



MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF NEW PORT RICHEY

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

September 3, 2024

4:00 PM

**ORDER OF
BUSINESS**

1 Call to Order - Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Chopper Davis at 4:00 p.m. Those in attendance were Deputy Mayor Kelly Mothershead, Councilwoman Matt Murphy, Councilman Peter Altman and Councilman Bertell Butler, IV. Also in attendance were City Manager Debbie L. Manns, City Attorney Timothy Driscoll, City Clerk Judy Meyers, and Assistant City Manager Gregory Oravec.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2 Discussion Regarding the Mural Ordinance and the Public Art Ordinance - Page 2

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated the purpose of this work session was to conduct a discussion relating to the Mural Ordinance and the Public Art Ordinance and to provide the City Manager with direction as to any modifications to the current ordinance which may be warranted. She stated that murals have long been a means of artistic expression, cultural representation and community engagement. Murals have now become an increasingly popular public art form that adds vibrancy to the built environment. She stated discussions regarding changes have been ongoing since 2022. City Manager Manns stated there is a great divide on how communities regulate murals. The current art ordinance calls for developers to make a voluntary contribution to the public art fund but that rarely ever happens. The amount should be 1.5% or up to \$100k.

The purpose of the discussion with the City Council is to seek specific direction relating to several key questions regarding the city's current mural ordinance. City Manager Manns then highlighted the questions as follows:

1. Should the city regulate the content of murals?
2. If it is believed that the city should regulate the content of murals what should the standards be?
3. If there are standards who should be responsible to ultimately decide whether a proposed mural meets the standards?

City Manager Manns highlighted the current process and suggested if Council wishes to regulate the murals it should go through the CAC and not Main Street. City Attorney Driscoll stated artistic expression is protected under the first amendment and any attempt to regulate would be under a strict scrutiny standard. His recommendation is to remove the contest restrictions and make the content more neutral. There are still standards that can be applied but the content would be neutral. Councilman Altman stated if we encourage good art it could be incentivized. The issue of language would need to be addressed. Councilman Butler asked about the rationale for materials. City Attorney Driscoll stated there are regulations in order to maintain the integrity of the mural. Deputy Mayor Mothershead stated she supports not having words. Councilman Murphy also agreed. Councilman Butler stated we could encourage to not use words and turn it into a positive. City Attorney Driscoll stated it sounded like the consensus was to remove words being allowed.

4. In what zoning districts of the city should murals be permitted?

City Manager Manns moved the discussion on to where the murals should be located as they are currently allowed only in the downtown now. Deputy Mayor Mothershead stated that this opportunity should be open to all business owners. Councilman Butler stated St. Pete does an art festival once a year. He spoke regarding murals on the RAC and the water tower. He stated it will spur an open ended conversation if we kept it open. Councilman Altman stated funding would be open to commercial businesses.

5. Should a mural master plan be developed?

City Manager Manns stated a mural master plan would allow the commission of artists. Councilman Butler asked if the CAC would work with the consultant on it and City Manager Manns stated yes.

6. Should the city amend the Public Art Ordinance to require a small contribution to the fund by developers implementing projects in the city absent any public art features?

It was the consensus of Council to require a small contribution to the fund by developers. City Manager Manns stated it would be determined by the project size and amount.

7. Should the Public Art Fund be used to finance the installation and maintenance of murals on public and private property?

City Manager Manns stated the public art fund could be used to make improvements on public and private properties as long as it is not residential.

3 Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

Approved: _____ (date)

_____ (signed)

Initialed: _____

Judy Meyers, CMC, City Clerk