



# 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*

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Wednesday, April 2, 2025

6:30 PM

Commission Chambers and Zoom.us

Webinar ID: 884 4921 2774

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<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88449212774>

### CALL TO ORDER

### ROLL CALL

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

### MOMENT OF SILENCE

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### 1) PRESENTATION(S)

#### STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF THE MONTH

A. [ID 2025-068](#) ABUNDANT LIFE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY: KAYLA SOLANO-COSTA (STUDENT), PATRICIA MCNEIL (TEACHER), (Ms. Latoya Dean, Principal and/or Ms. Ramona McCloud, Middle School Assistant Principal)

ATLANTIC WEST ELEMENTARY: JAYLEN CALIXTE (STUDENT), ANNETTE DITTMEIER (TEACHER), (Ms. Shereen Reynolds, Principal and/or Ms. Yahira Tamayo, Assistant Principal)

BROWARD MATH AND SCIENCE SCHOOLS: YAALON HUGLEY (STUDENT), ELVY PULLIYIL (TEACHER), (Mr. Hasan Kose, Principal and/or Ms. Sulaya Williams, Assistant Principal)

LIBERTY ELEMENTARY: LEONARDO LITTLE (STUDENT), RAISA MIRANDA (TEACHER), (Ms. Vicki Flournoy, Principal and/or Ms. Donna Styles, Assistant Principal)

MARGATE ELEMENTARY: GENESIS PLATA (STUDENT), LINDSEY

RODRIGUEZ (TEACHER), (Mr. Thomas Schroeder, Principal and/or Ms. Donna Rucker, Assistant Principal)

MARGATE MIDDLE: DEBORAH JARAMILLO (STUDENT), SHARLEEN MORGAN (TEACHER), (Ms. Sabine Phillips, Principal and/or Ms. Krystal Coke, Assistant Principal)

PHYL'S ACADEMY PREPARATORY SCHOOL: LUNA LUCAS (STUDENT), JACOBINA ROCKSON (TEACHER), (Ms. Afua Baptiste, Principal and/or Ms. Jalaja Cooke, Elementary School Director)

RISE ACADEMY SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: BERNARDO ALVES-TENORIO (STUDENT), HANNAH POWELL (TEACHER), (Dr. Adriana Guerra, Principal)

WEST BROWARD ACADEMY: AUSTIN SANCHEZ VASQUEZ (STUDENT), TRINA CLARK (TEACHER), (Mr. Derrick Hugue, Principal and/or Ms. Rossana Padron, Assistant Principal)

## **PROCLAMATION(S)**

- B. [ID 2025-071](#) CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH - APRIL, 2025 (presented to Tracy Graham, Communications & Public Affairs Manager at the Children's Services Council of Broward County)

A REPRESENTATIVE thanked the City for being committed to this program.

Following a brief recess, the meeting reconvened.

## **2) PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

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

TRACY VAN WINKLE, thanked City Manager Curtis and Public Works Director Batista, for taking care of the issue on Southgate Boulevard. She questioned whether the City would take Miami Dade's lead in removing fluoride from the water.

VICE MAYOR ANTONIO V. ARSERIO responded to Ms. Winkle's comments and indicated that a bill had been proposed statewide to ban fluoride.

MARGATE RESIDENT, MR. KRALJIC, read a statement pertaining to campaign signs being displayed around Margate despite the election being approximately two years away and referenced the City's code. He also raised the topic on fluoride in water.

MARGATE RESIDENT, ELSA SANCHEZ, read a statement where she was disappointed to see campaign signs in Margate and questioned why the current codes were not being observed. She thanked and commended Parks and Recreation Director, Jones and his staff and referenced the reopening of Calypso Cove.

MARGATE RESIDENT, DONNA L. FELLOWS, questioned whether she could erect a big "please do not feed the cats" sign and highlighted the problems that they caused. She

agreed that fluoride should be removed from Margate's water.

RICHARD ZUCCHINI OF LAKEWOOD CIRCLE, agreed with the sign code and referenced election signs. He thanked the three City Commissioners who responded to his five point correspondence but expected a written reply from the City.

LAUREN BERACHA, referenced the last City Commission meeting appointing committee members, discussed the process and alleged that very qualified people were being passed over.

MARGATE RESIDENT, MICHAEL A. SIRJUE, requested a cross walk on the west side of Atlantic Boulevard between US 441 and NW 66th Avenue.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ responded to Mr. Sirjue's request.

### 3) COMMISSION COMMENTS

COMMISSIONER, TOMMY RUZZANO, congratulated and welcomed former Sun Sentinel employee, Lisa Huriash, to the team. He recommended that the City address their sign code and discussed campaign signs. He indicated that although he was not adverse on to the effects of fluoride, he agreed that it should be removed from the water. He questioned City Clerk Johnson whether he had to change one of his board picks as his selected appointee had not lived in the City for long enough.

CITY CLERK, JENNIFER M. JOHNSON, responded to Commissioner Ruzzano's question and explained that he could select his board nominee at the next City Commission meeting.

Discussion ensued on whether to extend Commissioner Ruzzano's pick for one of the May 2025 City Commission meetings.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO informed that at the last Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) town hall meeting, the feedback received was that nobody wanted apartments. He indicated that one of the hot topics from that meeting were the concerns from the renters at Ace Plaza pertaining to five year contracts. He wanted to discuss extending the leases to possibly 20 years at the next CRA meeting. He asked City Manager Curtis to look into tiny houses. He agreed with Mr. Zucchini's views on trees on properties and discussed the same.

COMMISSIONER, ANTHONY N. CAGGIANO, highlighted the International Day Festival, Tree Giveaway, Drug Take Back Day and Household Hazardous Waste events. He was excited to see Ms. Huriash at the City.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ suggested amending the word "Drug" Take Back Day to "Medication."

COMMISSIONER, JOANNE SIMONE, highlighted that the Hazardous Waste event included document shredding and she explained the process for the Paint Giveaway event. She informed that Broward County (BC) Tax Collector's office was being established and that they would take over the Florida Driving License operations in the Summer of 2026. She stated that in 2022, Margate was certified in the Better Cities for Pets program which helped cities to be pet-friendly and explained the same. She wanted to get CONSENSUS to work with Parks and Recreational Director, Jones, on having a pet expo in the fall which she had been passionate about for years.

Discussion ensued on the proposed pet expo.

COMMISSIONER SIMONE was in agreement pertaining to the trees and that if the City required a tree to be planted or they planted the same on the swale, then it should be their responsibility and suggested that they needed to look at their code. She questioned if the City had asked developers to plant those trees and also if they asked residents to maintain them.

CITY MANAGER, CALE CURTIS, explained that the City's Landscape code required a certain amount of tree canopy for each lot and part of that tied back to the Tree City USA designation. He was unaware of any instances of where the City had gone out and planted a tree on the swale which they were not in favor of as it could affect the utility infrastructure. He also informed that quite often, the developers tried to maximize their space which included planting trees in the wrong places.

Discussion ensued about making residents aware of the City's code pertaining to trees and providing them with more education.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO advised the public that if they had any problems with mosquitoes, to go to the BC's website. He informed that Calypso Cove had reopened and to check the City's website for the operating hours. He addressed board picks and said that he selected or approved appointees that he did not necessarily agree or was associated with.

Discussion ensued on board appointees.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ said that she made contact with Development Services last year seeking information on placing signs on commercial properties. She continued to discuss signs and believed that there should be a permit process and would do a workshop. She said that not one of the developers planted a tree in any of the Orioles when they constructed the homes and indicated that it was down to the homeowners. She disagreed that the onus should be on the City to be responsible for the trees being planted on the swales in residential areas. She welcomed Lisa Huriash and wished everybody a Happy Passover and Palm Sunday.

#### **4) CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

CITY MANAGER CURTIS hoped that the Margate Publix at Palm Lakes Plaza would be reopening this month.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ discussed the reopening of Publix and suggested the reintroduction of a Code Manual for new residents.

CITY ATTORNEY, DAVID N. TOLCES, questioned whether they should move the board appointment to the May meeting

MAYOR SCHWARTZ polled the City Commission.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO – Yes

COMMISSIONER CAGGIANO – Yes

COMMISSIONER SIMONE – Had no problem.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO - Yes

MAYOR SCHWARTZ – Yes.

CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES provided an update on the litigation relating to 603 Melaleuca Drive and advised that the Judges denied the motion for a re-hearing and therefore, the judgment was final subject to any appeal to the Florida Fourth District Court.

Discussion ensued.

## 5) CONSENT AGENDA

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO heard that trees were not permitted in the swale area and questioned that if so, could they remove them without being hit with a fine or a penalty to put in additional trees on their property.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS could not say for certain but mentioned that residents could donate it to the City or fund.

Discussion ensued.

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 2025-075](#) MOTION - APPROVAL OF CITY COMMISSION MINUTES: MARCH 5, 2025 REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING AND MARCH 19, 2025 REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING

**APPROVED**

## Approval of the Consent Agenda

**A motion was made by Vice Mayor Arserio, seconded by Commissioner Caggiano, 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) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

- A. [ID 2025-078](#) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION - ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 26 - "PARKING OF NONCOMMERCIAL VEHICLES USED FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES AND COMMERCIAL VEHICLES," ARTICLE 1 - "IN GENERAL," SECTION 26-3 "PARKING REGULATIONS FOR NONCOMMERCIAL VEHICLES USED FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES"; PROVIDING FOR REGISTRATION; PROVIDING FOR BACK AND SIDE YARD PARKING

CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES read this Agenda title and advised that it was for discussion and direction.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO explained that parking had been an issue in Margate for some time and he was unsure on the overall solution which he did not believe could be fixed 100% due to how it was built. He advised that he and his colleagues had been pushing

for a parking reform for quite some time and explained that his position had changed as he understood that Margate was a working city. He said that they would not be able to get rid of the commercial vehicles, boats or a trailer but he was looking for a solution to prevent the public from abusing their kindness due to the flexible approach that the City had to this issue in comparison to other cities throughout BC. He continued to discuss his initiative of implementing a registration for parking where it should match the name on the lease to avoid people from abusing the system. He said that they have to draw the line somewhere, that the situation was deteriorating and referenced a property in Winfield Boulevard.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO thought there was a fee associated with this Item and explained that he was not in favor of implementing the same, especially if there was space to accommodate the extra vehicle. He said that there was not really much more they could do with addressing the parking problem in Margate and indicated that the problem was with cars being parked on the grass.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS explained that this was just a discussion and action Item but if there was support to move this forward, they would investigate the registration process and consider implementing a nominal fee.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO explained that he may not be a fan of the fee but residents should be able to register one or two vehicles without incurring costs.

Discussion ensued on "man" fees in administering this program.

CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES advised that the Ordinance required the individual registering the vehicle would also have to be residing at the home and a violation could be enforced by the Margate's Code Enforcement if the registration of a person lived in another city.

Discussion ensued including parking on the grass.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ gave a history lesson and read the City's ruling on parking boats that did not fit on driveways. She had problems with neighboring residents from other cities storing their boats in Margate and referenced seeing seven vehicles on a property which used the lawn for parking. She indicated that some of the laws were already in place.

Discussion ensued.

CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES read Section 26-3 A4, pertaining to vehicles parked on the lawn.

Discussion ensued on parking on the grass, expanding the driveway, commercial vehicles and paved paths.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS said that based on Commissioner Ruzzano's suggestion, the City was taking baby steps at looking to eliminate cars being parked on the grass. He explained that if they did pass an Ordinance which prohibited parking on the grass, it would force many of them to choose different options which would certainly short-circuit all of the red tape that they would go through.

Discussion ensued on parking on the grass.

Commissioner Simone left the City Commission meeting at approximately 9:05pm.

PRESIDENT OF LAKEWOOD ON THE GREEN, RICHARD ZUCCHINI, explained that the Resolution was very ill-conceived and was not well thought out. He concurred with Commissioner Ruzzano's comments pertaining to parking on the grass and said that the fee permit was a money grab.

Discussion ensued.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO was not a fan of a "blanket" no parking on the grass and believed that the City Chambers would be full of residents if that was implemented. He explained that he was not opposed to a Margate residential fee paying community parking lot on an Florida Power & Light Company (FPL) easement that had a fence, with a privacy screen such as surrounded hedges. He said that if the City was to impose some sort of restriction on residents, then they should offer them an alternative. He sought CONSENSUS by the City Commission to look into that conceptive.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ strongly opposed the building of any garage on Rock Island Road on the green space.

Discussion ensued.

COMMISSIONER CAGGIANO explained that the Mayor had a neighbor who parked on the grass despite there being parking spaces available and he understood her frustration. He did not have any problem looking into something if it made any sense but did not want the City to be liable for any loss or damage.

Discussion ensued.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO advised that there were alternative properties that the City owned that could be potentially used for this initiative such as the area surrounding Lemon Tree Lake which he would love to look into.

Discussion ensued.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS said that it sounded like there was CONSENSUS from the City Commission to look into this but his preference would be that they would look for an operator to do this. He would also need to discuss this initiative with Florida Power & Light Company (FPL).

Discussion ensued.

MS. FELLOWS, discussed conflicting rules on whether she could park a camper in her driveway and commercial vehicles. She also highlighted a neighbor having inoperable vehicles on their property.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO responded to Ms. Fellows' comments.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ responded to Ms. Fellows' comments.

Discussion ensued.

MARGATE RESIDENT, GEORGE WOOLEY, explained that he expanded his driveway to accommodate his recreational vehicle (RV) and any vehicles his family may have and indicated that this Ordinance would greatly affect him. He also discussed concerns

about identification (ID) security if a database for registration was introduced which stored his personal details. He forewarned about security at the City owned parking.

Discussion ensued.

MS. VAN WINKLE, discussed parking problems around Margate and suggested charging residents to use the parking lot by Oriole Field amongst other areas in the surrounding neighborhood.

MS. SANCHEZ questioned why the rules were not being adhered to and also questioned the requirements for installing driveways. She said that parking on the grass was the top priority.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO responded to Ms. Sanchez's comments. He also indicated that the staff were incapable of a City-wide sweep of this magnitude and referenced strategic planning.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO indicated that the feedback received, everyone was in unison against parking on the grass.

Discussion ensued on code issues around the City and property registrations.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS advised that before the City enforced no parking on the grass, they would need to amend the Ordinance to make it a prohibition.

CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES read a section of the current code pertaining to parking. He advised that if the City Commission wanted to prohibit parking on the grass, they needed to remove a provision.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO would probably vote "no" if there was a ban against parking on the grass and questioned the City Manager if current staff could effectively enforce it fairly. He said that if they were going to create something, the City should be able to enforce it.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS advised that it would depend on how fast they wanted to see this behavior changed.

Discussion ensued including perusing special magistrates cases, imposing fees, employing a third party or a consultant to assist with parking issues at Building and Building Code Services with parking, comparing Margate to other cities and changing the behavior of the community.

DIRECTOR OF BUILDING & BUILDING CODE SERVICES (BCS), RICHARD R. NIXON, indicated that the proposed Ordinance was brought to the City Commission with good intention with the goal of trying to help beautify Margate. He highlighted that he saw repeat violations which took a tremendous amount of paperwork, especially to bring it to the Special Magistrate. He explained that they wanted to stop writing things such as dead grass. He also wanted to look at ways of eliminating residents placing RVs on their driveways and parking the cars on the lawn. He informed that for the last three years, the City's grant program assisted residents widening their driveways and beautifying their homes. He also highlighted other illegal additions and screen enclosures being converted into apartments which would result in more cars. He provided an update from a meeting held today on identifying rental properties by a third party but he wanted to handle this inhouse. He also wanted to address residents hiring out RVs on their property.



Discussion ensued on citing properties with code violations, demolishing properties, hiring part-time personnel for parking services or Code issues and enforcing the laws.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS would work with Director of Building and BCS Nixon. He did not recommend moving forward with the proposed Ordinance as it needed work and he had direction to look at parking under the FPL easement as an option. He said that he would ask Director of Building and BCS, Nixon, to enforce everything that was currently on the books.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ said that the City had an option to look for other places to park not just the FPL easement.

MARGATE RESIDENT, MR. KRALJIC, summarized the comments discussed, praised Vice Mayor Arserio for taking credit for this proposal and read a statement. He suggested having the Planning and Zoning Board do some work on parking and referenced many cancelled meetings. He was surprised that Margate allowed the public to park on the grass.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO asked if they could place the question of no parking on the ballot.

Discussion ensued.

CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES advised that they would be looking at a Charter amendment as opposed to an Ordinance but if there was some questions that they wanted to put to the Margate electorate, in theory, it would be possible but the next ballot availability was not until 2026.

Discussion ensued on parking on the grass and to implement a residents' survey.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS said that they could survey the residents to receive their feedback before placing it on the Agenda.

Discussion ensued including the parking of commercial vehicles.

CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES questioned the City Commission if they wanted to remove the exception for a single family or two family dwellings with respect to require the parking spaces to meet the design standards of the code which would, in essence, prohibit parking on the grass.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO was not a fan of that initiative.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO – Yes.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ – Yes.

COMMISSIONER CAGGIANO – Would vote to have no parking on the grass.

CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES confirmed that he would prepare the change and bring it back for discussion.

Discussion ensued.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:34pm.

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: 884 4921 2774 or can listen via telephone by calling one of the following phone numbers: US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099.

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