



City of Margate

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

Meeting Minutes Regular City Commission Meeting

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

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

Wednesday, May 21, 2025

7:00 PM

Commission Chambers and Zoom.us

Webinar ID: 865 0149 3331

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86501493331>

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

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

Not Present: 1 - Commissioner Anthony N. Caggiano

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Commissioner Anthony N. Caggiano joined the City Commission meeting via zoom at 7:05pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1) PRESENTATION(S)

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

A. [ID 2025-106](#) ROBERT LOVINS, DRIVER/ENGINEER - FIRE DEPARTMENT - 30 YEARS

NIRMALA SAMLAL, BUYER I - FINANCE - 30 YEARS

CARLO DELBRUNE, SERVICE WORKER II - PARKS & RECREATION - 20 YEARS

JONATHAN MOREJON, DRIVER/ENGINEER - FIRE DEPARTMENT - 20 YEARS

LENNOX D. A. POWELL, UTILITY TECHNICIAN I - ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES - 10 YEARS

YALENA DA SILVA, CRIME SCENE TECHNICIAN - POLICE DEPARTMENT

- 5 YEARS

PROCLAMATION(S)

- B. [ID 2025-079](#) FAMILY ABDUCTION AWARENESS DAY - MAY 25, 2025 (presented to Yanina Hecker, Representative from National Parents Organization)
- PRESIDENT OF FLORIDA PROTECTIVE PARENTS ASSOCIATION, YANINA HECKER, read a statement on this Item.

2) PUBLIC DISCUSSION

MAYOR, ARLENE R. SCHWARTZ, provided instructions on how to submit a Public Discussion.

MARGATE RESIDENT, DONNA L. FELLOWS, discussed a homeless issue and referenced a couple concerning domestic violence.

MARGATE RESIDENT, TRACY VAN WINKLE (via Zoom), questioned why the City could not hire any more Police in the City due to finances. She thought the City had six homeless outreach personnel and referenced Ms. Fellows' comments.

PARKLAND RESIDENT, MARGARET J. BREZINA, clarified that the City Manager and the Police Department did a very good job of facilitating pertaining to the homelessness issue and referenced a lack of recourses.

PARADISE IV RESIDENT, PATRICK, said he was new to the area and questioned what the issues were with the iguanas.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ advised Patrick.

MARGATE RESIDENT, LAUREN BERACHA, alleged that the Carnival had not paid for their last couple of events and suggested that some of that revenue could be used to help the homeless.

3) COMMISSION COMMENTS

COMMISSIONER, TOMMY RUZZANO, apologized for not being able to attend the City Commission meeting in person but congratulated the members of staff for the Employee Recognition for Years of Service and referenced Purchasing Manager Shambray for doing an awesome job.

COMMISSIONER, JOANNE SIMONE, extended her congratulations to members of staff for the Employee Recognition for Years of Service and she appreciated their dedication. She highlighted the City's Memorial Day Ceremony.

VICE MAYOR, ANTONIO V. ARSERIO, said that he was unable to join the other two City Commissioners at the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) in Las Vegas which he hoped was productive.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ, highlighted the City's Memorial Day Ceremony. She discussed her attendance at the Broward County Public Schools Mayoral/City Manager Roundtable with conversations on possible closures, to re-engage the public to send their children to school and the City's Students of the Month. She questioned if part of the Victim Advocate's job was possibly being tasked with working with the Homeless Task Force

and whether it actually existed.

CITY MANAGER, CALE CURTIS, spoke on this matter and also deferred it to Chief of Police Palma.

Discussion ensued on the homeless.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ suggested that it would be a good idea if some of the Police Officers scheduled a meeting with the representative for the homelessness who could give them a perspective of what was out there.

CHIEF OF POLICE, MICHAEL PALMA, confirmed that he did not have a problem with that.

4) CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

There was no City Manager's Report.

CITY ATTORNEY, DAVID N. TOLCES, explained that they had a successful order issued by the Court in the Quality of Life case where he anticipated that the case would not go any further.

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 2025-124](#) A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE ADMINISTRATION TO NEGOTIATE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE TOP RANKED FIRM, GLOBALTECH, INC.; PURSUANT TO REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) 2025-008 - DESIGN/BUILD FOR WWTP HEADWORKS REHABILITATION; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

APPROVED

- B. [ID 2025-134](#) RESOLUTION - APPROVING AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN BROWARD COUNTY, THE CITY OF MARGATE, AND THE MARGATE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY REGARDING THE EXTENSION OF THE SUNSET DATE FOR THE MARGATE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY.

APPROVED

Approval of the Consent Agenda

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

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

6) RESOLUTION(S)

- A. [ID 2025-104](#) A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MARGATE AWARDING THE FIRE STATIONS IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS TO LLORENS CONTRACTING, LLC, CSI VIDEO SECURITY, AND SECURITY 101 AT A TOTAL COST NOT TO EXCEED \$108,472.47, PLUS A CONTINGENCY PROVISION OF 10% TO COVER UNANTICIPATED EXPENSES; APPROVING WAIVING OF BIDDING AND AUTHORIZING UTILIZATION OF CITY OF MARGATE FIRE IMPACT FEES FOR THE FIRE STATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

A motion was made by Commissioner Simone, seconded by Vice Mayor Arserio, that this Resolution, should be discussed.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO questioned whether they were waiving the bidding or piggybacking off a contract.

Discussion ensued.

CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES read an extract and confirmed that the vendor would perform the work and therefore, that was the reason for the waiver.

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

3) COMMISSION COMMENTS CONTINUED

COMMISSIONER, ANTHONY N. CAGGIANO, discussed hurricane preparedness.

- B. [ID 2025-127](#) A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA, RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF FIRE RESCUE SERVICES, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS IN THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA; ESTABLISHING THE ESTIMATED ASSESSMENT RATE FOR FIRE RESCUE ASSESSMENTS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2025; DIRECTING THE PREPARATION OF AN ASSESSMENT ROLL; AUTHORIZING A PUBLIC HEARING AND DIRECTING THE PROVISION OF NOTICE THEREOF; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

A motion was made by Commissioner Caggiano, seconded by Mayor Schwartz, to insert the number of \$373 to this Resolution, for discussion.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS advised that each year, the City had to establish a fire assessment rate which was based off of a study. He explained that the fire assessment study provided the maximum amount that could be charged per residential unit as well as

square footage for commercial, industrial, institutional and nursing homes that were used to offset the cost of fire services in Margate. He said that each year, the City Commission set the rate which could not be any higher than what was established in the study. He advised that over the last few years, the City had set the rate at \$300 but they projected over the next three years, there would be some challenges in the fire industry which would result in increases to the Fire Department's budget. His recommendation was that they look at incrementally increasing the fire assessment year over year to help offset those financial challenges. He also recommended that the City Commission should set it at the highest rate that the City was comfortable with, the notices go out one time and in July, they have a public meeting where they set the final rate which would be adopted and assessed on those properties and thereafter, the City could incrementally increase it without incurring that annual notification expense.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO explained that it did not necessarily mean that they were going to raise it to that rate and that it was the maximum allowed by law. He forewarned that there was going to be significant increases of up to \$5,000,000+ to the Fire Department and referenced the possibility of moving to a 24/72 hour shift which was industry wide. He informed that he did not want to burden the residents with a significant increase but he said it would be irresponsible to inform the residents that costs were not going to increase. He recommended a \$5 increment, to have better public safety and ensure that their Fire Department was running where he believed nobody would be upset about.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ indicated that regardless of what the amount was, the City subsidized the actual rate.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS advised that the annual fire budget was around \$17,000,000, the fire assessment at \$300 brought in approximately \$10,000,000 and the excess of \$7,000,000 was subsidized by ad valorem taxes and other general fund revenues.

RICHARD ZUCCHINI, LAKEWOOD CIRCLE, forewarned that if the City's Fire Department joined Broward Sheriff's Office (BSO) and to avoid that, the City would have to start considering fire assessments and pay scales.

Discussion ensued including charges for the recreational vehicle (RV) resort.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO did not support this increase as he believed both the City and the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) had healthy budgets. He preferred to leave it at the current rate to give the residents a sense of security.

A motion to amend was made by Commissioner Ruzzano, to insert the number \$300. This died for a lack of second.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO understood that the City had to come up with a considerable amount of funding for next year.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS advised that there were a lot of unknowns now such as a review for a BSO merger and he reiterated recommending the increase of the Fire Assessment fee.

Discussion ensued.

COMMISSIONER CAGGIANO was tired of kicking things down the road and indicated that regardless of what happened, the City would have to spend millions and needed to be competitive.

REPRESENTATIVE OF 3080, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS (IAFF) DISTRICT 14, MARGATE, ASSISTANT DISTRICT VICE PRESIDENT AND FIRE FIGHTER/PARAMEDIC, BRIAN PALMER, appreciated the City's continued support to improve public safety. He believed that the cost of the City's fire service was going to be same regardless if they went to BSO or stayed with Margate.

MS. SANCHEZ discussed budget planning and agreed with an increase to the Fire Assessment.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO referenced the Fire Assessment notice costing \$40,000 and said that if they put \$5 tonight and wanted to do an incremental increase, then every year, they would have to send out the notice. He advised that if they put the notice out tonight for the maximum, they would never have to do that again where the City would save money which would be another reason to put the highest number tonight but hoped that they did not raise it to the maximum.

MS. BERACHA worked with budgets and said that everything had been increased but agreed with zero or small incremental increases.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ advised that within the eight years of her being a City Commissioner, Margate never raised the fire assessment to the maximum.

Discussion ensued.

MS. FELLOWS questioned whether renters had to pay the same amount for the Fire Assessment fee.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ said that only homeowners paid and that the commercial rates were different.

Discussion ensued.

The original motion carried as follows:

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

No: 1 - Commissioner Ruzzano

- C.** [ID 2025-131](#) RESOLUTION - AMENDING THE COMPENSATION RATE FOR SPECIAL MAGISTRATE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE LAW OFFICES OF JOHN J. HEARN, PA; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

A motion was made by Commissioner Caggiano, seconded by Vice Mayor Arserio, that this Resolution, should be approved. This carried as follows:

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

7) ORDINANCE(S) - SECOND READING

- A. [ID 2025-123](#) ORDINANCE - AMENDING CHAPTER 6- ANIMALS AND FOWL SECTION 6-1 CITY DESIGNATED BIRD SANCTUARY AND 6-25, INJURY TO ANIMALS; AMENDING CHAPTER 33 - POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT, OFFENSES AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS, ARTICLE 1 - OFFENSES, MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS SECTION 33-15 - RESERVED; PROVIDING FOR NON-NATIVE INVASIVE IGUANA SPECIES EXCEPTION TO WILDLIFE SANCTUARY; PROVIDING FOR CAPTURE, HUMANE EUTHANASIA, AND TRESPASS; PROVIDING FOR EXCEPTIONS AND PROHIBITIONS; PROVIDING FOR ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

A motion was made by Commissioner Simone, seconded by Vice Mayor Arserio, that this Ordinance, Second Reading, should be discussed.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO expressed that he was split but was leaning on approving this Ordinance as he said in layman's terms that they were approving a property owner to kill an iguana on their own property which was legal in the State of Florida. He explained that he had spoken to the City Manager and the Police Department about this Ordinance and said that as he had been around firearms, he wanted to protect people who wanted to do that responsibly and also allow people to do what they wanted on their own property. He advised that the State of Florida had a list of invasive species and iguanas were one of them which caused a significant amount of damage and believed that people were allowed to humanely euthanize them. He voiced his concerns that people were going onto someone else's property without permission and shot iguanas which was prohibited. He informed on past problems and referenced people on boats on canals shooting into people's yards and referenced social media videos. He said that if they did not pass this Ordinance, they would still have people driving up and down killing iguanas.

RICHARD ZUCCHINI, LAKEWOOD CIRCLE E, questioned what the penalty was if he shot an iguana on his property.

GWENDA L. ARTIAGA, PARADISE GARDENS IV, read a statement saying that she had lived in this community for 10 years and highlighted the problems she had experienced with the iguanas.

MARGATE RESIDENT, PARADISE GARDENS IV, said that he counted 41 baby iguanas coming out of the ground last Summer and explained that they had returned this year where they have burrowed holes which resulted in a ground collapse and questioned what the City could do to help them.

Discussion ensued.

JOANNE, PARADISE GARDENS IV, indicated that Margate was trying to contradict what the State had already permitted.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO replied by saying that the State encouraged euthanization.

M. J. DUFF, PARADISE GARDENS IV, addressed the issue of shooting from the canal and said that they could do this from a boat. He advised that if this Ordinance passed tonight, they were going to redo their letter of authorization seeking permission from the board to go onto their property to kill iguanas subject to approval.

DOUGLAS R. KEMP, PARADISE GARDENS IV, provided education from an article in the Sun Sentinel referring to six feet predatory lizards setting up shop in South Florida.

EARL A. RATTRAY, PARADISE GARDENS, hoped that the City Commission made a ruling on this issue and offered his services for hire to get rid of the iguanas in Margate.

PRESIDENT OF PARADISE GARDENS IV, JOHN H. DONOHOO, questioned Mayor Schwartz who the authors of the letters were. He continued to highlight the devastation iguanas caused to private property and outlined that Margate's current ruling conflicted with Florida law.

MS. SANCHEZ said that she was totally unaware that iguanas caused so much problems and had a few queries on the same.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO responded to Ms. Sanchez's comments.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ questioned Ms. Sanchez if this was also a problem in Paradise Gardens IV.

Discussion ensued.

OCTAVIO E. SALCEDO thought he could resolve the issue with the aid of his dog but said that the City needed to help them. He praised Mayor Schwartz.

PAMELA, PARADISE GARDENS IV, voiced the problems that the iguanas caused in her area.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO informed that he was also in receipt of the emails and said that some of the content described was illegal and advised that although you could shoot from a boat, you could not perform this onto someone's property without their permission.

Discussion ensued.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ provided a detailed history of the problems that iguanas have caused to her property including losing 15 feet of bank. She addressed her concerns and explained that not everyone was that good with an air or pellet gun and that they should not be in possession of the same. She read correspondence from concerning residents pertaining to this matter. She said that she could not support this Ordinance as she believed it was the wrong way to go about it when there were people who did it for a living who may actually take care of the eggs which was where the problem lies.

COMMISSIONER SIMONE said that maybe she was an optimist but did not foresee a bunch a people around Margate buying air rifles/pistols to kill the iguanas. She believed people who had problems were the ones who would take care of it responsibly. She indicated that properties would continue to be ruined and referenced sinkholes, the collapse of seawalls and foundation issues and questioned who would be responsible. She said that something had to be done before the matter escalated. She expressed that although she did not like to kill any animal, iguanas were not a good species.

Discussion ensued.

The motion carried as follows:

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

No: 1 - Mayor Schwartz

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:53pm.

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.

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

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