



**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

September 1, 2020

7:00 PM

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**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 L. Manns, City Attorney Timothy Driscoll, City Clerk Judy Meyers, Police Chief Kim Bogart, Finance Director Crystal Feast, Fire Chief Chris Fitch, Economic Development Director Charles Rudd, Public Works Director Robert Rivera, Library Director Andi Figart, Parks and Recreation Director Elaine Smith, Development Director Earl Hahn, Technology Solutions Director Bryan Weed and Human Resources Manager Bernie Wharran.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Moment of Silence

4. Approval of August 19, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion was made to approve the minutes as presented.

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

5. Proclamation - National Drive Electric Week (By Title Only)

Mayor Marlowe read the proclamation by title only.

6. Vox Pop for Items Not Listed on the Agenda or Listed on Consent Agenda

Mayor Marlowe opened the floor for public comment. Maya King 5416 Jobeth Drive, NPR, came forward and stated her children are victims of racism in our county. She wants her children to feel safe here. She stated people are coming to her home and she is scared.

James Washington 7940 Augusta Blvd., Hudson, came forward and stated that he has stood with BLM since May. He stated he has seen the police department use discourse through social media. He stated they have been harassed since May. He stated they have talked to the FBI. He stated we must act now.

Jeremy Waters 6712 Adams Street, NPR, came forward and stated that for the last two weeks there have been protests across from his home. He stated he had nine protestors on his property including one in his backyard and they refused to leave.

Bruce Waters 6511 River Road, NPR came forward and stated that when he went to his son's home there were protestors looking at his boat and his girlfriend's car. He told them they need to move and cannot be on private property. He stated there should not be division between us we must all work together.

Amy Marin 6216 River Road, NPR, came forward to give an update on the mural at Fitzgerald's. She stated they have met with the artist and the sponsors and the project will be reinvigorated soon. She stated 34 out of 36 faces have been spoken for.

Rachel Hagenbaugh 6026 Tennessee Ave., NPR, came forward to state that she would like to be a bridge. She stated officers were associating with the Proud Boys. She stated she was personally stalked and mocked by officers for videotaping. She stated the protestors have a right to be there. Her greatest concern is the safety of the community.

With no one else coming forward for public comment, Mayor Marlowe closed Vox Pop. Deputy Mayor Starkey showed some photos and stated he has seen appalling behavior on both sides. He then had some audio played. He stated we have to look at both sides of the story. He stated he has had his comments misrepresented in the newspaper. He said he has never gotten any comments about racism in the police department in his seven years on Council. He stated there has been horrible information given by both sides.

Mayor Marlowe stated he has been targeted as a racist on Facebook. He stated he is painfully aware of racism. He does not approve of the counter-protests. He stated that today Jesse Jackson told the BLM to stand down. He stated he has no problem talking or meeting with people. He stated we need to de-escalate this now. The protests are turning city residents against the BLM movement and reason for existence. He stated there are changes that need to be made nationally and locally. He stated we have body cams in the budget for the upcoming fiscal year. We are looking at making the changes that we need to.

Councilman Davis stated his phone number is also available on the website. He stated we can change what happens in New Port Richey but no one has reached out for a meeting.

Deputy Mayor Starkey stated he would be alright with a conducting a work session on the matter.

Councilman Altman stated that the Mayor is our spokesman. He stated the City Manager runs the city. He stated he would be open on conducting a work session. He stated he has reached out to some of those involved. He stated only as a group can they direct the City Manager to take a course of action. He stated he is opposed to having anyone participating in a march or protest to carrying a weapon. No one should have baseball bats, knives or guns. Anger has to be translated into a positive. He stated if the BLM did a silent march he would attend but cannot attend when there is yelling and obscenities directed at our police department.

Councilman Murphy stated he tries to put himself in the other person's shoes. He decided to come down to the protest Saturday and observe how both sides were being treated. He stated he was harassed by BLM participants. He stated that he just wanted to observe and wound up being attacked by both sides on Facebook. He stated he is willing to talk to anyone but no one has reached out to him either. He stated he feels there is a better way to accomplish goals. He stated both sides need to focus on what they want to do.

Councilman Davis stated we have an ordinance regarding megaphones. He stated we also have an event ordinance.

7 Consent Agenda

Motion was made to accept the Consent Agenda.

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

- a Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes - June 2020
- b Environmental Committee Minutes - July 2020
- c Cultural Affairs Committee Minutes - July 2020
- d Purchases/Payments for City Council Approval

8 Business Items

- a Board Re-Appointments: John Grey and Daniel Maysilles, Land Development Review Board

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to approve the re-appointments of John Grey and Daniel Maysilles to the Land Development Review Board. She stated that Mr. Grey and Mr. Maysilles have been valued members of the Land Development Review Board for over fifteen years. If approved, their terms will be for three years and will be up for renewal on September 1, 2023. Upon opening the floor to public comment, no one came forward therefore Mayor Marlowe returned the floor to Council. 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 Meadows Park Improvement Project

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to approve a proposal from Wannemacher Jensen Architects, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$49,000 for architectural and design services relating to the Meadows Park Improvement Project. The proposal includes master planning but not construction services. Upon opening the floor to public comment, no one came forward therefore Mayor Marlowe returned the floor to Council. Councilman Davis asked if this was a bid project and City Manager Manns stated that Wannemacher Jensen is on the City's approved list and the amount requested is an industry standard. Councilman Altman stated these improvements are greatly needed. Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

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

- c Quarterly Cash & Investment Performance Report

City Manager Manns introduced Finance Director Crystal Feast who then made a presented the item to Council. She stated that this report was as of June 30, 2020. She stated income growth was slow due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Total income earned was \$69,208. Changes from the previous quarter were due to transfer of funds to cover water and sewer projects. Other changes were due to the decrease in income earned.

9 Communications

Councilman Davis asked the City Manager to explain how to fill the Council vacancy. City Manager Manns stated that the appointment would be made to fill the seat until the next election. City Attorney Driscoll stated that the top vote getter would get three years, the second three years and the third place would fill the rest of Deputy Mayor Starkey's term. Councilman Davis suggested separating the terms through ordinance. Mayor Marlowe stated there was a similar situation when he first came on Council. City Attorney Driscoll stated that Council could appoint someone to fill the seat and then have someone qualify for the one year position so that the next election there would be two seats for three years and one seat for one year unless the person in the one year position has no opposition then they would just keep that position. Deputy Mayor Starkey stated if you see one of our officers please thank them as they need it right now. Councilman Altman stated he knows the Chamber owes us money but it could be forgiven if they vacate the current location. Councilman Altman asked about the holiday parade and City Manager Manns stated they work with the Holiday Rotary on the Christmas Parade. Councilman Altman stated that he wanted to reassert that if we close Railroad Square and charge a \$5 fee then we could get come chaperones and volunteers and it would be a great opportunity to get NPRMS out there. He stated there is a cost benefit to discuss at a future meeting. He stated he is aware that the audit exposed some of those who are not paying for trash service and is a proponent for the city to offer the service. It would be a service to the providers. We have the software and billing department. He stated there is a tract of land for sale off Rowan and he would like to see what the County's plans are for it. Mayor Marlowe asked about the new Leaf and Mr. Rivera stated it is being outfitted now.

10 Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

(signed) \_\_\_\_\_  
Judy Meyers, City Clerk

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

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