



**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**

**January 29, 2025**

**4:30 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 4:30 p.m. Those in attendance were Councilwoman Matt Murphy, Councilman Peter Altman and Councilman Bertell Butler, IV. Deputy Mayor Kelly Mothershead participated electronically.

Also in attendance were City Manager Debbie L. Manns, City Attorney Timothy Driscoll, City Clerk Judy Meyers, Finance Director Crystal Dunn, Public Works Director Robert Rivera, and Police Chief Bob Kochen.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**2 Residential Solid Waste Collections - Page 2**

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated the purpose of this work session was to conduct a discussion regarding solid waste delinquencies and the future billing method for solid waste collection services. City Manager Manns began her presentation by giving a history of the process to date which included billing options of water bills, tax bills and direct billing. Current delinquency rate is 27% and an outstanding amount of \$152,691.77 due. She stated Waste Pro submitted a request to place the solid waste bill on the tax roll. Waste Pro is currently carrying the delinquent amount on their books. Staff is recommending to conduct a special meeting on February 27, 2025 to solicit public input and consider the adoption of a resolution electing to use the uniform method of collection.

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

- Lisa Tinker, 7017 Park Drive, NPR spoke regarding current Council members being delinquent and to look at the billing method. City Manager Manns stated there is an issue with the software regarding the past due \$19.10 amount. She stated nine people are listed as delinquent as they signed up for auto payment but chose the wrong option.
- Jack Willman, 6634 Orange Blossom Trail, NPR spoke regarding paying for a full year when he is only in Florida for four months. He asked Council to take that under

consideration.

With no one else coming forward, Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Councilman Altman spoke about the City of Dade City billing on the water bill. He spoke about when he was with the city and talking to the haulers. He stated there was an idea of having zones but there were objections to that for different reasons. He stated when he finished his house last year it was not on the tax roll until the following year. He stated he would like to think about snow birds and those who still are unable to live in their homes due to the hurricanes. He stated Dade City raised the rate yesterday and it is approximately \$15 a month. He stated he is in agreement that Waste Pro needs to be made. He is willing to amend the current contract. He asked Council to look at it from his accountant perspective. He stated in his view it goes back to the user and if the user is using it the vendor should get paid. Every water that is connected or disconnected should be charged. Mayor Davis then spoke about the duplexes and triplexes water and trash. He asked what happens when someone pays the water bill and not the trash bill. He stated his landlord pays for his trash as it is a part of his rent. Councilman Butler asked about commercial dumpsters on multi-family properties. Mayor Davis asked about snow birds paying less and City Manager Manns stated that is not a current provision in the contract. Finance Director Dunn stated they can put it on a vacation account but it requires that the water to be turned off and there is a fee to reinstate. Councilman Murphy asked about pro-rating. City Manager Manns stated we could craft a program. Councilman Butler thanked Mr. Parker for the ride on he did when he first got on Council. He asked about the course of action. City Manager Manns stated that was an excerpt taken from the document submitted by Waste Pro. He asked how the City is currently handling the delinquencies. Finance Director Dunn explained the \$19.10 invoice issues. She stated once we moved into the next quarter Invoice Cloud was able to upload those bills. She stated it is not an error in billing. The amount does not show unless you are looking at the invoice. Councilman Butler stated he is one of those who has a delinquent amount and he has not been in the home or had trash service since September. He stated he sees his amount due as a trash tax. Deputy Mayor Mothershead stated she signed up for auto billing and she has not received any notices of outstanding amounts. She stated she did go in and paid the charges. Councilman Butler told Deputy Mayor Mothershead her amount was more. Councilman Butler asked if we've tried an alternate way to reaching out to delinquent accounts before we move putting it on the tax bill. Deputy Mayor Mothershead stated when you sign up for auto pay you do not receive bills. Finance Director Dunn stated that Deputy Mayor Mothershead enrolled in early March to receive electronic bills and signed up for auto pay but chose the wrong option. She stated the solid waste option was not there at the time. Councilman Butler asked if any letters or notices have been sent to those who are delinquent. City Manager Manns stated that this is a severe problem and we have cross checked that most of those on the list are also delinquent on their water bills. Mayor Davis stated that water bills are monthly and trash bills are quarterly and renters are going to pack up and leave and not pay what is due. Councilman Butler stated his recommendation is to not put it on the tax bills and look at addressing the delinquencies in other methods. He stated that this is biproduct of not putting this issue on the ballot. Councilman Altman stated he would like to suggest moving the haulers to a monthly fee and putting it on the water bill and the money can then be collected more efficiently. He stated we could modify the contract. He stated you will never be able to collect everything. He stated we can shut off water if the bill is not paid. He stated you only pay when you have water. It can be turned on and off. Councilman Altman then left the meeting at 5:23 p.m. as he had a previous meeting to get to.

Mayor Davis stated we are going to help people who have been affected by the hurricanes. Councilman Butler asked if putting it on the tax bill would require a modification to the contract. City Attorney Driscoll stated it would not necessarily require it but could be dovetailed. He stated that there are two issues that we are trying to present here. One is switching completely to a non-ad valorem assessment moving forward. He stated there are two aspects to this. We are up against deadlines to proceed for this coming tax year on these issues. This is a precursor to a meeting that has to take place before March 1st if we are going to implement this system for this tax year. He stated there are two issues that we can proceed on. One is to completely switch over to a non-ad valorem assessment for all future billings for

residential solid waste pickup. Commercial would still be outside of that and billed by the vendor. The other which can be either or both is to put on the tax bills delinquent assessments that are not collected between now and August 31st. He stated we would still have the opportunity to collect against those accounts and bring those numbers down but then any remaining assessments would be put on the tax bill and Council would vote on those particular assessments in September during the budgeting time. He stated there would be two separate assessments one for the delinquency and one moving forward. City Attorney Driscoll stated this is just a work session and no vote is being taken this evening just direction on starting the process. City Manager Manns stated letters will be sent in the interim. City Manager Manns stated tags have been ordered to put on properties so homeowners are noticed. Councilman Butler stated putting it on the water bill each month makes more sense. Finance Director Dunn stated our current billing system allows for owners and renters to sign up for service. We have to send the renters to collection agencies. City Manager Manns stated it would be in our best interest due to the transient nature to have the bills in the owner's name. She stated sometimes the bill for water is so low we exceed the amount we are trying to chase with our administrative fees. Councilman Butler stated this conversation is rushed and would not be having this conversation if we had multiple haulers. Councilman Murphy stated the water bill can go to the renter and the trash bill to the owner but how would you process that. He stated if there was a way to accommodate snow birds ahead of time would be a good solution so those people can at least opt out. Deputy Mayor Mothershead stated she does like it being on the water bill and an opt out option. She stated we need to make it known to contact the City to make arrangements. Public Works Director Rivera spoke regarding billing the owners for utility bills and the homeowners that were renting the property out they were coming in to shut off the accounts to displace their renters. He stated that left renters in homes without water service. He stated that alleys have become dumping grounds. Councilman Butler stated there are programs in place now for properties that are not homesteaded. City Attorney Driscoll stated we need to know if we are to proceed with the special meeting on February 27, 2025. City Attorney Driscoll stated Council does not need to commit to approving anything at this point but we just need to know whether or not to proceed or not to proceed on that issue as we need to place an advertisement by this Friday. He stated the only item that is time sensitive is the placement of this on the tax rolls. He stated all the other options Council has to collect this money will be on the table continuously. City Attorney Driscoll stated that to make it clear we will be setting a meeting for Thursday, February 27, 2025 at 6PM to consider two resolutions. One resolution to proceed with a non-ad valorem assessment for all future billings for residential solid waste collection and another to pursue a non-ad valorem tax assessment for current delinquencies in August or September. He stated Council can then vote in favor of or not.

3 Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

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

\_\_\_\_\_ (signed)

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

Judy Meyers, MMC, City Clerk