager Manns introduced Public Works Director Robert Rivera who then presented the item to Council. He stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to approve a task order from Half Associates, Inc. for engineering services in the amount not to exceed \$59,500 for the 2024 Aspen St., Pine St., High St., and School Rd. Drainage Improvements Project. Engineering work must be done for drainage issues. Upon opening the floor to public comment, no one came forward therefore Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

Motion made by Mike Peters and seconded by Matt Murphy. The Motion Passed. 4-0. Ayes: Altman, Davis, Murphy, Peters Absent: Mothershead

f RFP23-024 CDBG-CV Engineering Services – Consideration for Approval

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to approve the proposal from Environmental Consulting and Technology, Inc. for the construction of the proposed Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Coronavirus (CV) sidewalk project and allow staff to negotiate fees associated with engineering services of the project. This project will include the construction of approximately 10,602 linear feet of six-foot-wide concrete sidewalks in the east and west Grand neighborhoods. Mr. Rivera listed the criteria used for scoring. He stated ECT has performed previous work within the city. Upon opening the floor to public comment, no one came forward therefore Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

Motion made by Mike Peters and seconded by Pete Altman. The Motion Passed. 4-0. Ayes: Altman, Davis, Murphy, Peters Absent: Mothershead

g Discussion Regarding the Collection of Solid Waste Fees

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was for City Council to authorize that a fee in the form of an assessment be placed on the 2024 tax roll to cover the cost associated with solid waste pick-up and hauling. City Manager Manns stated the six haulers were put on notice that the City was moving to a single hauler three years ago.

City Manager Manns stated that this decision was based on some of the concerns including: a significant number of residential properties not registered for service, concerning level of illegal dumping, experience of having six waste haulers vehicles on the city's roadway system twice per week, waste haulers report a higher-than-average experience of bad debt/revenue loss because of rental population changes and the resultant loss of franchise fees.

City Manager Manns stated that there are two methods available to the city and they each have advantages and disadvantages attached to them. The first method is to create an assessment and place it on the tax roll. The second method is to place the amount of the charges for service on the water bill. Staff is recommending that City Council choose to put this assessment on the tax bill.

Upon opening the floor to public comment, no one came forward therefore Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Councilman Altman stated that he has been a proponent of monthly billing and could put the onus on the property owner. He stated the responsibility is on them to pay the water bill. Councilman Altman stated each year the assessment is approved. He suggested making trash receptacles uniformed throughout the city. Councilman Altman stated the assessment method may result in higher rents for tenants. Councilman Peters stated that single-hauler will result in less fees for homeowners for trash collections. He stated he appreciated all of Councilman Altman's comments about the water bills. Councilman Peters stated if we go forward with this decision it does not compound the problem but makes it simpler. Deputy Mayor Murphy stated that adding the garbage onto the water bill will cause additional issues. He stated that this will make collection by the City easier. Mayor Davis stated this will cause for 100% pickup across the city. Councilman Altman stated it would still be one bill and not two. He stated we do need to look at and see if we can tighten up the process. Councilman Altman asked about how will we make the deadline. City Manager Manns stated that the schedule has been slated in order to meet the Tax Collector and Property Appraiser's deadlines. She stated the program will not launch until January 1, 2024 so it will be a partial assessment for the first year. Councilman Altman asked about the amount that will be assessed and City Manager Manns stated a public notice will be sent that includes the rates.

Motion was made to place the solid waste collection fee as an assessment on the tax bill.

Motion made by Mike Peters and seconded by Matt Murphy. The Motion Passed. 3-1. Ayes: Davis, Murphy, Peters Nays: Altman Absent: Mothershead

h Re-Appointment of Timothy P. Driscoll, Esq. as City Attorney

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was for City Council to approve the re-appointment of Timothy P. Driscoll, Esq. as City Attorney with an effective date of September 6, 2023. Mr. Driscoll has served as City Attorney since 2016.

Upon opening the floor to public comment, the following people came forward to speak:

- Marlowe Jones, 6141 Pine Hill Rd., PR spoke in opposition of the agenda item.
- Shinikki Whiting, 5755 Indiana Ave., NPR spoke in opposition of the agenda item.
- Judith Allen, 5940 Grand Blvd., NPR spoke about her conversation with Mr. Driscoll at her court hearing.

With no one else coming forward Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Motion was made to approve the item as presented and include a 5% pay increase.

Motion made by Mike Peters and seconded by Matt Murphy. The Motion Passed. 3-1. Ayes: Davis, Murphy, Peters Nays: Altman Absent: Mothershead

9 Communications

Councilman Altman stated he spoke with representatives at the FLC conference who can help with charter advisory boards. He stated with the way our elections are structured there is not a possibility for someone to run for mayor without resigning to run. He stated there are a lot of little things that could be tweaked by a charter advisory. Councilman Altman stated that there was also a non-profit that can analyze performance data. He stated that when the City hired the auditing firm they also had data resources. Councilman Altman stated we should look at AI code enforcement programs to review plans. He stated he is now the Chair for the TBRPC Resiliency Committee. Councilman Peters congratulated Councilman Altman on his appointment. He stated that it was interesting talking to other elected members at the FLC conference. He stated he was glad the Penny for Pasco was renewed as we don't know where we would be on funding without it. Councilman Peters stated that some of our parks are showing their age and we need to spend some money on bringing them up to date. He stated he is looking forward to the CIP projects that are coming up over the next few years. Councilman Peters spoke about the single-trash hauling decision and how some people do not like change. He hopes we can come to some agreement on the trash cans. Mayor Davis stated that he spent quite a bit of time with Mayor Hoover at the FLC conference. He will present some of the things he learned over the next year. City Attorney Driscoll thanked Council for their comments and the extension of his contract. City Manager Manns stated that speakers at Vox Pop are under no obligation to present facts when they speak.

10 Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

(signed) \_\_\_\_\_  
Judy Meyers, CMC, City Clerk

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Initialed: \_\_\_\_\_