



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

NEW PORT RICHEY CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

5919 MAIN STREET, NEW PORT RICHEY, FLORIDA

August 29, 2017

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 pm. Those in attendance were, Deputy Mayor Jeff Starkey, Councilman Bill Phillips, Councilwoman Judy DeBella Thomas and Councilman Chopper Davis.

Also in attendance were City Manager Debbie Manns, City Attorney Timothy Driscoll, City Clerk Judy Meyers, Finance Director Crystal Feast, Public Works Director Robert Rivera, Technology Solutions Director Bryan Weed and Assistant Public Works Director Barret Doe.

2 Pledge of Allegiance

3 Moment of Silence

4 Business Items

a. Public Hearing - Stormwater Utility Assessment - Page 3

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated there are three funding revenues which provide services and benefits for residents. Tonight we will be discussing assessments. Benefit assessments fund flood control, streetlight benefits. There was a work session on May 16, 2017 to discuss the stormwater and streetlight systems. On June 20, 2017 approved final rate studies. Tonight will approve the resolutions for the stormwater and streetlight assessment fees. Implemented fee in 2001 at \$40.32 per ERU and remained the same until 2012. \$77.36 per ERU since then.

City Manager Manns introduced Michael Stoffel with Ayres Associates who then made a presentation to Council. Mr. Stoffel began his presentation by providing an overview of the stormwater utility and rate study findings. In the 2016 stormwater utility survey 70% use the impervious area methodology. 45% charged for undeveloped lands. Past rate was \$77.36 and proposed rate is \$80. Grant programs help to offset costs. Residential parcels continue to be charged as 1 ERU, general parcel charged 1 ERU per 2,629 sf. and undeveloped charged 35% of 1 ERU per average residential parcel size. City Attorney Driscoll then read the proposed resolution by title only.

Upon opening the floor to public comment, Andy Hatcher came forward and spoke about property that was annexed into the city. He asked to be exempt from the fees.

Glenna Summerall came forward and asked about the charge for a duplex. She stated there is no drainage on her street. Why is she paying extra when there are only a few streetlights on her road. She doesn't mind paying but wants to have the benefit of service.

Mark Sipes came forward and asked why is it being assessed on the tax bill and why not on their water bill that way it could be charged in lesser increments over the year. City Manager Manns stated it is not permissible by law to put a benefit assessment on the water bill. She stated there is a tax payment program offered by Pasco County with a zero interest loan.

Robin Knight came forward and stated last year when there was a test of the fire hydrant the water didn't go down so crews came with a machine that cleaned out the drain. She stated she has come up with ways to help the flooding.

James Tillman came forward and asked why the assessments are growing. He asked for clarity tax payment versus the nickel and dime. May address individual needs but does not see an explanation. With a tax program you can get a write off. Mayor Marlowe stated the paving is to get all the roads on a twenty year plan. The stormwater assessment is to keep our system up to date and improve it so there is no flooding like there is in Holiday or Port Richey. We have been working hard on streetlight program. City Manager Manns noted that tonight's proposed rate is for five years and will remain constant.

Russell Sipes came forward and stated he lives on Hemlock Drive and it floods. He noticed there are quite a few streets that have no drainage. He stated there is an angle parking lot near his home that drains into his road. Mr. Rivera reiterated his comments that a retention pond will be built near Hemlock. Councilman Phillips asked if this was Jasmine Heights area and Mr. Rivera stated yes. Councilman Phillips stated we have identified the areas.

Vance Ray asked how much the rate study cost. Mr. Rivera stated it was about \$14,000. Councilman Phillips stated we have to go back and reassess. For ten years past Councils just passed the ball down. These two funds were taking away funds from the general fund. Had to figure out the new baseline back in 2012 as we need to continue to address the flood areas.

With no one else coming forward Mayor Marlowe returned the floor to Council. Councilman Phillips stated we are trying to not take it away from tax base. There are certain times you can resolve flooding. Enhance the value of property and aesthetic of city. Confident and happy to support. Every time a property does not flood speaks well how we have moved from point a to b to c.

Councilman Davis stated when you hear about flooding in New Port Richey it is in county areas. Continue to address this issue. Out driving today and notice water off the street.

Deputy Mayor stated it is not easy to assess residents. Been tasked with hard decisions but it is something we have to do.

Councilwoman DeBella Thomas stated it is important to hear the questions and an opportunity to get the information out to the community. She was also out today and there are still some pocket areas that can't take the water but through this process we are being diligent and addressing the problem areas. We are all hard working and we have to be as diligent as we can.

Mayor Marlowe of all things we spend money on stormwater is most critical. Not perfect and still have areas to be addressed but confidence staff can manage it. Much better than some unincorporated areas of Pasco County that have mass flooding.

Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

It should be noted that there were several objections received by the City Clerk for this agenda item. The objections are attached to these minutes and hereby made an official part of this proceeding.

Motion made by Bill Phillips and seconded by Chopper Davis. The Motion Passed. 5-0. Ayes: Davis, DeBella Thomas, Marlowe, Phillips, Starkey

b. Public Hearing - Street Lighting Assessment - Page 17

City Attorney Driscoll read the proposed resolution by title only. City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that in 2003 the city started to implement benefit assessment for streetlight. Only for developed properties. Changed in 2012 after rate structure and analysis. The rate necessary was \$36.24 per ERU has not changed since that time. Recent study covers actual and projected cost for streetlights with \$38.71 per ERU covers 2018-2022. Mr. Stoffel came forward and made a presentation to Council. He highlighted the history of the city's program. From 2003-2012 the rate was \$26.07 then 2013-2017 \$36.24. The adopted rate is \$38.71. Previously not charged to undeveloped parcels. Staff has gone through and recognized the dark areas in the city and new lights will be installed. Residential parcel charged 1 ERU and general parcels charged 1 ERU per 1,860 sf. of building area. Undeveloped will not be charged 26% of 1 ERU. Mayor Marlowe asked for clarification about the LED light cost. Mr. Rivera stated that we don't own the LED lights. One of the benefits of paying just maintenance to Duke is that there are no costs incurred. As technology progresses rates will go down. We are charged per fixture.

Upon opening the floor to public comment, Andy Hatcher came forward stated his property does not have a streetlight and he does not want a streetlight. He doesn't want to pay for someone else's light. The city paid for the lights the whole time he worked here. The city gets a franchise fee and the fees should come out of that.

Vance Ray came forward and stated there has to be other revenue sources that can be used.

With no one else coming forward Mayor Marlowe returned the floor to Council. Deputy Mayor Starkey stated he has a hard time charging undeveloped lands for streetlighting when no one is living there.

Councilman Phillips stated that it is at a reduced percentage. He advocated for this in 2012 as he felt that the vacant property owners were getting a benefit as streetlighting was keeping things from happening on their property. The streetlights benefit occupied and unoccupied property. At the end of the day he felt that if everyone was together with the fees it would have a positive impact. Shared cost across the board. He asked how many additional lights were to be added. Mr. Rivera stated he could not remember off hand but would get the information but he thought maybe 68.

Councilman Davis stated he has a lot on Oleander and for \$10 year he would pay to make sure mischief does not happen.

Deputy Mayor Starkey would like to see lights in and around the vacant lots. Mr. Rivera stated he would take a look at the areas called in and look at it at night to see if light is needed or perhaps trees are covering the light. He asked Mr. Rivera to contact FDOT about the lights on US19.

Councilman Phillips asked if we adopt tonight and take care of dark spots can we look at this a year from now or is it locked in for five years. One more additional year of study of the dark spots. Let's see how impact is during the next year and that we are effectively using the funds collected. Trying to give surety that we are looking at a net benefit.

Mayor Marlowe agreed that we should look at it in the spring and get a report of where we are with the dark spots.

Councilwoman DeBella Thomas stated one of her concerns about the change in streetlights is the lack of lighting in the neighborhoods. The lights are high and almost hidden in the tree canopies. Asked to

discuss with Duke streets south of Main. We would welcome participation in the observation and refer dark areas to Public Works. The lighting currently have is addressed so we can see the change in the community.

Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

It should be noted that there were several objections received by the City Clerk for this agenda item. The objections are attached to these minutes and hereby made an official part of this proceeding.

Motion made by Bill Phillips and seconded by Judy DeBella Thomas. The Motion Passed. 5-0.
Ayes: Davis, DeBella Thomas, Marlowe, Phillips, Starkey

5 Communications

Councilman Phillips asked to invite the City Manager from Port Richey to come visit and share what they are doing regarding BP funding and dredging. What they do at the mouth of the river will have dramatic effect downstream. New Facebook page that Eric from Gil Dawg called The "New" Port Richey and it looks like it is coming from us.

Councilwoman DeBella Thomas stated the Hacienda event was an excellent opportunity of where we can go with that building. Sorry could not attend the Community Art Show awards and thanked the artists who participated.

Deputy Mayor stated it was an honor to attend Hacienda event.

6 Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

(signed) _____
Judy Meyers, City Clerk

Approved: _____ (date)

Initialed: _____

August 14, 2017

Mayor Rob Marlowe
Deputy Mayor Bill Phillips
Councilperson, Jeff Starkey
Councilperson, Chopper Davis
Councilperson, Judy Debella Thomas

Re: Proposed Increase in Streetlight fee, Stormwater, Solid Waste, & Paving Assessment

Please be advised I am against any increases in above proposals. I am a senior citizen, age 73, and have lived in New Port Richey for 18 years. I was against the first 3 proposals back when they were first proposed. And now am adamantly against the additional Paving Assessment of \$85.00 for my property. I live in a condominium on a dead end street and get very little traffic. I live on a very small fixed income, which has been reduced 15% this past year. If these proposals go through, my real estate tax bill will go from \$161.34 to \$251.45, a 55.85% increase.

I am against the street paving assessment because I believe that as a resident, I should not have to pay for tourists, snowbirds, & others who come to Florida for several months and use our roads.

I barely have enough money for food each month after my bills are paid. Food is the only expense that I can cut.

I would hope that as my city council members, you could consider other fairer means for the above assessments. How about adding to the sales tax or gas tax so that all who come & live in Florida pay their fair share. Thank you for your consideration, I would appreciate it.

Yours truly,



Diane S. Borino
4747 Azalea Dr, #230
New Port Richey, FL 34652
ph 727 848 8992



ALSAC · Danny Thomas, Founder
Finding cures. Saving children.

stjude.org

I OBJECT TO THESE ASSESSMENTS. I LIVE ON A FIXED INCOME OF ONLY \$1069/MONTH. I AM DISABLED + ELDERLY + CAN NOT AFFORD THE \$204 TOTAL FOR ALL OF THESE ASSESSMENTS. I PAY ENOUGH IN TAXES AND CAN NOT AFFORD MORE.

VIRGINIA LEMKUIL
PARCEL # 16-26-16-0520-000004290



Y169346
Flor
Ms Virginia M Lemkuil
4853 Elmwood St
New Port Rchy, FL 34653



CITY - CLEAR
OBSTACLES TO PAVING, STREET LIGHTS,
+ STOP WATER NON-AD VALUATION
ASSESSMENTS
5919 MAIN ST.
NEW PORT RICHEY, FL 34652

SHR412



Diana Liedtke Thorpe 5419 Waters Edge DR New Port Richey FL 34653

08/08/17

Ref: Letter to residents for notice date 26 Aug 2016 adoption of storm water assessment

Tax parcel number 09-26-16-0040-00000-0360

I received the letter on 04 Aug 17. The letter stated that the meeting to discuss the letter was to take place on 01 Aug 17.

I do not have a problem paying for the storm water assessment. However, here are my concerns. I have only lived in the home since August 2016.

- Public works has already had to fix the storm drain next to my yard.
- NPR water department has had to replace and raise my water meter
- EVERY time it rains the street in front of my home and half way into the neighbor's home on both sides floods
- Home owners and delivery trucks must slow down due to the water that DOES NOT DRAIN into the storm drains to ensure that the car can make it thru the depth of the water
- Mosquito growth is terrible
- I am unable to mow the area across the street from my home as the area is so wet my lawn mower has had to be fixed. The mower is less than a year old.
- The road has sunk since I have lived here

I have spoken with the Public Works department gentleman when they have been working in the area and was told that there is a plan to fix this area. However, the men said that the plan had no date

I have called the Water Department since the meter was replaced as it has sunk again. I was told someone would come and evaluate the concern. I do not know if this has happened.

Please have the Public Works Department fix the road in front of the three homes.

Please have the Public Works Department fix or enlarge the storm drain across the street from my home

Encl: photo of water in front of tax parcel 09-26-16-0040-00000-0360



Diana L Liedtke Thorpe





Street in front of
5419 Waters Edge Dr

Richard Stewart

Tax Parcel Number: 09-26-16-0160-00100-0071

5538 Frances Avenue

New Port Richey FL 34653

City Clerk

08/15/2017

Objections to Stormwater Non-ad Valorem Assessments

5919 Main Street

New Port Richey, FL 34652

To whom it may concern;

This correspondence shall serve as our written objection to the City Council to the proposed street lighting service assessments, including their collection on the ad valorem tax bill. It is my understanding that street lighting services are already included in our current tax bill. Therefore, this tax would be levied twice on our property for each fiscal year. I do not consume any services from the City being that I am retired and have no dependents. I live on a set income, and currently pay higher taxes than most other jurisdictions within the same area.

v/r



Richard Stewart

East Richey Square Center, Inc.

6137 State Road 54
New Port Richey, FL 34653

Phone: 727-847-2036

Fax: 727-842-5388

August 23, 2017

City of New Port Richey

RE: Non-Ad Valorem Stormwater Fees
East Richey Square Center
6502 Massachusetts Avenue
Parcel ID # : 04-26-16-0010-00700-0000

To the Honorable City Council Members:

This letter comes as a response to the proposed increase for stormwater assessment fees within the New Port Richey City limits.

Please do not pass this proposal!

The stormwater assessment is increasing at a rapid rate and there are also the basic tax millages as well. The shopping center assessment for streetlights alone, for the year 2017 shall be \$1,416.20. Typically, these are fees which are passed down to the Tenants of the shopping center as part of their CAM and real estate tax pro rata shares. At East Richey Square Shopping Center, we have only one nationally recognized name store, with the majority of the center being "mom and pop" type entrepreneurs-as well as a church. Because this section of New Port Richey is home to many assisted living and lower income residents, the Tenants of the shopping center are already faced with a declining clientele of shoppers, leaving them struggling to keep their businesses open. (We have been unable to lease two units for several years due to the economics and the deterioration of this section of New Port Richey even with having hired an outside real estate broker for assistance.)

In this troubled economy, as Landlords, we have been giving out rent concessions and even renewing leases at significantly lower base rent costs to help Tenants remain in business, at a cost to the property owners. Applying an additional increase to the stormwater assessment will impact not only these Tenants, but all small businesses in town. We cannot bear higher taxes at this point. We would hope that in these difficult times, the government would do their part to help lessen the burden.

Again, please vote no to this assessment.

Sue Wieman

Sincerely,

Sue Wieman

East Richey Square Center

Owner's Representative

Richard Stewart

Tax Parcel Number: 09-26-16-0160-00100-0071

5538 Frances Avenue

New Port Richey FL 34653

City Clerk

08/15/2017

Objections to Street Lighting Non-ad Valorem Assessments

5919 Main Street

New Port Richey, FL 34652

To whom it may concern;

This correspondence shall serve as our written objection to the City Council to the proposed stormwater service assessments, including their collection on the ad valorem tax bill. It is my understanding that stormwater services are already included in our current tax bill. Therefore, this tax would be levied twice on our property for each fiscal year. Furthermore, the city does not maintain the stormwater at the end of my driveway when it does flood every time we get a hard rain. I do not consume any services from the City being that I am retired and have no dependents. I live on a set income, and currently pay higher taxes than most other jurisdictions within the same area.

v/r



Richard Stewart

East Richey Square Center, Inc.

6137 State Road 54
New Port Richey, FL 34653

Phone: 727-847-2036
Fax: 727-842-5388

August 23, 2017

City of New Port Richey

RE: Non-Ad Valorem Streetlight Fees
East Richey Square Center
6502 Massachusetts Avenue
Parcel ID # : 04-26-16-0010-00700-0000

To the Honorable City Council Members:

This letter comes as a response to the 38.71 % proposed increase for streetlight assessment fees within the New Port Richey City limits.

Please do not pass this proposal!

The shopping center tax assessment for streetlights alone, for the year 2010 was \$911.95 and the estimated fee for 2017 shall be \$1,416.20. The stormwater assessment is nearly SIX times this fee and then there are the basic tax millages as well. Typically, these are fees which are passed down to the Tenants of the shopping center as part of their CAM and real estate tax pro rata shares. At East Richey Square Shopping Center, we have only one nationally recognized name store, with the majority of the center being "mom and pop" type entrepreneurs-as well as a church. Because this section of New Port Richey is home to many assisted living and lower income residents, the Tenants of the shopping center are already faced with a declining clientele of shoppers, leaving them struggling to keep their businesses open. (We have been unable to lease two units for several years due to the economics and the deterioration of this section of New Port Richey even with having hired an outside real estate broker for assistance.)

In this troubled economy, as Landlords, we have been giving out rent concessions and even renewing leases at significantly lower base rent costs to help Tenants remain in business, at a cost to the property owners. Applying an additional increase to the streetlight assessment will impact not only these Tenants, but all small businesses in town. We cannot bear higher taxes at this point. We would hope that in these difficult times, the government would do their part to help lessen the burden.

Again, please vote no to this assessment.

Sue Wieman

Sincerely,
Sue Wieman
East Richey Square Center
Owner's Representative