



City of Margate

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

Meeting Minutes Regular City Commission Meeting

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

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

Wednesday, January 21, 2026

6:15 PM

Commission Chambers and Zoom.us

Webinar ID: 862 5238 5215

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86252385215>

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Present: 4 - Commissioner Arlene R. Schwartz, Commissioner Joanne Simone, Commissioner Tommy Ruzzano and Mayor Antonio V. Arserio

Not Present: 1 - Vice Mayor Anthony N. Caggiano

Vice Mayor Caggiano arrived at the City Commission meeting at 7:04pm.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1) PRESENTATION(S)

A. [ID 2025-363](#) UPDATE BY MARTY KIAR, BROWARD COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER

BROWARD COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER (BCPA) MARTY KIAR thought it would be important to provide an update on the property tax proposals in Tallahassee. He provided the background on this proposal and advised that the Florida Policy Institute organized a study to eliminate all property taxes and questioned how they could replace that lost revenue. He explained that after that proposal was rejected, the conversation changed from eliminating all property taxes to Homesteaded property taxes but advised that the State Governor would not have a veto and whatever was put on the ballot was through the House and Senate. He advised that the Senate had not come up with a plan and had some concerns about diminishing public services. He advised that currently, there were proposals moving through the Florida House of Representatives and that they were very concrete where there was a possibility that it could make it to the ballot. He advised that next week was Broward Days in Tallahassee 2026 and indicated that it was a good opportunity to discuss with those who were in the legislature about those impacts. He informed that the proposals did not affect the school portion of the tax bill,

that they prohibited the reduction in funding for police and that they were starting to add amendments to prohibit the reduction for firefighters as well.

He provided a overview on the proposals on the Fiscal Impact Estimates for Broward County (BC) & Margate and his PowerPoint presentation discussed the following points:

HJR 201: Elimination of Non-School Property Tax for Homesteaded Properties
HJR 203: Phased Out Elimination of Non-School Property Tax for Homesteads
HJR 205: Elimination of Non-School Property Tax for Homesteaded Property for Persons Age 65 or Older
HJR 209: Property Insurance Relief Homestead Exemption of Non-School Property Tax
HJR 211: Accrued Save-Our-Homes Property
HJR 213: Modification of Limitations on Tax Benefit for Non-School Property Tax

COMMISSIONER, TOMMY RUZZANO, referenced residents' taxes which were paid to the City and informed that the revenue of one third respectively went to the City, BC and the schools.

BCPA KIAR concluded his presentation and thanked the City for giving him the opportunity to provide his presentation.

A question and answer session ensued.

MAYOR ANTONIO V. ARSERIO thanked BCPA Kiar for all that he did and encouraged residents to sign up to Owner Alert. He advised the public to review all the policies and forewarned that the City could lose \$14,500,000 if they eliminated taxes.

Discussion ensued.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO questioned that if the Broward County Public School (BCPS) was the only tax collector, if they could get receivership of the property. He did not believe that half of the money that went to BC or the BCPS got represented well. He advised that for the last seven years, the City had not raised taxes which he voted against.

BCPA KIAR repeated that any proposal could only be applicable to Homestead property taxes and explained that the school portion of the bill was not impacted and that it would be treated like anything else. He explained that Margate was a very fiscally responsible City.

Discussion ensued.

COMMISSIONER, ARLENE R. SCHWARTZ, thanked BCPA Kiar for clarifying the things that were going up in Tallahassee. She preferred if they could lower homeowners insurance as a separate initiative.

Discussion ensued.

B. [ID 2025-360](#) 2025 HOLIDAY DECORATING CONTEST WINNERS

1ST PLACE - STOP # 8, The Eacker Family (Acre) : 7665 NW 22nd Street (\$100 GIFT CARD)

2ND PLACE - STOP # 9, Shazim Ali : 7610 NW 23rd Street (\$50 GIFT CARD)

3RD PLACE - STOP # 14, Julia Errante : 2030 NW 70th Lane (\$25 GIFT CARD)

STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF THE MONTH

C. [ID 2025-361](#) ABUNDANT LIFE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY: KYLE BAKER (STUDENT), TIMOTHY WINT (TEACHER), (Latoya Dean, Principal and Ramona McCloud, Assistant Principal)

ASCEND ACADEMY CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL: PEDRO PONTON (STUDENT), BRADLEY LINN (TEACHER), (Dr. Kathrine Pierandozzi, Principal and/or Ms. Neisha Billy, Assistant Principal)

ATLANTIC WEST ELEMENTARY: JOSE ZUNIGA (STUDENT), CARYN CAMPBELL (TEACHER), (Shereen Reynolds, Principal and Corinne Mendez, Assistant Principal)

BROWARD MATH AND SCIENCE SCHOOLS: LUCAS FERNANDES (STUDENT), NICHOLAS SAMMARITANO (TEACHER), (Hasan Kose, Principal and Katy Twist, Assistant Principal)

LIBERTY ELEMENTARY: HANNA ALDAMA (STUDENT), DAYANA LIZARDO (TEACHER), (Vicki Flournoy, Principal and Donna Styles, Assistant Principal)

MARGATE ELEMENTARY: FALLYN RADCLIFFE (STUDENT), AMAYA RAINFORD (TEACHER), (Thomas Schroeder, Principal and Donna Rucker, Assistant Principal)

PHYL'S ACADEMY PREPARATORY SCHOOL: ISABELLE MORRIS (STUDENT), GLORIA MCFARLANE (TEACHER), (Ms. Afua Baptiste, Principal and/or Ms. Jalaja Cooke, Elementary School Director)

Following a brief recess, the meeting reconvened.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

D. [ID 2025-362](#) JOSEPH A. COFER, DRIVER/ENGINEER - FIRE DEPARTMENT - 25 YEARS

AMADO J. CARDENAS, SERVICE WORKER II - PUBLIC WORKS - 10 YEARS

DIXIE-ANN GANGOO, HEALTH SUPPORT - SENIOR CENTER - 10 YEARS

KATARZYNA NOWAK, ACCOUNTANT II - FINANCE - 10 YEARS

ALLY STAFFORD, FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC - FIRE DEPARTMENT - 5 YEARS

KAYLA M. BROYLES, TELECOMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST - POLICE DEPARTMENT - 5 YEARS

2) PUBLIC DISCUSSION

MAYOR ARSERIO, provided instructions on how to submit a Public Discussion.

PARKLAND RESIDENT read a statement concerning the issues within the United States.

MARGATE RESIDENT, TRACY VAN WINKLE, thanked Margate Police Department for all of the efforts in their neighborhoods and referenced Southgate Boulevard and continued to voice her concerns of issues within the City.

MARGATE RESIDENT, DONNA L. FELLOWS, voiced her concerns about the upkeep of a church that the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) owned and referenced overflowing dumpsters. She also said that the cat issue had to be addressed and reported that they were in her carport.

RICHARD ZUCCHINI, LAKEWOOD CIRCLE, requested feedback pertaining to his statement on apartment developments.

CITY ATTORNEY, DAVID N. TOLCES, advised that there was a potential of an appeal.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO responded to Mr. Zucchini's comments and expressed that his views had changed on apartments over the years.

HIALEAH RESIDENT, MATHEOS RODRIGUEZ, read a statement concerning the issues within the United States.

HIALEAH RESIDENT, MAYA GARCIA, read a statement on his concerns pertaining to the youth in the United States.

HIALEAH RESIDENT, DAMIAN RODRIGUEZ, read a statement concerning the issues within the United States.

HIALEAH RESIDENT, DIDIER ORTIZ, read a statement concerning the issues within the United States.

3) COMMISSION COMMENTS

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ wished everyone a Happy New Year. She appreciated what the public had to say but advised that Margate was a local government.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO, addressed some of the comments from Public Discussion.

Discussion ensued.

Following a brief recess, Mayor Arserio reconvened the meeting.

Discussion ensued.

4) CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

There was no City Manager's Report.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:49pm.

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.

[Unified Land Development Code – Section 40.300(C)] 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 Boards may be in attendance and may participate at the meeting.

Members of the public are invited to view this meeting through Zoom using Webinar ID: 862 5238 5215 or can listen via telephone by calling one of the following phone numbers: US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099.

- A copy of the Agenda for this Meeting is posted on www.MargateFL.com and on the main bulletin board outside City Hall located at 5790 Margate Blvd, Margate, FL 33063.

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