



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

October 18, 2022
7:00 PM

ORDER OF
BUSINESS

1. Call to Order – Roll Call

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

Also in attendance were City Manager Debbie L. Manns, City Attorney Timothy Driscoll, City Clerk Judy Meyers, Human Resources Manager Bernie Wharran, Deputy Police Chief Lauren Letona, Interim Finance Director Crystal Dunn, Fire Chief Chris Fitch, Assistant Public Works Director Barret Doe, Community and Development Director Dale Hall, Economic Development Director Barbara Carr, Library Director Andi Figart, Technology and Innovations Director Robert Greene.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Moment of Silence

4. Approval of September 26, 2022 Special Meeting Minutes

Motion was made to approve the minutes as presented.

Motion made by Mike Peters and seconded by Kelly Mothershead. The Motion Passed. 5-0. Ayes: Altman, Marlowe, Mothershead, Murphy, Peters

5. Approval of October 3, 2022 Work Session Minutes

Motion was made to approve the minutes as presented.

Motion made by Matt Murphy and seconded by Kelly Mothershead. The Motion Passed. 5-0. Ayes: Altman, Marlowe, Mothershead, Murphy, Peters

6. Approval of October 4, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion was made to approve the minutes as presented.

Motion made by Mike Peters and seconded by Matt Murphy. The Motion Passed. 5-0. Ayes: Altman, Marlowe, Mothershead, Murphy, Peters

7 Proclamation - Friends of the New Port Richey Public Library Week

Andi Figart accepted the parchment from Mayor Marlowe.

8 Environmental Committee Annual Report Presentation

Environmental Committee Chair Dell deChant and member Tia Rowe made the presentation to Council.

9 Vox Pop for Items Not Listed on the Agenda or Listed on Consent Agenda

Before opening the floor for Vox Pop, Mayor Marlowe read a statement regarding downtown businesses and the recent Bikefest event. Mayor Marlowe then passed the gavel to Deputy Mayor Peters. Upon opening the floor for public comment the following people came forward to speak:

- Judith Allen, 5940 Grand Blvd., NPR came forward to speak regarding a recall petition of the Mayor.
- David Wallis, 12131 Lacey Dr., NPR came forward to speak regarding the fees charged to business owners during the recent Bikefest event.
- Thomas Carpinone, 9040 Brush Ln., Hudson came forward to speak regarding the Cotee River Bikefest wrap up meeting. He also spoke regarding the downtown businesses and the issue of family-friendliness.
- Jason Purvis, 12604 Rangeland Blvd., Odessa came forward to speak regarding the Children's Burn Foundation. He stated the Fire & Iron Club has raised money for their organization for over ten years. He also spoke about the camp they host.
- Derek Pontlitz, 5728 Main St., NPR came forward to speak regarding the closure of one of his businesses during the pandemic. He also spoke regarding comments made by Mayor Marlowe and his lack of support for events.
- Jeremy Harding, 5941 Madison Ave., NPR came forward to speak regarding his support of the recent Bikefest event. He also spoke regarding obtaining permits and code enforcement.
- Wendy Longman, 5051 US 19, NPR, came forward to speak regarding Mayor Marlowe advising visitors to attend events in other cities.
- Rudy Fiordilino, 16410 US 19, Hudson, came forward to speak regarding his cannabis business and his exclusion from the Bikefest event.
- Patricia Kleg, 6379 Conniewood Square, NPR came forward to speak regarding Mayor Marlowe's comments regarding Cotee River Bikefest.
- Donald Thomson, 836 Park Ct., Palm Harbor came forward to speak regarding the Fire & Iron Club's support of the Cotee River Bikefest. He stated that the Club has donated over \$100k to the Children's Burn Foundation.
- Chopper Davis, 6110 Florida Ave., NPR came forward to acknowledge Matt Murphy, Mike Peters, Lisa Langford, Mike Gordon and William Labbanz for their help with supplies for those affected by Hurricane Ian. He also acknowledged several other businesses and friends who also provided assistance.
- Bertell Butler, 5335 Bellview Ave., NPR came forward to speak regarding staff morale and salary.
- Kimberly Cox, 7336 Ashmore Drive, NPR, came forward to speak regarding the treatment by Council over the last two years.
- Angela Napolitano, 6013 Adams St., NPR came forward to speak regarding off-street parking and fines that she was assessed.
- Shinikki Whiting, 5755 Indiana Ave., NPR, came forward to read a statement from Marlowe Jones.

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

10 Consent Agenda

Motion was made to accept the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Mike Peters and seconded by Matt Murphy. The Motion Passed. 5-0. Ayes: Altman, Marlowe, Mothershead, Murphy, Peters

a Library Advisory Board Minutes - August 2022

b Purchases/Payments for City Council Approval

11 Business Items

a Board Appointment: Nicholas Pacini, Library Advisory Board

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to approve the appointment of Nicholas Pacini to the Library Advisory Board. If approved, Mr. Pacini's term will be for three years and will be up for renewal on October 18, 2025. Upon opening the floor to public comment, Mr. Pacini came forward to highlight his education and experience which will make him an asset for the Board. With no one else coming forward Mayor Marlowe returned the floor to Council. Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

Motion made by Pete Altman and seconded by Matt Murphy. The Motion Passed. 5-0. Ayes: Altman, Marlowe, Mothershead, Murphy, Peters

b 2022/2023 Street Improvement Project Task Order No. 41994.005 - Engineering Services

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to approve approve a task order from Halff Associates, Inc. for engineering services in the amount not to exceed \$166,300.00 for the proposed 2022/2023 Street Improvement Project. She then introduced Asst. Public Works Director Barret Doe who then made a presentation to Council. He stated the streets included in the next cycle are as follows:

1. Nebraska Ave. from Madison St. to Congress St.
2. Montana Ave. from Lafayette St. to Congress St.
3. Delaware Ave. from Madison St. to Congress St.
4. Louisiana Ave. from Grand Blvd. to Madison St.
5. Lafayette St. from Illinois Ave. to Lincoln St.
6. Lincoln St. from Lafayette St. to Main St.
7. Franklin St. from Illinois Ave. to Montana Ave.
8. Adams St. from Illinois Ave. to Missouri Ave.
9. Jefferson St. from Illinois Ave. to Missouri Ave.
10. Van Buren St. from Illinois Ave. to Indiana Ave.

Upon opening the floor to public comment, no one came forward therefore Mayor Marlowe returned the floor to Council. Councilman Altman asked about Montana and the road diet. He suggested having an analysis done. Mayor Marlowe stated that he, Deputy Mayor Peters and Councilwoman Mothershead attended an FDOT meeting earlier today. He stated that this is not just a repaving project but to look at the streets as a holistic project in order to keep pedestrians and bicyclists safe. Mr. Doe stated that funds have been allocated for asphalt however change orders can be done during engineering. He stated the majority of the roads for this project have existing sidewalks. He stated we were awarded a sidewalk grant. Councilman Altman stated that this is a street improvement process and the funds can be allocated for other items besides just asphalt. City Manager Manns stated that Council does have the authority to change how we have traditionally done. She stated that there is \$1M for the implementation of sidewalks from the CDBG Covid grant. Deputy Mayor Peters asked if this was the last master round of streets and Mr. Doe stated that now we have gone through the major collector roads we have moved into an altered phasing part of the project. Deputy Mayor Peters asked when construction will begin and Mr. Doe stated it will occur in the next fiscal year. Councilwoman Mothershead stated she would like to see staff look at making the sidewalks safer. Mayor Marlowe stated that reducing the road would slow traffic down and also save on asphalt. Motion made by

Councilman Altman to continue this item and was seconded by Councilwoman Mothershead.

Motion made by Pete Altman and seconded by Kelly Mothershead. The Motion Passed. 4-1. Ayes: Altman, Marlowe, Mothershead, Murphy Nays: Peters

c Request to Purchase a Mobile Home Located at 6938 Plathe Road

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to authorize the purchase a 2007 Fleetwood Manufactured Home 30' x 60' located at 6938 Plathe Road from Diane and Richard Case in the amount of \$127,333 relating to the continued surveillance and other police related responsibilities at the James E. Grey Preserve. The James E. Grey Preserve is the City's largest park. The park is 98 acres in size and it serves residents and visitors to the area with a wide variety of site amenities. In the interest of public safety it has been the practice of the city to position a police officer to reside on property located adjacent to the park. The presence on the property and patrol of the site regularly is a deterrent to theft, vandalism, disturbances etc. The manufactured home that is currently on the property was purchased and sited through the efforts of the officer that most recently was given the extra duty assignment to the James E. Grey Preserve. That specific officer is no longer employed by the city. An appraisal of the manufactured home was conducted by J.D. Wallace & Associates, Inc with an assessed value of \$127,333 to the structure. Upon opening the floor to public comment, Kimberly Cox, 7336 Ashmore Dr., NPR came forward to state a regular officer could patrol the property without the expense of having someone living there. Angela Napolitano, 6013 Adams St., NPR came forward and stated she does not believe this park needs this attention. With no one else coming forward Mayor Marlowe returned the floor to Council. Councilman Altman asked if this was in the recently approved budget and City Manager Manns stated it was not. City Manager Manns stated the officer does pay rent. Deputy Mayor Peters stated several high schools have officers who live on property. He stated the County also has some parks that house employees. Councilwoman Mothershead stated many parks in Hillsborough do this as well. Councilman Murphy stated this is additional duties and not a full-time position. Mayor Marlowe stated it is a ranger type position. Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

Motion made by Mike Peters and seconded by Kelly Mothershead. The Motion Passed. 4-1. Ayes: Marlowe, Mothershead, Murphy, Peters Nays: Altman

12 Communications

Councilman Murphy stated he attended the MPO meeting last Thursday and Secretary Gwynn was there and went over the safety report for U.S. 19. He stated he has known Ms. Napolitano since high school and stated no one is above the law and he has parked on his lawn a few times to do work on his home. He stated he has visited her property as well. He stated he always tries to help residents. He stated that yes he has received a warning for parking on the lawn. Councilman Altman stated that when speakers come to the podium they should address Council and not those in the audience. He stated that he was around for the Charter Advisory Board. He stated the role of the Mayor is misunderstood. Councilman Altman stated that there is no reason why we cannot review the Charter. He stated a provision could be placed on the ballot if people want things to change. Councilman Altman then spoke regarding stores along Daytona Beach that are only open for three months of the year and how they make their money during Biketober Week. He stated that the event ordinance was changed at the economic downturn. He stated the City has not charged for crowd control. He suggested revisiting the ordinance. Deputy Mayor Peters stated that if we went to a strong Mayor it would be extremely political and would not serve the city of our size and diversity. He is satisfied with the current Council-Manager form of government. Providing a good quality of life is what is important. He stated that the ordinance passed at last meeting was at the Mayor's request several months ago after an incident with a business. He stated that he still thinks it is a good ordinance and Council did the right thing. He stated he was glad that Bikefest was a successful event. Councilwoman Mothershead stated that she supports the ordinance but three days before an event for a charitable organization was not the time to implement it as it was not fair. She stated she attended the IEMO last week in Tampa and she went through the Charter and is happy with our form of government. Mayor Marlowe stated that the ordinance was at his encouragement but it was a basic unfairness for a business to pull an additional

BTR for special events. He stated that State rules are beyond bizarre and leave far too much discretion to inspectors. He stated there was an alcoholic beverage inspector who told a business to screw shut an exit. Mayor Marlowe stated the Grey Preserve is amazing. He stated he brought a former classmate out to the Preserve and was impressed by the story walk. He stated it is a phenomenal resource. Mayor Marlowe stated the reunion was great. He stated the Swanson Lot was almost full on his way over tonight. Mayor Marlowe stated he wanted to reiterate that if the Environmental Committee could persuade Chasco Fiesta to move away from styrofoam it would lead other events away from using it. Mayor Marlowe stated that there was a news story regarding edible utensils. He stated that Tampa Bay Water has done a preliminary true up on the year that just ended and it is estimated that the City will get \$250k. He stated he thinks we need to look at some of the provisions of the Charter. He stated there was a local municipality that had one member of Council in charge of a city department. Councilman Altman stated he wanted to clarify comments that there are some people who do not understand roles and duties. Mayor Marlowe stated there are things there to make boards and committees more functional. City Attorney Driscoll stated the event cooking ordinance was crafted to placate the State agency while letting businesses operate during events. He stated he will look into the CDB and street paving provisions.

13 Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

(signed) _____
Judy Meyers, CMC, City Clerk

Approved: _____ (date)

Initialed: _____

Employee Package Proposal

City of New Port Richey

18 October 2022

DELIVERED TO: The Office of the City Clerk

ATTENTION TO: Members of the City Council; the Office of the City Manager

The following is a proposal to the City of New Port Richey recommending additional and necessary investments into employee relations. The contents of this request derive from consultations with employees from each of the city departments.

Proposed Deliverables	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Additional 4-point COLA increase, totalling cost-living adjustment at 7% for FY22-FY232. One-time staff bonuses: \$1000 for FT and \$500 for PT3. Proactive educational incentives, not reimbursements4. Annual one-day paid staff retreat - facility closures5. Mandatory biyearly reviews of department manuals
Estimated Expense	<p>\$600,745.44</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$379,433.20 for 4-point COLA increase• \$220,500.00 for one-time staff bonuses• \$812.14 for staff retreat compensation* <p style="text-align: right;"><i>*excludes implicit costs, such as food or utility expenses</i></p>

Justifications:

1. **COLA Increase.** The City of New Port Richey has entered Fiscal Year 2022-2023 with a 3% cost-of-living adjustment to staff salaries. This is well below the rise in cost of living for the state of Florida, which is greater than the national average of ~8%¹. The Social Security office has established their cost-of-living adjustment at 8.7%. The City's 3% cost-of-living adjustment does not adequately recover losses as a result of rising prices in housing, utility, and food in the state of Florida—all of which are higher than the costly national spike. Employees living in the state are experiencing these economic conditions, which are only compounded by the increased cost to health and dental benefits that the City has passed along to the employees to cover. Thus, it is requested that the City pursue an amendment to their budget to include an additional four-percent adjustment to employee salaries, revising the City's cost-of-living adjustment to a total of 7% for the Fiscal Year 2022-2023.
2. **Staff Bonuses.** City employees feel underappreciated, underinvested into, and underpaid. Attrition in department head staffing. Consistent complaints of low pay and chronic micromanagement. The City cannot continue to ignore the needs of its staff. A monetary bonus to all staff, explicitly citing the City's past neglect of employee relations as the cause, will go a long way in showing good faith in investing into staff development and morale.

¹ Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER)

3. *Educational Incentives.* Employees are less likely to participate in City education programs with morale as low as it presently is. There is a trust factor to this program that requires the employee to take on full financial risk in pursuing credentials necessary for professional development and, in some cases, career advancement. The City should offer some level of buy-in to these programs to project trust and confidence. To this end, the City should reexamine its existing educational reimbursement program to provide for proactive coverage of professional development opportunities. It is also recommended that a written policy be put in place requiring city department heads to play a proactive role in identifying these opportunities for their staff.

4. *Staff Retreat.* The City of New Port Richey should explore hosting an annual staff retreat at one of the city's facilities. This retreat would offer a paid-day off from regular work responsibilities for employees to focus on team building, interdepartmental partnerships, and cross department information sharing. Employees may be more sympathetic and effective in their functions if they understand what takes place at other departments and have the opportunity to professionally connect with other staff. This retreat can include buy-in from all departments and could be modeled after existing programs, such as Citizens Academy and Student Government Day.

5. *Manual Reviews.* Some City policies have been shown to be outdated. The City should create an enforceable policy that mandates the regular review of department-specific manuals by the department head. Some staff are presently improvising procedures due to outdated policies on important operational issues. This creates a liability for the employees and the City.