



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

April 7, 2020

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 Jeff Starkey, Councilman Chopper Davis, Councilman Peter Altman and Councilman Matt Murphy. Also in attendance were City Manager Debbie Manns, City Attorney Timothy Driscoll, City Clerk Judy Meyers, Public Works Director Robert Rivera, Development Director Earl Hahn and Technology Solutions Director Bryan Weed.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Moment of Silence

Mayor Marlowe read the following into record following the moment of silence:

Due to the Novel Corona virus, the City Council will be conducting its meetings through the use of Communications Media Technology (CMT) until further notice. The City Council chamber will NOT be open to the public for these meetings. Members of the City Council, City staff, or presenters at the meeting may appear at these meetings through the use of CMT and may not be present in the City Council chamber.

The City Council is committed to protecting the public's right to observe and participate in these meetings to the greatest extent possible, without jeopardizing the public health. All members of the public are encouraged to visit the City's website in advance of a scheduled City Council meeting. There, you will find an agenda for the meeting, along with back-up documentation for various agenda items. You will be able to submit public comments or questions on any item. You are encouraged to submit all of your comments in advance of the meeting, since opportunities during the meeting may be substantially limited.

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Online - <https://www.cityofnewportrichey.org/city-departments/city-council/meeting-broadcasts/>

Spectrum - Channel 644

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Your City Council greatly appreciates your patience through this challenging time in our national history. As always, the safety of the great citizens of our beautiful City is our number one priority.

4 Approval of March 18, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion was made to approve the minutes as presented.

Motion made by Matt Murphy and seconded by Chopper Davis. The Motion Passed. 5-0. Ayes: Altman, Davis, Marlowe, Murphy, Starkey

5 Proclamation - Donate Life Month (By Title Only)

Mayor Marlowe read the proclamation by title only.

6 Proclamation - Alcohol Awareness and PowerTalk 21® Month (By Title Only)

Mayor Marlowe read the proclamation by title only. Kellie Rodriguez with Pasco ASAP submitted the following comments:

Thank you to the New Port Richey City Council Members and thank you to Mayor Marlowe for sponsoring us to be here again this year. Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and the Pasco County Alliance for Substance Addiction Prevention (ASAP) Alcohol Initiatives Committee want to remind the community that April is Alcohol Awareness month. Our yearlong focus is to reduce impaired driving and underage drinking in Pasco County. Eight years ago, MADD launched its Power of Parents program with a simple message to parents, Talk Now and Talk Often. Today, this message is just as important as ever. Studies continue to show that this critical conversation matters and that kids are listening to parents' messages about alcohol and other drugs. April is not the only opportunity parents have during the Spring to talk with their kids about alcohol and other drugs. Parents should take advantage of all opportunities to have these critical conversations, but should make a concerted effort in preparation for high-risk events like Prom, Spring Break, and Graduation to name a few, when there is high peer pressure for youth to drink alcohol and/or use other drugs. This PowerTalk 21, 2020, MADD launches updated resources and tools for educating parents. Marijuana is changing the landscape of prevention and is more accessible today by youth than in previous years. Additionally, we know so much more about the addictive and long-term impact of youth usage than we did when marijuana first grew in popularity in the '60s and '70s. Now, MADD has added much of this new knowledge to the Power of Parents program to help parents not only talk with their youth about the dangers of underage drinking, but the dangers of early marijuana usage. Parents matter, and what parents say matters to youth.

7 Proclamation - The Year to Embrace the Gulf (By Title Only)

Mayor Marlowe read the proclamation by title only.

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

Due to COVID-19 concerns, Vox Pop was conducted electronically. Comments received were as follows:

John Kane - It seems we have entered a different point in time in the world, our nation, and our

community. Our streets look barren, our parks empty, and our roads a pleasure to travel, the latter I have not seen in over thirty years but all at a great cost to human life and our economy. No one knows how long this will go on and what we will look like after the devastation. Whatever the case we will eventually prevail through improvise and innovation. However we must be vigilante to protect our democratic process as well. Since there are no public meetings the voice and opinion of the citizens has been hampered. I would like to reflect and comment on our last public meeting I attended involving the Chasco and the changes to its structural set up. I realize this issue is considered moot but there is a clarification that should be made. In defending the fencing of Sims Park for this event a comparison was drawn to Coachman Park in Clearwater and the fact that the city fences it for its annual jazz festival. E.H. Coachman sold a large plot of land to the city of Clearwater in 1945 at a discounted price with the stipulation that some of the land be used as a public park, however it was not until the early 1960's that land was set aside and developed as a park, what we know today as Coachman Park. In December of 1924 George Sims donated through deed an area referred to as "Enchantment Park" to the residents of the City of New Port Richey in perpetuity! This was sealed by the city's Ordinance One (our first ordinance) that the park would forever belong to the citizens of New Port Richey. This park is to never be sold, loaned out to, or rented by any private entities according to this law. This distinction makes our park (now named Sims Park) different than Coachman Park altogether, which was never donated or protected as is the case of our park. It may look reasonable to some that if one city does something then why not us? I caution you to this way of thinking since it violates not only our law but our unique obligation to protect this great gift through your oath of office as representatives of the citizens and protectors of our city Charter and its ordinances. However well intended an event may be, or good it may do, it should not and cannot have express rights to this park, not ever! Since the term perpetuity is clear in legal language, I believe it becomes void only when the sun stops shining and the stars fall from the sky. It is also not the right of any city official no matter how high to grant an obstruction to the original ordinance, no matter how temporary, especially without the knowledge of council. While some events could be housed in the park they should meet a special criteria so that they don't violate "ordinance one" and have low environmental impact to the park. I believe other areas of the city should be considered for future use as fair grounds and our park should be preserved at all costs to honor our commitment to a park that belongs to the citizens of the city to escape to, at all times of the year. It is also my opinion that any council member serving on any private committee or private organization should recuse themselves from discussion or vote involving their private interests. This seems like a violation of Sunshine Law, and if not, certainly an ethical one indeed.

Bonayah Yisrael - To the New Port Richey City Council and the citizens of Pasco County, as a college student of Pasco-Hernando State College, I'm sending a suggestion or proposal to reduce or prevent the symptoms and spread of coronavirus in Pasco County, and Florida. This suggestion is also to doctors in hospitals in Florida. That is for doctors to use intravenous Vitamin C for patients that have the coronavirus, and for citizens to use nature's highest level of Vitamin C in the fruit called camu camu. This fruit can be ingested in powder form. Citizens can also use adaptogenic herbs in powder form or as tea to enhance immunity and white blood cells such as ashwagandha, astragalus, including elderberry syrup, etc. Based on research online, doctors in China have used and are using intravenous Vitamin C for patients with coronavirus. Confirming the reports from small independent studies and 3 clinical trials, Shanghai, China has announced a recommendation to use high dose intravenous treatment of vitamin C to reduce or prevent coronavirus, according to the Orthomolecular Medicine News Service. They also recommend oral Vitamin C.

Faye Kropik - My name is Faye. I am a resident of NPR for 15 years and am now on Wyoming Avenue a great ace close to downtown. I do not understand why the bathrooms are closed in the parks. This is the only place for homeless people or anyone walking their dog etc. to wash their hands! Can we have more hand washing places instead of less? The stations we use during Chasco? That seems a fine solution. Several of those in town. Some kind of access to water would be ideal for everyone. Thanks for your consideration. My second thought is what about the chickens already? We have wanted them allowed for years and we need access to food especially during times like this. I feel these are two reasonable "requests" and I know they are shared amongst many in the neighborhood. Do we really have to waste time with flooding emails about this? During times when people's lives are in danger going to the store I feel a few back yard hens will be a great way to distract from conditions give

people something to do and tend for, as hens alone are fairly easy to maintain. You do not need roosters to have eggs.

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9 Consent Agenda

Motion was made to accept the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Jeff Starkey and seconded by Chopper Davis. The Motion Passed. 5-0. Ayes: Altman, Davis, Marlowe, Murphy, Starkey

- a Library Advisory Board Minutes - January and February 2020
- b Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes - February 2020
- c Environmental Committee Minutes - February 2020
- d Purchases/Payments for City Council Approval

10 Business Items

- a Resolution No. 2020-11: Appointment of Members to Florida Small Cities CDBG Citizen's Advisory Task Force

City Attorney Driscoll read the proposed resolution by title only. Mayor Marlowe asked if any public comments had been submitted. City Clerk Meyers replied no. Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

Motion made by Chopper Davis and seconded by Matt Murphy. The Motion Passed. 5-0. Ayes: Altman, Davis, Marlowe, Murphy, Starkey

- b Sewer Collections Pump Replacement - Consideration for Purchase

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 sole source proposal from Xylem Water Solutions USA, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$31,110.28 for a sewer collection replacement pump at the Raintree Drive Lift Station located in Magnolia Valley. He stated that on March 4, 2020 tests determined that the pump had impeller damage, shaft/rotor damage, had volute damage, was in need of 66 feet of new power cord, a new terminal board, and new set wear rings. A repair estimate for the pump was submitted to the City in the amount of \$38,641.43. The current pump is 26 years old. Mayor Marlowe asked if any public comments had been submitted. City Clerk Meyers replied no. Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

Motion made by Chopper Davis and seconded by Matt Murphy. The Motion Passed. 5-0. Ayes: Altman, Davis, Marlowe, Murphy, Starkey

11 Communications

City Attorney Driscoll stated the way the meeting was conducted tonight was good. He suggested keeping public comment broad. If we find we are getting long emails we can cut it off at three minutes and read the rest at a future meeting.

City Manager Manns stated the Vox Pop comments submitted by Mr. Kane warrant legal and she would get with the City Attorney. The response will be sent in CM report. Deputy Mayor Starkey stated that Vox Pop comments regarding closing restrooms that Pasco County has closed all of their parks. Sims Park is open and is a great place to get out and exercise. It is his hope that these restrictions will not go on for months. Residents should not be coming to the park for picnics. He is alright with fishing but when he see people bringing in blankets and foods in the park that is not what we should be doing right now. We put up signs at the boat ramp that we want to keep open but please use social distancing. We are not opening restrooms for homeless or anyone right now and to use Sims Park for exercise and go home. He stated there has been complaints from business owners on food trucks and that the complaints on social media have been from the ones that did not want food trucks to begin with. It is his opinion that the people that came down to the lobster truck came so for lobster and not other restaurants. Businesses are struggling but there is government assistance. Everyone is stressed out but if we work together and try to help each other out we can make it through this terrible time. We will come back stronger. He stated that he feels like his life has changed within the last few weeks and this situation has brought his family together. It is his opinions that food trucks give everyone options.

Councilman Murphy asked City Manager Manns if anything had been done with the food trucks. City Manager Manns stated the vendors received a communication yesterday withdrawing their permit rights until some point in the future when normal operations resume. Councilman Murphy stated that Juan-A-Taco is only open on Tuesday. He stated that he is alright with food trucks. Mayor Marlowe stated that the bbq truck was parked on the sidewalk and cars were parked there.

Councilman Davis stated that food trucks started at Wells Fargo when they wanted to give something to their employees. He stated vendors are invited in and given a permit by the City. It is more of a catering thing for the businesses. He stated the bbq truck did not have social distancing. There was not conscious management there. The lobster truck was invited by Ordinance One. He would like to keep it as the ordinance is and have them invited by businesses.

Councilman Altman stated that he noticed that there was a sliders food cart in front of the Village Pub and a bbq pit by Sullivan's so leading up to this he was continuing feeling like there was no management of this provision. Councilman Davis stated they get a license from the City. Councilman Altman stated there is a certain sense of escape of taxation and paid by the residents. It is not a great revenue scheme for the City but it does get people into the street. He understands the position taken by the City Manager. He stated that many businesses have been using tape to keep distancing standards. Our residents are taking it serious. Our Publix has not had any cases yet. He stated the City of St. Petersburg has instituted payments for some businesses. He was contacted by Mr. Sullivan who suggested our city businesses have their parking lots declare a zone to put tables out. Some communities are loosening up some rules for businesses. If there are ways that are non-monetary that we can loosen up he is open to hear them.

Mayor Marlowe stated he was not happy when he heard about the bbq truck. They showed up without an invitation. Personally his preference is his concern about the brick and mortar businesses downtown. He went down last Tuesday for a taco and had to wait almost an hour to get his food. At the same time he kept an eye over on Boulevard Beef and they only had one car. To his way of thinking our obligation is to them and not food vendors who come in. City Attorney Driscoll stated that there seems to be a consensus to allow food trucks on private property and that perhaps public property permits should be suspended.

Councilman Davis asked about fishing at Sims Park and City Manager Manns stated that the only reason the park is open is to accommodate physical activity but she would discuss this matter with Chief Bogart. She stated that for the safety of our staff we cannot open the restrooms. It is just not viable at this time. Deputy Mayor Starkey stated social distancing needs to be followed when fishing.

Mayor Marlowe stated over the weekend someone that lives out of town came and parked a motorhome off of Grand Boulevard. He did not know where we were on that but it was a gathering place. He stated it was not wise to throw a party down by the river. He would like to see enforcement stepped up on overnight parking. City Manager Manns stated she was also contacted by Ms. Brenner and it may warrant a change to the ordinance. He urged everyone to wear a mask when you go out in public. He has a teleconference with the other Mayors and Chairman Moore and a report will be sent on Friday.

Councilman Altman stated in regards to Vox Pop comments made by Mr. Kane that back in the 1990's there was a concert that was \$10 to attend and it was a City sponsored event. The argument has been made many times before with Chasco there can be nothing to generate revenue. He stated that it is a broad interpretation of the ordinance. He does not think it violates the idea that the park is free if there is a big name that was scheduled. He takes exception to the suggestion that there has been any kind of ethical breach. There was discussion by Council but no decision about fencing off the park. He stated there have been a number of incidents at Main Street Landing where the homeless have used the outdoor shower and pool. He stated they are holed up in the old bait shop near Beef O'Brady's. He spoke to Mr. Pridgen and City Manager Manns about it. City Manager Manns stated Det. Norris serves on the Homeless Coalition. She stated she has had recent communications with Cathy Pearson with the County to set up comfort stations for the homeless. Councilman Altman stated the question is where could these be set up. He stated if the City is asked to participate there is a location off of Congress. City Manager Manns stated it sounded like the County has a plan in place and we would just need to disseminate the information to the homeless. Deputy Mayor Starkey stated there is a choice to be homeless. A lot of them get government checks and like to live that way. He stated there was a needle on the sidewalk near the bridge over the weekend. The majority of the ones he sees have open containers. In today's world you cannot congregate together at this time until the pandemic is over regardless if you are homeless or not. Councilman Altman stated there is a needle by the church property. He stated in a larger sense there was such excitement with the city and when we come out of this we can work on changing our profile. Councilman Davis stated he has spoken to Mr. Rudd about attracting people downtown once life returns to normal. Mayor Marlowe stated he spoke to Liz Misemer about planning a street party on Railroad Square once things return to normal.

Mayor Marlowe stated the City of St. Petersburg is using CRA dollars to help some of their businesses. He suggested looking to see if there is something the City can do. City Manager Manns stated the City of St. Petersburg is investing \$6.8 million but we will look to see if there are some other ways to assist businesses. Councilman Davis stated the New Port Richey Rotary is putting money into the downtown. Mayor Marlowe encouraged everyone to get take-out from our local businesses. We have to rally around our businesses. Deputy Mayor Starkey commended City Manager Manns for keeping the City on track during this time.

12 Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

(signed) _____
Judy Meyers, City Clerk

Approved: _____ (date)

Initialed: _____