



City of Margate

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Meeting Minutes City Commission Workshop

Wednesday, February 4, 2015

6:00 PM

Commission Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

In Attendance:

City Manager Douglas E. Smith

City Attorney Eugene M. Steinfeld

City Clerk Joseph J. Kavanagh

1) PRESENTATION(S)

A. ID 14-895 CITY DONATION POLICY

MAYOR SIMONE explained that the purpose of the workshop was to set policy for charitable donations with guidelines and application. She said that most Cities did not allow contributions during a meeting or to the dais. She stated that most businesses and other Cities had a policy and application in place. She felt that because taxpayer dollars were being spent, not having a policy and application was not in the best interest of the residents. She felt that it was actively irresponsible to not provide a policy and application. She felt that charitable donations should be handled the way City Departments handled requests by asking for details, and that the validity of the requests by organizations for charitable donations should be checked. She added that due diligence time was needed, and that the City needed to know how many applications would be obtained during the Budget, as well as the amounts. She felt that the decisions should be made at one time. She said that many charities had a worthy cause; however, were all of the charities a benefit to Margate residents or businesses. She stated that the charities should have to compete for the City's dollars. She mentioned that the Children's Services came before the Commission; however, they received money on the tax bills as a taxing district. She felt that she did not want to have the City held responsible when a charity was not on the up and up.

COMMISSIONER TALERICO said that the City should be firm about putting a line item in the Budget pertaining to exactly how much the Commission felt should be spent every year on charitable donations. He also suggested putting caps on what could be requested for on the applications.

MAYOR SIMONE clarified that the application would require the amount requested, which would then be reviewed. She noted that in other Cities the Commission was not the body to review the applications, and that it could be the City Manager, Finance Director or the Recreation Director. He said that after the review, the reviewing body would make a recommendation to the Commission.

COMMISSIONER TALERICO said that a lot of organizations were not aware of when they would need the charitable donation; therefore, he felt that the applications should be reviewed on a quarterly basis.

MAYOR SIMONE suggested that a certain amount of dollars be set aside for certain incidentals. She noted that last year there was a \$5,000 Budget; however, the City

spent \$13,000 on charitable donations. She felt that the departments were asked to stay within a Budget; therefore, she felt that it was incorrect for the charitable donations to exceed the Budgeted amount.

COMMISSIONER TALERICO noted that there were certain groups that were used every year, such as Family Central, when there was a direct benefit for families in Margate. He noted that more could be given because Family Central did impact a lot more people.

MAYOR SIMONE said that how much to provide to individual organizations, such as Family Central, could be discussed at Budget time. She said that at that time, line items for certain charities could be added. She noted that this workshop was strictly to put a policy and application in place, rather than having organizations come before the Commission to ask for money.

COMMISSIONER TALERICO mentioned baseball and noted that they had no way of knowing they would win and go to Texas.

MAYOR SIMONE said that last year \$5,000 was given, and she asked how that money was spent. She questioned whether it was for plane fare.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO asked whether the Commission knew exactly how the money given to Family Central was spent.

MAYOR SIMONE explained that was the reason she wanted the application.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO asked whether the Mayor believed the City had been burnt by charities in the past.

MAYOR SIMONE felt that the City overspent with regard to charitable donations. She did not think the City was doing business with people's money the right way because donations were being given without knowing about the organization, how the money would be spent, what percent was going to charity and what percent was going to administrative costs.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO asked for an example.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN said that currently there was no policy in place, which should have been in place once the Officer of the Inspector General (OIG) stated that Commissioners could not get money for charities. She noted that all policies were put in place after that. She noted that Mayor Simone was asking for a policy that provided people to fill out an application giving information about the requested donation. She stated that most Cities had a list of charities in their policy.

MAYOR SIMONE stated that those Cities already had an application process in place.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN said that the Cities had their application process since 2011, and the resolution and exhibits list the charities. She asked whether the City would now list charities on the policy.

MAYOR SIMONE said that she did not want to do that.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN stated that she had no problems with having applications or putting a policy in place.

MAYOR SIMONE said that if Commissioners felt strongly about having an organization

on the list, that donation should come out of the Commissioners own pocket.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN mentioned Relay for Life, and asked whether they could be added to the list to bypass the application.

MAYOR SIMONE felt that initially, everyone needed to fill out an application; however, the Commission could put in the Budget a specific organization.

COMMISSIONER TALERICO left meeting at 6:27 p.m.

MAYOR SIMONE questioned why the other Cities had a policy and application in process, if it was not successful.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN said that she did not disagree; however, amounts were not indicated.

MAYOR SIMONE clarified that the purpose of this workshop was not to talk about monetary amounts, but was about setting a policy in place for an application with guidelines.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO felt that the ultimate purpose of the workshop was to cut the funds.

MAYOR SIMONE and COMMISSIONER PEERMAN disagreed.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN explained that a policy would be put in place that involved filling out an application. She said that if the Commission then wanted to give the organization \$5,000 at Budget time, there was nothing stopping them because an application was filled out.

MAYOR SIMONE disagreed and noted that the Commission would have say in who they wanted to give donations to.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN said that she had no issue with having an application and policy; however, she felt that it would not change anything except having people request donations at the dais. She felt that the monetary issue would involve a larger workshop, because the City currently gave money to charities that were not chosen by this Commission.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO said that it was one step harder to request a donation. He noted that when people came to the dais to go to Australia for a swim meet in two weeks, the Commission would say, "No."

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN said that would come from the Student Initiative Fund where an application had to be filled out, and the individual would come before the Commission to explain the request.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO said that if a policy was put in place, would the Commission have to direct the individuals to fill out an application.

MAYOR SIMONE explained that the application would be due at a certain time, and just because someone filled out an application did not automatically provide them a donation. She said that all applications would be reviewed at the same time. She would like to have the City Manager and the Finance Director, who would then make recommendations to the Commission.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO asked whether the applications would be seen.

MAYOR SIMONE said that the Commission would see all applications.

COMMISSIONER BRYAN asked whether there would be a deadline for all applications to be submitted for a year process, and MAYOR SIMONE agreed that was correct.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO mentioned what would happen in a situation such as the baseball, when it was not known until two weeks before their trip.

MAYOR SIMONE reiterated that everyone would have to fill out an application, because she wanted to know how it was going to be spent.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN said that Mayor Simone could not have it both ways. She said that a deadline cannot be provided if asking how the money was being spent. She stated that there were a lot of incidents that happen during a year that might not know that they need a little extra money.

MAYOR SIMONE suggested having it twice a year instead of once a year.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN suggested just having the organizations fill out the applications when they want the money, and MAYOR SIMONE said that was not the right way to do business.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO questioned why it was the wrong way to do business.

MAYOR SIMONE explained that the Commission did not know how much money would be left; however, this way would allow for budgeting.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO said that was a money issue and the applications would not solve that.

MAYOR SIMONE said that whatever was allocated could be spent on the amount of charities.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO clarified that the Commission would be spending all the allocated money at Budget time and nobody could come and ask for money after that. He said that was not right because of the baseball situation.

MAYOR SIMONE said that two Cities, Miramar and Sunrise, that had a separate Sports Policy in place, which she was willing to do. She stated that a separate application process could be provided for the Sports Leagues.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO said it was not just sports leagues, but that other things could come into play. He stated that if the money was allocated and someone filled out an application, there would be no money left.

MAYOR SIMONE explained that it was up to the Commission whether they wanted to hold a specific amount of dollars in abeyance.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO felt that would not work and he asked if other Cities were doing that or would Margate be the first. He stated that the current process was good.

COMMISSIONER BRYAN said that the current process was not good, because there was no accountability.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO said that the job of the Commission was to represent the people.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN noted that the people did not like the way their money was being spent. He asked if the concern was due to going over Budget.

COMMISSIONER BRYAN stated that the concern was with having policy in place.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO said that he had no problem with a policy.

COMMISSIONER BRYAN said that she did have a problem with having to know a year in advance.

MAYOR SIMONE suggested having two deadlines. She explained that if an event was taking place from October 1st to March 30th, the deadline for the application would be September 1st. She said that would be one month before the event. She further explained that if the event was taking place from April 1st to September 30th, the deadline would be March 1st. She felt this would provide more flexibility for the requestors.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO agreed, but asked what would happen if the money was not there and had been given in the first quarter.

MAYOR SIMONE said that if there were two deadlines with \$5,000, \$2,500 would be set aside for the first period and \$2,500 would be set aside for the second period, because of a cap. She noted that last year there was a cap of \$5,000 and \$13,000 was spent on the baseball.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN noted that the money came from Vice Mayor Ruzzano's travel money, because the Commission was specific when saying that if the money could be found in the Commissioner's Budget, it would come from that money and not from the donation money.

MAYOR SIMONE said that should never have happened.

CITY CLERK JOSEPH J. KAVANAGH read aloud a list of the contributions made last year and to what organizations they were made:

\$ 500 – 211 Broward
\$ 500 – Women in Distress
\$1,500 – Relay for Life
\$ 360 – Saint Vincent's Men's Guild
\$ 700 – Golf Tournament Sponsorship
\$4,000 – Margate Youth Baseball Inferno (VICE MAYOR'S TRAVEL MONEY)
\$4,000 – Kiwanis Margate/Coconut Creek
\$ 450 – Margate Chamber of Commerce

CITY CLERK KAVANAGH read aloud the list from 2013:

\$1,000 – Women in Distress
\$ 500 – The Baseball Factory
\$ 250 – The National Student Leadership Foundation
\$1,500 – Relay for Life
\$ 150 – Kiwanis
\$ 500 – Margate Pony Elite Baseball

CITY CLERK KAVANAGH noted that the Budget was for \$5,239; however, only \$3,900 was spent.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO stated that the baseball team went to Texas, won the World Championship, promoted Margate and branded Margate. He felt that the donation was worth it.

MAYOR SIMONE mentioned any benefit from the baseball team branding the City and noted that their shirts said South Florida Inferno, not Margate. She stated that City pins were provided to the baseball team, which they did not wear.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO felt that it was insignificant to have people fill out a form when there was no money available.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN said that she had no problem with the form or the policy; however, she had a problem with the deadlines. She stated that a large portion of the charities already knew to come to Margate in September because the Budget was in October. She felt that if donating to Relay for Life every year, it should be added as a line item so it did not come out of the \$5,000 for donations. She felt that the organizations requesting donations should fill out the applications for review; however, she did not agree with the deadline.

COMMISSIONER BRYAN also did not like the deadlines, because things could come up through the year and people would be turned away because they missed the deadline.

MAYOR SIMONE questioned why the one year deadline was successful in every other City.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN asked whether any of the Cities had charities come in beyond the deadline.

MAYOR SIMONE said that as the policy did not allow that, the Cities did not have them come in.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN said that she would research the issue and stated that Wilton Manors had provided donations to charities that came in at the last minute. She felt that because of a deadline, all organizations would request the money during the first part and then there would be no money left.

MAYOR SIMONE said that was good business and that people should have to compete for City dollars.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN stated that it was not the City's dollars, but the taxpayer's dollars. She said that people would never agree 100 percent on what to give to charities. She reiterated that she was good with a policy and applications; however, she was not in agreement with the deadlines.

COMMISSIONER BRYAN agreed with Commissioner Peerman and did not like the deadline. She suggested additional research.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN stated that a policy was needed, and all Commissioners agreed with having a policy for accountability. She suggested obtaining additional information from other Cities.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO agreed with the policy and applications; however, he also did

not agree with the deadlines. He suggested breaking down categories of contributions.

CITY MANAGER DOUGLAS E. SMITH stated that there could be a combination process, which would provide an application process going in conjunction with the Budget process. He said that when reviewing the applications, an amount to be budgeted would be determined. He stated that a reserve amount could be set aside for requests coming in throughout the year, or an adjustment could be made in the Budget when those requests came up. He noted that a main application period could still be used with money budgeted, while considering requests throughout the year.

VICE MAOR RUZZANO said that City Manager Smith was referring to putting money in reserves; however, Mayor Simone wanted to know exactly how much would be spent for the year. He asked Mayor Simone if she wanted to know what would be spent every year for charities.

MAYOR SIMONE agreed and stated that she did not want to go over that amount either.

CITY MANAGER SMITH said that the Commission would have to come to a decision on.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO stated that there was no point in having a cap if keeping money in reserves.

MAYOR SIMONE said that was not today's discussion. She noted that there was no monetary amount in the application process.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO expressed concern with approving the donations early on and being left with nothing for after.

COMMISSIONER TALERICO rejoined the meeting at 6:53 p.m.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN asked that the Mayor schedule the next workshop to be about the Budget money in the Commission Coiffers.

MAYOR SIMONE stated that she did not want to go over the \$5,000 budgeted.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN stated that \$4,400 was already given to the Alzheimer's Association.

MAYOR SIMONE noted that the Alzheimer's Association donation was in the line items.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN suggested that the Relay for Life be made a line item so as not to have it come out of the \$5,000. She requested a workshop to discuss those items and all the charities.

CITY MANAGER SMITH noted that could be done anytime and did not have to be done at Budget time. He said that it could be a pre-discussion in conjunction with the policy.

MAYOR SIMONE agreed to have a workshop.

COMMISSIONER TALERICO mentioned individuals coming before the Commission and asked whether there was any procedure to address those instances that were not organizations.

MAYOR SIMONE said that they should still have to fill out some type of application.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN said that it could be on the application where it could be noted that it was individual or an organization. She noted that if it was a resident student, it would fall under the Student Initiative Program, which was \$250.

MAYOR SIMONE asked for a consensus on moving forward with a policy and application, and all Commissioners agreed 5-0.

COMMISSIONER BRYAN stated that she had no problem with the policy or application; however, she felt that some things needed to be tweaked.

MAYOR SIMONE wanted to add to the application. She wanted the section regarding the organization's annual Budget, to include the percentages spent for administrative and provision of services.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO said that was micromanaging someone else's business.

MAYOR SIMONE felt that it was the City's business to do that.

COMMISSIONER TALERICO said that it was a controversy with organizations.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO said that the application was very lengthy and it would be broken down even more with the percentages.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN felt that was a good question to ask, because some charities used more money on administrative costs rather than on the charity itself.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO questioned how that would come into play for the Baseball teams.

COMMISSIONER TALERICO noted that the funds needed to go towards the children, rather than towards a Secretary.

COMMISSIONER PEERMAN said that some of the Baseball money went to the travel.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Transcribed by Carol DiLorenzo

Joseph J. Kavanagh, City Clerk

Date: _____