



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

October 7, 2024

8:00 AM

ORDER OF
BUSINESS

1 Call to Order – Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Chopper Davis at 8:00 a.m. Those in attendance were Deputy Mayor Kelly Mothershead and Councilwoman Matt Murphy. Councilman Peter Altman arrived at 8:02 a.m. and Councilman Bertell Butler, IV arrived at 8:08 a.m. Also in attendance were City Manager Debbie L. Manns, City Clerk Judy Meyers, Fire Chief Chris Fitch and Police Chief Robert Kochen.

2 Pledge of Allegiance

3 Moment of Silence

4 Business Items

a. Resolution No. 2025-04: Declaring a Local State of Emergency RE: Tropical Storm/Hurricane Milton - Page 3

City Manager Manns read the proposed resolution by title only. She stated the purpose of this agenda item was to declare a local state of emergency in response to Hurricane Milton. The local state of emergency will be in effect as of 12:01 a.m. on Tuesday, October 8, 2024 and will remain in effect for seven days. Councilman Murphy stated we are unsure what this storm is doing and urged everyone to be safe. Deputy Mayor Mothershead urged everyone to heed the evacuation orders. Councilman Altman spoke regarding the Harborview Mobile Home Park and evacuation assistance for low-income residents. Upon opening the floor to public comment, no one came forward therefore Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

Motion made by Matt Murphy and seconded by Kelly Mothershead. The Motion Passed. 4-0. Ayes: Altman, Davis, Mothershead, Murphy Absent: Butler

5 Communications

Deputy Mayor Mothershead stated the debris pickup will be another issue and if anyone can secure it to do so in advance of the storm. She stated there is a main drainage off of River Road near Veterans that is covered currently by debris. She stated she would like to see those main drains cleared or we will have more flooding than before. City Manager Manns stated she has had Public Works crews

working all weekend and they started picking up debris yesterday and we have brought in contractors to assist in picking up the debris in addition to the storm contractor so that we can pick up the most we can from the most impacted areas in advance of Hurricane Milton. She stated we are having some difficulty with the County in terms of getting a place to dump and so we are currently dumping at Pine Hill which is not the best method. She stated we will have to move the debris a second time. Councilman Murphy asked if we are still hiring contractors and City Manager Manns stated yes. He stated after all of this is over he would like to sit down and have a roundtable about what we have seen. Councilman Altman stated the TBRPC is having a roundtable for the entire membership on October 14th in Pinellas Park to include five counties and all of the cities sharing stories. He stated the roundtable will be broadcasted and he encouraged the other Council members to watch. He stated one thing that was discussed last Tuesday for the last storm was the City's invoicing related to permits and he noticed that the City of Clearwater has removed permits related to rebuilding for all residential but did not remove them from commercial. He said that was a big issue along with the 50/50 rule that everyone is scared about. Councilman Altman then spoke again regarding Harborview Mobile Home Park and those that rent their lots and would have to rebuild according to the 50/50 rule. He stated he has heard from permitting that there are some residents who have built theirs up but there has been a story that the management company has been walking to these properties that are so severely damaged and are handing legal documents to have people sign over their properties on the site to avoid paying rent. He stated everyone in there has been charged October rent even though they are not able to be there. He told Councilman Murphy to his point that there will be several different issues. Councilman Altman thanked the other members of Council for being seen in the community and showing that we care. Councilman Butler thanked Councilman Altman and staff for touring the Harborview community. He stated it is the same west of US19. He stated he caught the end of the debris discussion and wanted to know if there was any discussion regarding those who were notified they would be losing power and asked if that had been pushed back due to the new hurricane that was approaching and City Manager Manns responded that there have been no changes. She stated the position is still if your power lines were impacted with water we can't restore your power until they have been certified to be safe. Councilman Butler stated he was not going to call anyone out but there are folks who have been given that notice but their power is still on so they are in limbo on to continue working or should they not. Councilman Murphy responded by stating that he has heard that many times that they are going to come turn your power off but he doesn't think that will happen as they are working to get power turned on so he is not sure where that came from but they are not going around turning people's power off. Councilman Murphy stated it is the individual's responsibility to make sure their stuff is inspected so they do not have issues. Councilman Butler asked if we have looked into a potential funding source for contracting with electricians on a tiered level because he has seen anywhere from \$150 to \$1,200 for inspections and he asked Councilman Murphy is an inspection is enough and Councilman Murphy stated it is difficult to isolate circuits. Councilman Murphy stated what they have been doing is going through and any wires that were affected they have been disconnected from the panel and then installing outlets under the panel to use to at least get your power back on. City Manager Manns stated she has worked with Councilman Murphy to craft a program. Councilman Murphy stated it is called a partial pass so that at least the power can be turned back on but the permit is still there so they know what repairs need to be done. Councilman Altman stated the real thing now is that people who have lost everything are now liquidating their bank accounts in the false hope that they will be able to come back. He stated in Harborview there is a power station that is costing \$3,500 to be replaced and in theory is owned by the ownership of the property. He stated the fifty percent rule is negating any value in the investments they are making just to get their power back on. Deputy Mayor Mothershead stated there has been a lot of people at the Library helping with FEMA applications and there has been feedback from the community that is has been greatly appreciated.

6 Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 8:19 a.m.

(signed) _____
Judy Meyers, MMC, City Clerk

Approved: _____ (date)

Initialed: _____