



**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

March 5, 2024

7:00 PM

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**ORDER OF**  
**BUSINESS**

1. Call to Order – Roll Call

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

Also in attendance were City Manager Debbie L. Manns, City Attorney Timothy Driscoll, City Clerk Judy Meyers, Finance Director Crystal Dunn, Fire Chief Chris Fitch, Public Works Director Robert Rivera, Police Chief Bob Kochen, Library Director Andi Figart, Technology and Innovations Director Robert Greene, Assistant City Manager Gregory Oravec and Human Resources Director Arnel Wetzell.

2 Pledge of Allegiance

3 Moment of Silence

4 Approval of February 15, 2024 Special Meeting and February 20, 2024 Regular 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, Davis, Mothershead, Murphy, Peters

5 Proclamation: Irish American Heritage Month

6 Proclamation: Athletic Training Month

7 Proclamation: Problem Gambling Awareness Month (By Title Only)

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

Mayor Davis opened the floor for public comment. The following people came forward to speak:

- Rob Marlowe, 5603 Palmetto Rd., NPR spoke regarding Schwettman, 5462 Grand Blvd., commended City Manager Manns and the new entryway sign.
- Darla Schwendeman, 2940 Meadowood Dr., NPR spoke regarding a lawsuit.
- Ryan Knowles, 6431 Taylor Ct., NPR spoke regarding the new solid waste program.
- Tom Finn, 5949 Tennessee Ave., NPR spoke regarding the new solid waste ordinance and lawsuit.
- Laurie Baker, 5853 Lafayette Ave., spoke regarding the upcoming Pasco County Women Pioneer performance.
- Michael Turansky, 6932 Washington Ave., NPR spoke regarding the new solid waste program and opting out of the new system.
- Judith Allen, 5940 Grand Blvd., NPR spoke regarding meetings on the website, the ordinance and flex card.
- Shinikki Whiting, 5755 Indiana Ave., NPR spoke regarding comments at the last meeting regarding bullying and derogatory remarks.
- Kimberly Cox, 7336 Ashmore Dr., NPR spoke regarding the conduct of Mayor and Council members.
- Nathan Pollock, 6153 Massachusetts Ave., NPR spoke regarding the fundraiser at Patriot Stogies, the new solid waste program and grants.
- Marlowe Jones, 6141 Pine Hill Rd., PR spoke regarding Shinikki Whiting, public records request.

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

- a Speakers must identify themselves prior to speaking by stating their name and full address for the record. Speakers shall address the City Council as a whole and refrain from addressing individual members of the City Council or the City staff. Speakers shall afford the utmost courtesy to the City Council, to City employees, and to the public, and shall refrain at all times, from rude and derogatory remarks, reflections as to integrity, abusive comments, and statements as to motives and personalities.

#### 9 Consent Agenda

Motion was made to accept the Consent Agenda.

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

- a Purchases/Payments for City Council Approval
- b Cultural Affairs Committee Minutes - November 2023 - January 2024
- c Library Advisory Board Minutes - November 2023 and January 2024

#### 10 Public Reading of Ordinances

- a First Reading, Ordinance No. 2024-2291: Rezoning for 12.42 Acres of Property Located at Sea Forest Drive and Green Key Road

City Attorney Driscoll read the proposed ordinance by title only. City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to conduct a first reading of an ordinance to rezone a 12.42 acre property located at Sea Forest Drive and Green Key Road from PDD and R-1 to PDD. She then introduced Senior Planner Lisa Algieri who then made a presentation to Council. The subject property is located at the southeast corner of Sea Forest Drive and Green Key Road. The future lane use is low density. The property is vacant with the eastern and southern portions lying in wetlands. The applicant is requesting to rezone from PDD & R-1 to a PDD

with an amended site plan. The revised site plan will consist of 60 single-family attached townhomes with site amenities. She stated there was a change requested by the applicant in height from 35' to 50'. The proposal is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Upon opening the floor to public comment, the following people came forward to speak:

- Raquel Thiebes, 4731 Sanctuary Dr., NPR spoke regarding flooding, the amount of fill, runoff and parking. She urged Council to go out and visit the site.
- John Kane, 6041 Florida Ave., NPR cautioned Council about the number of homes that can be put there and flooding.
- George Thiebes, 4731 Sanctuary Dr., NPR spoke regarding environmental assessment and traffic impacts.
- Ron Orchard, 6719 Manor Beach Rd., NPR spoke regarding previous zonings, the amount of fill, runoff and the Coastal Management statute.
- Bertell Butler, IV, 5335 Bellview Ave., NPR spoke regarding long term impacts of the project, FEMA, flood insurance for the residents and environmental aspects.
- Ryan Knowles, 6431 Taylor Ct., NPR asked about loss of life should there be a hurricane.
- Kimberly Cox, 7336 Ashmore Dr., NPR spoke about not building and to let properties just exist. She also spoke about gentrification.
- Marlowe Jones, 6141 Pine Hill Rd., PR spoke regarding tabling the item. He also about an environmental assessment and if it can be made public.
- Denise Blume, 4631 Green Key Rd., NPR spoke homeless on her street and the view of the water from her backyard.
- Judith Allen, 5940 Grand Blvd., NPR spoke regarding the no name storm in 1993 and urged caution on building on the west side of 19.
- Cheryl Orchard, 6719 Manor Beach Rd., NPR spoke regarding the Coastal Management statute, the no name storm of 1993, the conditions when the County installed their sewers and the lack of swails at Manor Beach and Green Key.
- Sherry Stamback, 6926 Washington St., spoke regarding emergency services for the area.
- Donna Jensen, 5922 Wyoming Ave., NPR spoke about conserving the area and bringing back the area to what it was in the past.
- Dave Schwendeman, 2940 Meadowood Dr., NPR spoke about slowing down building and leaving land for the animals.

With no one else coming forward Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Amy Huber from NPR Townhomes came forward to make a presentation on behalf of the applicant. She stated that this agenda item is solely for a rezoning and is not a site plan. She stated what is being asked is to rezone the entire parcel PDD. She then made a presentation to Council. She said they are only developing on the upland. She stated an environmental assessment and traffic study has been submitted. Ms. Huber then highlighted the criteria in order to adhere to quasi-judicial guidelines. She then highlighted the amenities for the project. Councilman Altman spoke about his history with the property. He stated our job is to weigh the evidence and the existing zoning. He stated he is aware of the resiliency issues. City Attorney Driscoll stated Council is constrained to review the evidence presented and not speculation or conjecture. He stated Council is approving a PDD and site plan. He stated any development is subject to SWFWMD and FDEP review. Motion was made to approve the ordinance upon its first reading.

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

## 11 Business Items

### a Board Appointment: David P. Folds, III, Cultural Affairs Committee

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to approve the appointment of David P. Folds, III as member to the Cultural Affairs Committee. If approved, Mr. Folds' term will be for two years and will be up for renewal on March 6, 2026. Upon opening the floor to public comment, the following people came forward to speak:

- David P. Folds, III, 5743 Delaware Ave., NPR introduced himself to Council.
- Marlowe Jones, 6141 Pine Hill Rd., PR spoke in support of the appointment and his application to the committee.

With no one else coming forward Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

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

b 2024 Sims Park Artificial Turf Installation

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 proposal from FieldTurf USA Inc., in the amount not to exceed \$231,708.90 for the installation of artificial turf in Sims Park. He stated that improvements to Sims Park were completed in 2016. The sod was replaced in 2019 and 2021. The sod is due once again to be replaced again. Mr. Rivera then highlighted the benefits of artificial turf. He stated funding for this project is available in the CIP. Mr. Rivera then highlighted the Capital Cost Operation and Maintenance of regular sod versus artificial turf.

Upon opening the floor to public comment, the following people came forward to speak:

- John Kane, 6041 Florida Ave., NPR spoke regarding the park usage and thinking out of the box by using road areas and Railroad Square. He also suggested limiting park events.
- Ryan Knowles, 6431 Taylor Ct., NPR asked about golf carts, stakes and motorcycles on the turf.
- Darla Scwendeman, 2940 Meadowood Dr., NPR asked about the heat on the turf.
- Judith Allen, 5940 Grand Blvd., NPR spoke about the CDBG Grant and Council decisions.

With no one else coming forward Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

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

c Auxiliary Power Generator Purchase – Fire Station No. 2

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 proposal from Ring Power Systems Incorporated in the amount not to exceed \$133,842.00 for the purchase of a 300KW auxiliary power generator for Fire Station No. 2 and corresponding budget amendment. In an effort to reduce costs associated with the project, staff has begun the direct purchase of several items. The first being the auxiliary power generator. This direct purchase reduces the cost of the project by eliminating the sales tax, contractor's profit and insurance, as well as competitive pricing thru the use of the Sourcewell Coop contract bid process.

Upon opening the floor to public comment, the following people came forward to speak:

- Laurie Baker, 5853 Lafayette St., NPR spoke about qualifying for Penny for Pasco funds.

With no one else coming forward Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Motion was made to approve the item as presented and have staff look for alternate funding sources.

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

d Resolution No. 2024-03: Amending City Council Meeting Times

City Attorney Driscoll read the proposed resolution by title only. City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to adopt Resolution No. 2024-03 which amends the start time for all regular City Council meetings and work sessions to 6:00 p.m. At your regular meeting on February 20, 2024, Councilman Peters brought up the suggestion of amending the start time for City Council meetings from 7:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Staff has researched what times the other five municipalities in Pasco County begin their meetings. The results are as follows:

- City of Dade City meetings begin at 5:30 p.m.
- City of Port Richey meetings begin at 6:00 p.m.
- Town of St. Leo meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. but are only held once a month.
- City of San Antonio meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. but are only held once a month.
- City of Zephyrhills meetings begin at 6:00 p.m.

Upon opening the floor to public comment, the following people came forward to speak:

- Deanna Wilson, 5532 Delaware Ave., NPR spoke in opposition of the item.

With no one else coming forward Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Motion was made to approve the item as presented effective April 2, 2024.

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

e Potential Acquisition of 5462 Grand Boulevard

City Manager Manns introduced Asst. City Manager Gregory Oravec who then presented the item to Council. He stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to authorize the City Manager to participate in an online auction for 5462 Grand Blvd., New Port Richey, FL 34652, approving a bid up to appraised value or \$575,000, whichever is less, to be funded by the Community Redevelopment Agency. As set forth in the companion item to the CRA Board, the subject property (hereinafter referred to as the "Property") is prominently located at 5462 Grand Boulevard, at the southeast corner of Grand Boulevard and Gulf Drive, directly across Gulf Drive from Historic Gulf High School (a/k/a Schwettman Education Center). It is critical to highlight that the Property includes the two lots on the east side of George Street, contiguous to Historic Gulf High School's remote parking lot. According to the Property Appraiser's records, the Property is described as Parcel ID 08-26-16-0240-00300-0010 and Parcel ID 08-26-16-0250-03504-0080; approximately 0.69 acres in the aggregate; occupied by a 3-story office building of approximately 13,310 SF; and currently valued at \$401,302 in the aggregate. Unfortunately, this key site on our City's premier local north-south thoroughfare has had multiple unresolved code violations since 2019; and this ultimately led the City to seek relief through court action, which it won pursuant to a Uniform Final Judgment of Foreclosure dated January 18, 2024. The Judgment of Foreclosure has ordered a public sale, via online auction, on March 18, 2024. As you may know, in such an auction, the effective opening bid will start with the amount owed to the City, which is currently estimated at \$241,000. Further, if no other party bids on the Property, the City could acquire title to the Property for that amount owed plus miscellaneous fees; and should it elect to bid, would only have to "come out of pocket" for that amount over \$241,000. Given the Property's prominence on Grand Boulevard and strategic location in relation to Historic Gulf High School and the remote parking lot, staff believes that the City and Agency are being presented with a special opportunity to assemble a catalytic redevelopment site which would not only squarely address the running code violations on the Property, but also enable the City, Agency, and our community to plan and then implement a transformational project for both sides of Gulf Drive. The Agency has ordered an appraisal of the Property to help guide the City's participation, if authorized, in the online auction. It is anticipated to be complete by close of business, March 8. Consequently, staff has structured this request with a cap of \$575,000 or appraised value, whichever is less, and that cap represents the total maximum bid amount inclusive of any City credits, such as the aforementioned \$241,000. When considering valuation of the Property, its current state of vacancy and physical condition, and the difference that active property ownership and reinvestment can make, it is

interesting to compare the building on the Property to the building at the northwest corner of Grand Boulevard and Gulf Drive, 5509 Grand Boulevard. Even though the buildings are very similar in size and architecture, the Property Appraiser values the building at 5509 at \$22/SF and the building at 5462 at \$13.17/SF. If the Property is acquired, Agency staff would outline a proposed procurement process, to be considered at a future meeting of the Agency Board, by which a multidisciplinary planning firm would be selected to lead a community-oriented master planning process for the Property, Historic Gulf High School, and the surrounding Schwettman Oaks Neighborhood. Such a master planning process would include several opportunities for citizen engagement and would be expected to result in the Agency Board's adoption of a master plan for the sites and surrounding area, which would then be implemented through subsequent action.

Upon opening the floor to public comment, the following people came forward to speak:

- Dale Webb, 5647 Kentucky Ave., NPR spoke regarding the condition of the building and advised the City not go acquire it.
- Deanna Wilson, 5532 Delaware Ave., NPR spoke about buying the building to get the place.
- Bertell Butler, IV, 5335 Bellview Ave., NPR spoke regarding this being a selling point for private investment. He asked if this was included in the CRA Master Plan or is this a decision now because of the foreclosure.

With no one else coming forward Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Councilman Altman stated it is blighted and would most likely fall within the Plan. He stated the goal is going to see this demolished. He stated the CRA Plan has to be updated to include the projects that we envision. Motion was made to approve the item as presented.

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

f City Manager Performance Evaluation

City Manager Manns introduced the item to Council. She stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to conduct the annual evaluation of her performance as City Manager. She stated that the evaluation ensures an open and productive communication. She stated that we are ruled by a Charter and she is one of two Charter officials. City Manager Manns then highlighted the Council-Manager form of government, budget and employees. She stated it is her job to make sure Council makes the most informed decisions they can. She stated Council oversees the Strategic Plan and Budget. She spoke about what Council was looking for in a manager when she interviewed ten years ago. They were looking for someone who could steer the City and that is what they received. She stated there is still a lot of hard work to do and she is looking forward to continuing the work. City Manager Manns stated she has great passion for wanting to make the city better. She then proceeded to introduce the changes to her contract as follows:

- The term of contract shall be for five years and shall be up for renewal on June 2, 2029.
- The city shall provide an annual salary adjustment as a cost-of-living rate adjustment on an annual basis which shall be the percentage increase in the CPI and shall be determined based on comparing the CPI for the March immediately preceding the proposed rate adjustment. The rate adjustment if any, shall take effect on June 2, 2024, and each year thereafter.

Upon opening the floor to public comment, the following people came forward to speak:

- Bertell Butler, IV, 5335 Bellview Ave., NPR spoke regarding severance and postponing the item until March 19th.
- Katie McQuillan, 6442 River Rd., NPR spoke about her daughter's wedding and the group effort led by the City Manager she deserves the contract extension.
- Kimberly Cox, 7336 Ashmore Dr., NPR spoke in opposition of the item.
- Judith Allen, 5940 Grand Blvd., NPR spoke in opposition of the item.
- John Kane, 6041 Florida Ave., NPR spoke regarding the length of the contract, the timing in relation to the election and secret ballots for employees.

- Nathan Pollock, 6153 Massachusetts Ave., NPR read scripture from the Bible and in opposition of the item.
- Laurie Baker, 5853 Lafayette St., NPR asked about making decisions.

With no one else coming forward Mayor Davis returned the floor to Council. Councilman Altman stated he would reiterate his comments made last year. He suggested a term until October. He stated the Council should be receiving financial information to make decisions. Councilwoman Mothershead stated a current Council should provide the review and not a new Council coming in. She stated City Manager Manns is very committed to our city and wants what's best. She stated she attacks all of the challenges head on. She stated she is very active in the community. Deputy Mayor Murphy stated that the good she's done for our community is light year's ahead of where our city has been. He stated that not everybody has the ability to look into the future. He stated that the important things try to get done right away. He stated it would not be fair for someone to rate her who has not worked with her. He stated he appreciates all the hard work and commitment that she puts into the city. He stated she is dedicated to what is going on in this city. Councilman Peters stated that it wasn't that many years ago that people called NPR no place really. He stated that we are here to improve our citizens quality of life. He stated the City is moving forward in that direction. He stated the City Manager job is not an easy job. He stated there have been some really great hires lately. He stated if there is one criticism it is that City Manager Manns sets her expectations high so sometimes there aren't ones that are a good fit. He stated City Manager Manns navigated the city through the COVID pandemic. Councilman Peters stated he has seen her interact with other local, State and Federal leaders. Mayor Davis stated he part of the team that hired City Manager Manns. He said she was head and shoulders above the other two. He stated that she has set up a wage system for all employees. He stated she has built an excellent relationship with our labor unions. He stated she has always tried to keep healthcare costs down. Mayor Davis spoke about City Manager Manns' negotiation with Keiser University and securing their location in the city. Motion was made to extend the term of the contract for five years and provide an annual salary adjustment as a cost-of-living rate adjustment on an annual basis which shall be the percentage increase in the CPI and shall be determined based on comparing the CPI for the March immediately preceding the proposed rate adjustment.

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

12 Communications

None.

13 Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, upon proper motion, the meeting adjourned at 10:48 p.m.

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

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

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