



City of Margate

5790 Margate Boulevard
Margate, FL 33063
954-972-6454
www.margatefl.com

Meeting Minutes Regular City Commission Meeting

Mayor Tommy Ruzzano
Vice Mayor Arlene R. Schwartz
Commissioners:
Antonio V. Arserio, Anthony N. Caggiano, Joanne Simone

City Manager Cale Curtis
City Attorney Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman
City Clerk Jennifer M. Johnson

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

7:00 PM

Commission Chambers and Zoom.us
Webinar ID: 839 1554 2542

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83915542542>

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Commissioner Anthony N. Caggiano, Commissioner Joanne Simone, Commissioner Antonio V. Arserio, Vice Mayor Arlene R. Schwartz and Mayor Tommy Ruzzano

MOMENT OF SILENCE - INVOCATION BY PASTOR MARCIO ALVES

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1) PRESENTATION(S)

- A.** [ID 2024-031](#) MARGATE 50 YEAR RESIDENCY AWARD - LAUREN SKIPPER
LAUREN S. SKIPPER, 6473 NW 20 CT MARGATE, spoke on this Item and spoke highly of the NorthWest Focal Point Senior Center (NWFPSC).

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

- C.** [ID 2024-025](#) STEVEN MCCULLOUGH, MAINTENANCE SUPERVISOR - PUBLIC WORKS - 25 YEARS

KEVIN D. STEPHENS, UTILITY TECHNICIAN LEAD - ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES - 25 YEARS

RANDALL A. MARTINEZ, RECREATION SUPERVISOR - PARKS AND RECREATION - 10 YEARS

LAWRENCE J. BLAKESLEE, CHIEF UTILITY MECHANIC - ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES - 10 YEARS

ALEYDA M. ZEGARRA, TREATMENT PLANT OPERATOR -

ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES - 5 YEARS

2) PUBLIC DISCUSSION

MAYOR TOMMY RUZZANO explained the protocol for this Item.

JULIE JONES said that she placed the magazine, National Weekly, on the dais and asked the City Commission and staff to read the same. She raised concerns about the US Government's travel advisory on traveling to Jamaica. She highlighted a "free lunch for the needy" initiative by Rob Reiner at Margate's Big Daddy's Pizza & Subs.

AIRA AUSTIN, 851 SW 55 WAY, highlighted his concerns of activity at Serino Park that abuts his property and discussed issues that he was having from the Code Compliance Officers which included his fence and lights.

COMMISSIONER ANTONIO V. ARSERIO responded to Mr. Austin's comments.

VICE MAYOR ARLENE R. SCHWARTZ responded to Mr. Austin's comments and questioned whether they had cameras at every park.

CITY MANAGER CALE CURTIS informed that he had taken Mr. Austin's address, had written some notes and would visit the park and revert back with some recommendations. He confirmed that there were cameras at Serino Park but he was unsure if they were positioned to look at the back of Mr. Austin's house.

Discussion ensued.

RICHARD ZUCCHINI, 380 LAKEWOOD CIRCLE E, #B referenced adhering to Robert's Rules pertaining to the City Commission meetings. He questioned Commissioner Arserio if he received communication from Eric Nathanson on January 21st, 2021 who at that time, was representing the owners of the Palm Lakes Golf Course and alleged that they were willing to offer the land to the City for free.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO confirmed being in receipt of a text message from Mr. Nathanson's representatives which indicated interest in giving the City the property and he believed that there was a Public Records Request pertaining to the same.

VICE MAYOR SCHWARTZ responded to Mr. Zucchini's question.

Discussion ensued.

MARGATE RESIDENT, said that he was grateful and commended the City Manager, City Commission and said that the Police Department was doing an amazing job. He lived in the Kimberly Forest area and raised concerns about a safety issue pertaining to cars parked in the road due to the driveway space.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO responded and asked questions pertaining to parking issues, driveway expansions and Code Compliance fines.

Discussion ensued.

PATH TO RECOVERY LLC OWNER, 1613 E RIVER DR, LUIS E. MELENDEZ, referenced being violated by City Code Compliance and was seeking a straightforward answer for the reasonable accommodation that he had submitted last December.

CITY ATTORNEY DAVID N. TOLCES explained that they were in the course of processing the additional information that Mr. Melendez submitted. He advised that Mr.

Melendez should be receiving more information to issuing a notice for a public hearing which would be set by the City Manager where he could make his presentation for him to decide which would be pursuant to the City Code provisions. He advised that whether or not he would be entitled to that reasonable accommodation was separate to the Special Magistrate.

Discussion ensued.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO made comment and thanked Mr. Melendez for his work on recovery homes and for being Florida Association of Recovery Residences (FARR) certified.

Discussion ensued.

TRACY VAN WINKLE, 1020 SW 61ST AVENUE forewarned that the City should pay attention to their City employees.

ELSA J. SANCHEZ, 6930 NW 15TH STREET, thanked Commissioner Simone and select departments heads for helping one of their residents in Paradise Gardens III and also a separate issue pertaining to a committee meeting to discuss scams. She did not understand why they needed a consulting company in reference to the Strategic Planning as she believed this could be conducted in-house.

DONNA L. FELLOWS, 6108 NW 9TH COURT, advised that there were a couple of distributing letters stating that their homes were available for foreclosure. She asked what was being built on NW 8th Street where the old bank was.

MAYOR RUZZANO would revert back to Ms. Fellows when they establish further information. He also forewarned the public to be careful of scam letters.

3) COMMISSION COMMENTS

COMMISSIONER ANTHONY N. CAGGIANO thanked everyone for attending the City Commission meeting and hoped everyone had a good Valentine's Day and to stay healthy.

COMMISSIONER JOANNE SIMONE highlighted the City's kickball game this Saturday. She reminded that the Fire Department had partnered with the Red Cross to install free smoke alarms for Margate residents on Saturday, March 9th. She also highlighted the forthcoming events for March which included the Broward County Waterway Cleanup, Water Matters Day respectively and the Spring Clean up and Garage Sale. She referenced Donna Fellows and discussed solicitations where she had received several emails from residents. She questioned if there was anything they could do for solicitation.

CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES said that he would have to review the City Code.

Discussion ensued including signing up to the Broward County Property Appraiser (BCPA) Owner Alert.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO highlighted the forthcoming City's 2nd Annual International Festival and that he was very close to having a date set for the teddy bear drive for the City's Police and Firefighters.

VICE MAYOR SCHWARTZ thanked Human Resources (HR) for organizing the Employee Appreciation Day. She discussed her attendance at Walmart with Commissioner Caggiano where they received some electrical items to give away at the

International Festival.

MAYOR RUZZANO thanked the City Manager for putting together the Employee Appreciation Day. He said that he would be attending the Margate Sports Complex this Saturday with his baseball team for six year olds. He referenced an article in Margate News pertaining to the School Board possibly dismissing all proposed bids for repair to Margate Middle School and discussed the same.

VICE MAYOR SCHWARTZ voiced her frustration that bonds were not utilized for much needed repairs at schools in Margate and referenced air-conditioning and restrooms.

Discussion ensued

MAYOR RUZZANO highlighted that reality TV show, Bar Rescue, was filming at Gerri's Sports Pub. He asked for CONSENSUS to move 7) A . above Consent Agenda.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO said that he would be hosting the Hispanic Vote at Jasmine Thai tomorrow with Vice Mayor Schwartz and Commissioner Caggiano. He said that elected officials from Broward County would also be in attendance and BCPA's Kiar would be the guest speaker.

7) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

Item 7) A. ID 2024-047 was moved above City Manager's Comments.

- A. [ID 2024-047](#) WAIVING OF RENTAL FEES FOR THE USE OF CITY OF MARGATE BASEBALL/SOFTBALL FIELDS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$360 FEE WAIVED REQUEST BY CHALLENGERS BASEBALL OF BROWARD

CITY MANAGER CURTIS confirmed that they had a line item for this budget which was approximately \$2,500.

Discussion ensued.

MAYOR RUZZANO suggested waiving the fees in lieu of the \$2,500 and also suggested doing free ice cream.

CHALLENGER BASEBALL OF BROWARD COUNTY, MELISSA VENDITTI SACKMAN introduced herself and confirmed that they were looking for the field waiver as they did not pay fees at any of their other fields. She announced that their opening day for Challenger Baseball was this Sunday which was hosted at the City of Parkland.

Discussion ensued including the contact person for the ice cream.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Schwartz, seconded by Commissioner Arserio, to approve the waiver of rental fees and the addition of the Police Department's ice cream truck.

Discussion ensued on volunteering.

The motion carried as follows:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Caggiano, Commissioner Simone, Commissioner Arserio, Vice Mayor Schwartz and Mayor Ruzzano

4) CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

There was no City Manager's Report.

5) CONSENT AGENDA

Items listed under Consent Agenda are viewed to be routine and the recommendation will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. If discussion is desired by the Commission, the item(s) will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

- A.** [ID 2024-037](#) MOTION - APPROVAL OF CITY COMMISSION MINUTES: JANUARY 24, 2024
REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING

APPROVED

- B.** [ID 2024-041](#) RECLASSIFICATION OF THE OFFICE MANAGER POSITION FOR BUILDING
AND CODE SERVICES

APPROVED

Approval of the Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Schwartz, seconded by Commissioner Arserio, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Caggiano, Commissioner Simone, Commissioner Arserio, Vice Mayor Schwartz and Mayor Ruzzano

CITY CLERK JENNIFER M. JOHNSON advised that the City was still accepting board applications for Planning and Zoning Board and the Board of Adjustment.

Discussion ensued.

6) RESOLUTION(S)

- A.** [ID 2024-042](#) A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA, AWARDING RFP 2023-016 - STRATEGIC PLAN CONSULTING SERVICES TO BERRY, DUNN, MCNEIL & PARKER, LLC; PROVIDING FOR TOTAL COMPENSATION NOT TO EXCEED \$78,600; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

CITY MANAGER CURTIS advised that Berry Dunn's (BD) Michelle Kennedy, was present to give a brief presentation and would be taking any questions thereafter.

BD'S PROPOSED ENGAGEMENT MANAGER, MICHELLE KENNEDY gave a presentation where she outlined her Project Team and explained their key experience.

She also highlighted the Project Approach Overview which included Project Initiation and Management, Participant Engagement and Strategic Analysis, Strategic Plan (SP) Development and Implementation Planning. She said that her role as the Engagement Manager would bring almost 30 years of local government strategic experience to help design a process that would fit the City's unique needs and that Karen Whichard, would be the City's on-the ground resource if Margate selects their firm. She highlighted that they also have a large bench of very experienced local professionals that BD had hired that represent all of the different functions that city government does. She advised that BD had a strong mission to help organizations transform and innovate and were very pleased of their track record. She advised that they would be helping cities, municipalities and local governments perform at their absolute best. She opened the meeting to questions.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO requested if they can put this Item on hold and present an award for Athlete of the Month.

The City Commission paused this Item to revisit Athletes of the Month.

PRESENTATION(S) CONTINUED

1) ATHLETES OF THE MONTH

- B. [ID 2024-045](#) SOFTBALL: CHARLOTTE UBER, 6 YEARS OLD (CITY OF MARGATE SOFTBALL)

RESOLUTION(S) CONTINUED

- 6) [ID 2024-042](#) A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA, AWARDED RFP 2023-016 - STRATEGIC PLAN CONSULTING SERVICES TO BERRY, DUNN, MCNEIL & PARKER, LLC; PROVIDING FOR TOTAL COMPENSATION NOT TO EXCEED \$78,600; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO expressed that he was a big fan of SP and public input surveys and said that was one of the first initiatives he did when he was first elected as a City Commissioner. He believed that it was irresponsible if any multimillion-dollar company or municipality did not do a SP. He did not see an issue with BD and hoped that this Item passed. He addressed a previous public speaker who said that they City should conduct the SP in-house but explained that they did not have the capacity, expertise or was certified to do the outreach which BD was proposing to do. He also spoke of the importance of surveys and strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis and said that the current SP was out of date.

A motion was made by Commissioner Arserio, seconded by Commissioner Caggiano, that this Resolution, should be approved.

COMMISSIONER SIMONE thanked the BD representative for conducting the presentation. She received feedback from one City who used BD's services and they informed they would not recommend them and that there were better companies. She also explained that staff were not pleased as they had to do everything which was voluminous. She was informed that on paper, everything looked good but in reality, that was not really the case. She explained that the staff were unhappy with what was

presented on the website but were pleased with the magazine that came out at the end. She thought SP was a buzzword and right now, she believed in doing a SP in-house as they had very capable and dedicated staff to do this which would avoid spending approximately \$100,000. She indicated that Margate had accomplished and made much progress in their City such as the ETC Community Survey and that they were not a new city or City Commission and that they knew how to set goals. She agreed with Mayor Ruzzano's comments at the last City Commission meeting that their top priorities were public safety, water, sewer, infrastructure and working on their roads. She highlighted that Colliers International were working on their downtown development as well as other developers that were already working in the City such as the project on Coconut Creek and 441, the Executive Golf Course and most of the City's parks have been completed. She also said that they were improving water treatment plants and that they were applying for a bond on the same, the Property Improvement Grant Program (PIP) and she continued to list a number of initiatives that the City had accomplished on their own and questioned why they were spending the money. She said that the City knew what was required and they could organize workshops and discuss what they need to achieve in the next five years and repeated her belief that they were capable of doing this in-house.

COMMISSIONER CAGGIANO understood Commissioner Simone's concerns and concurred that the City was doing a great job but he said that they had to have a plan. He said that although they have a bucket of what they want to do, they would need to have a plan to see what they were going to be looking at into the future but indicated that they would need external input to avoid being tunnel visioned. He compared the discussions that he had heard to his scouting career of the Seven P's; "Prior Proper Preparation Prevents a Pitifully Poor Performance" and believed that they needed to have a plan and that it was a necessary expense to get to where they really want to go.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO concurred with Commissioner Caggiano's comments but said that there was nothing measurable for the residents and also referenced that it would be difficult to hold staff accountable. He respected Commissioner Simone for doing her research. He said that he had received positive feedback about BD where he had discussed this with three City Commissioners in Cooper City as well as the President of the Florida League of Cities, Greg Ross, who were all impressed with BD. He continued to discuss his support for this Item but wanted to give it a shot and see where it went.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS believed that the City would not have the capacity to do the public outreach independently and accomplish it in an efficient manner.

Discussion ensued.

VICE MAYOR SCHWARTZ questioned BD'S Proposed Engagement Manager, Michelle Kennedy about her presentation. She expressed that she would prefer face to face interaction rather than conversing remotely. She knew the City had done terrific things but there was no direction in particular and that was what a SP was, which she believed the City needed. She was concerned about the feedback received from one of the other cities and did not want to see people undermining the process because they were overwhelmed with it.

Discussion ensued.

VICE MAYOR SCHWARTZ suggested whether they should include a Request for Proposal (RFP) in the actual agreement.

CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES confirmed that the RFP was referenced as one of the agreement documents but he would have to check with the Procurement Department.

He recommended that the RFP would be the first thing that would be seen behind this agreement.

Discussion ensued whether the RFP should be part of the contract.

BD'S PROPOSED ENGAGEMENT MANAGER, KENNEDY addressed the staff involvement part and explained that BD's project work plans defined the roles and responsibilities. She said that although they would need to work with City employees, BD tried to minimize to every degree possible the amount of impact on staff time. She would like to know what they had perceived not to have done well and indicated that she had not heard that negative feedback from any client.

Discussion ensued.

MR. ZUCCHINI explained that he was really impressed with the last one that he sat in on and could not see why they would not want to take advantage of this opportunity.

MS. JONES concurred with Commissioner Simone and agreed that the City could do this in-house as they had some very intelligent and smart employees and that they should not waste the taxpayers money.

MAYOR RUZZANO wished that they could conduct an anonymous vote of the City's Directors and see where this would go and he believed that they would not move forward with this Item. He highlighted previous problems that occurred when they organized previous SP and indicated that to devise a plan, that the City would have to stick by but thought they were on the right path. He listed all the departments that were doing well and said that the City's budget was flush. He questioned what the SP would accomplish but thought the City was doing a great job and that there was a lot of development and projects going on. He said that the last SP was \$20,000, BD was approximately \$100,000 and that they did not need another third party.

Discussion ensued on having a SP.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS referenced Mayor Ruzzano describing a scenario of a tremendous amount of success throughout the different departments which he said he could probably tie that back to the SP that the City did a few years ago. He explained that feeling of success in those departments were because they all set a level of expectations, goals and objectives and three years later, they have what in the City Commissions eyes were success coming out of those departments. He said that they had received positive feedback from the community as they surveyed in different areas to find out what their needs were and they started to align their activities towards those needs in the community and that they were seeing it themselves from the different departments and the successes that were going on. He advised that they could go through the SP process and that the objectives remained the same and that they continue down that same path or that they could find that there was a slight shift in that based on resident and department head feedback. He was curious to understand the idea of collating anonymous feedback from the process from Department Directors as he said that it was intended to be an open collaborative effort between himself, the Directors and the City Commission and that they all get on the same page and that there should not be any personal feelings involved of where the budget went and it would align the City to move in the same direction for the next three to five years. He said that in terms of conducting this internally, he indicated that there would be some work on the staff's part as they would have to produce information that goes into the plan. He informed that he would be the first to go to the City Commission to stop the agreement if he believed it was too much of a burden on the City as the intent was to make it easier and more efficient and to complete it in a condensed period of time and produce those measured objectives that they can rely on.

Discussion ensued including why department heads could not speak to the City Manager.

A motion to amend was made by Mayor Ruzzano that this Item is approved upon the majority of the Directors passing this as an anonymous vote. This failed for a lack of second.

CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES advised that they cannot have an anonymous vote as Mayor Ruzzano was appointing a Committee that was to essentially vote on the approval of a contract that would obligate the City.

Discussion ensued.

The motion carried by the following vote

Yes: 4 - Commissioner Caggiano, Commissioner Simone, Commissioner Arserio and Vice Mayor Schwartz

No: 1 - Mayor Ruzzano

- B.** [ID 2024-049](#) A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA, APPROVING AN AGREEMENT WITH ESTRADA HINOJOSA & COMPANY, INC. FOR MUNICIPAL ADVISOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES RELATED TO THE ISSUANCE OF MUNICIPAL BONDS AND RELATED SERVICES; AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER AND MAYOR TO EXECUTE AGREEMENTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS NECESSARY FOR ANY ASSOCIATED PROFESSIONAL SERVICES WITHOUT FURTHER COMMISSION ACTION; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

A motion was made by Commissioner Caggiano, seconded by Vice Mayor Schwartz, that this Resolution, should be approved.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS confirmed that there was no presentation for this Item but the Consultant was present for any queries and that they would need to hire Municipal Bonds and Related Services (MBRS) as their Project Manager for the bond issuance. He said that there would be three transfers of bonds which would be issued; \$60,000,000, \$25,000,000 and \$25,000,000 and said that a majority of costs of the MBRS as well as the other consultants are paid out of the bond process.

Discussion ensued.

The motion carried as follows:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Caggiano, Commissioner Simone, Commissioner Arserio, Vice Mayor Schwartz and Mayor Ruzzano

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:47pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Transcribed by Salene E. Edwards

Jennifer M. Johnson, City Clerk

Date: _____

PLEASE NOTE:

If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the City Commission with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, the person will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. Anyone desiring a verbatim transcript shall have the responsibility, at his/her own expense, to arrange for the transcript.

[Appendix A – Zoning – Section 3.3] Any representation made before any City Board, any Administrative Board, or the City Commission in the application for a variance, special exception, conditional use or request for any other permit shall be deemed a condition of the granting of the permit. Should any representation be false or should said representation not be continued as represented, same shall be deemed a violation of the permit and a violation of this section.

Any person with a disability requiring auxiliary aids and services for this meeting may call the City Clerk's office at (954) 972-6454 with their request at least two business days prior to the meeting date.

One or more members of the City of Margate advisory boards may be in attendance and may participate at the meeting.

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