



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, July 10, 2024

7:00 PM

Commission Chambers and Zoom.us

Webinar ID: 843 7070 7473

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84370707473>

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 Shawn O'Neill from Christian Life Center

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

6) PUBLIC HEARING(S)

Item 6) A. ID 2024-182 was heard before Item 1) Presentation(s).

- A.** [ID 2024-182](#) PUBLIC HEARING AND RESOLUTION - RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF FIRE RESCUE SERVICES, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS IN THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA; REIMPOSING FIRE RESCUE ASSESSMENTS AGAINST ASSESSED PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE CITY OF MARGATE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2024; APPROVING THE RATE OF ASSESSMENT; APPROVING THE ASSESSMENT ROLL; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

PUBLIC HEARING TIME OF 7:00 P.M.

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

COMMISSIONER, ANTONIO V. ARSERIO advised that the City was not increasing the fee again this year for residents.

MAYOR TOMMY RUZZANO advised that some residents had questions about notifications they had received indicating an increase.

CITY MANAGER, CALE CURTIS, confirmed that the Residential rate was remaining the same although there had been some adjustments to the Commercial and Industrial rates.

Discussion ensued.

A MARGATE RESIDENT questioned whether there was a shortfall within the Fire Budget and also questioned why there was such a large shortfall for businesses.

Discussion ensued.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS explained that it was based on a study that was performed to determine the residents versus commercial versus industrial and what classifications utilize the fire services the most then it was allocated in that fashion. He informed that last year's study revealed that the businesses versus industrial portion of it used more of the fire services than in the previous study.

Discussion ensued.

The motion carried as follows:

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

1) PRESENTATION(S)

Item 1) was heard after 6) A. ID 2024-182 Public Hearing(s).

A. [ID 2024-204](#) MARGATE 50 YEAR RESIDENCY AWARD

JERRY FLEMING spoke on this Item.

B. [ID 2024-222](#) PRESENTATION OF THE 4TH OF JULY PARADE WINNERS: PRIVATE BUSINESS: FAMILY KNOWLEDGE ACTION MARTIAL ARTS, NON-PROFIT: AMERICAN LEGION POST 157, MARGATE FAMILY: THE BERTRAM FAMILY

PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR, MICHAEL A. JONES, presented the awards to the winners.

A REPRESENTATIVE FROM AMERICAN LEGION POST 157 spoke on this Item.

A BERTRAM FAMILY MEMBER spoke on this Item.

ATHLETES OF THE MONTH

C. [ID 2024-205](#) BASEBALL: COLIN FERELS, 10 YEARS OLD (MARGATE AAA RUBBER DUCKS)

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

D. [ID 2024-199](#) PAUL T. FRANKENHAUSER, POLICE SERGEANT - POLICE DEPARTMENT - 25 YEARS

JOSE A. RODRIGUEZ, JR., NETWORK ANALYST - INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY - 25 YEARS

JOHN M. SHELTON, GIS COORDINATOR - ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES - 25 YEARS

JAMES HOFFMAN, FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC - FIRE DEPARTMENT - 15 YEARS

EDELE SIMEON, UTILITY TECHNICIAN - ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES - 10 YEARS

LARRY VIGNOLA, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER - CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE - 5 YEARS

PHILIP M. BILBAO, ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER - POLICE DEPARTMENT - 5 YEARS

MICHAEL LUHRS, FLEET SUPERVISOR - PUBLIC WORKS - 5 YEARS

CITY MANAGER CURTIS, presented Assistant City Manager Vignola his plaque.

ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER, LARRY VIGNOLA, spoke on this Item.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR, GIOVANNI BATISTA, presented Public Works' Fleet Supervisor, Luhrs his plaque.

PUBLIC WORKS' FLEET SUPERVISOR, LUHRS, spoke on this Item.

2) PUBLIC DISCUSSION

MAYOR RUZZANO explained the protocol for submitting comments to Public Discussion.

ELSA J. SANCHEZ, read a statement pertaining to the behavior at recent City Commission meetings and referenced arguments and being respectful.

MAYOR RUZZANO responded to Ms. Sanchez's comments.

Discussion ensued.

TRACY VAN WINKLE, concurred with some of Ms. Sanchez's sentiments pertaining to the City Commission's behavior at meetings. She said that Margate's 4th July Parade was excellent but she would prefer to see less political material and more businesses advertised.

DONNA L. FELLOWS commented on Margate's 4th of July Parade and said that the fireworks were phenomenal and thanked Parks and Recreation. She concurred with

some of Ms. Sanchez's sentiments pertaining to the City Commission's behavior at meetings. She thanked Mayor Ruzzano for his passion at the meetings.

RICHARD ZUCCHINI, 380 LAKEWOOD CIRCLE E, #B, discussed Palm Lakes.

LAUREN BERACHA, 6950 NW 14TH PLACE, made comments about the last City Commission meeting pertaining to a City Commissioner's behavior. She enjoyed the 4th of July Parade.

JULIE JONES thanked the Ruzzano family for their great donation for the 4th of July parade and referenced the ice pops.

3) COMMISSION COMMENTS

COMMISSIONER, ANTHONY N. CAGGIANO, thanked those who attended and worked on the 4th of July Parade. He wished his best friend a Happy Birthday for tomorrow.

COMMISSIONER JOANNE SIMONE acknowledged staff for a wonderful July 4th Extravaganza and also thanked the residents for attending. She highlighted this Saturday's Sandbag Distribution event and advised residents to look on the City's website on how to fill and stack them at home. She also highlighted events taking place at NorthWest Focal Point Senior Center (NWFPSC). She advised people to stay well, hydrated and to be safe.

COMMISSIONER CAGGIANO explained that the NWFPSC was one of the hidden jewels of the City and referenced caregivers.

Discussion ensued on the NWFPSC.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO, hoped that the Sandbag Distribution was a good success event and hoped to repeat this in the peak of hurricane season. He spoke of the importance of hurricane preparedness. He thanked the staff for the 4th of July Extravaganza and said that he would have no problem looking into doing a drone show with a grand finale of fireworks at the end. He reminded the public that it was prohibited to rent out recreational vehicles (RV) where people stayed on the property.

VICE MAYOR, ARLENE R. SCHWARTZ, advised that the City's Facebook page had the 4th of July fireworks display and said that the company they hired did a great job. She highlighted the National Night Out 2024. She responded to comments made by Mr. Zucchini.

Discussion ensued.

MAYOR RUZZANO read an extract of a letter from a member of the public praising the NWFPSC. He also received a letter from the Arbogast family. He did not mind looking into drones but preferred fireworks. He referenced Public Works Division Leader Collection and Distribution, Maragh, who received positive feedback and had also won an award. He also received feedback from residents explaining that some of the City's code was outdated and suggested uploading a link to Margate's social media. He discussed the grand opening at Pete's Barber Shop with a new owner. He said that July 4th was awesome, that the videos were incredible and referenced the City winning a Telly Award for the third consecutive year. He wished Rosie a Happy Birthday and advised that the next City Commission meetings were back to back on August 21st and he hoped to organize a town hall meeting during the interim. He explained yesterday's Budget Workshop, advised that they were keeping the Millage at the same rate and also

discussed teachers' low salaries who worked in Broward County schools. He highlighted the upcoming City events and tomorrow's Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) meeting.

CITY ATTORNEY DAVID N. TOLCES congratulated Assistant City Manager Vignola on his 5th anniversary with Margate. He enjoyed the 4th of July parade.

Discussion ensued on the budget.

4) CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

CITY MANAGER CURTIS echoed everybody's comments on 4th July Extravaganza and thanked Parks and Recreation, Fire and Police respective Departments and all the staff members who participated in making it a memorable event. He advised that the City's paint giveaway was by appointment only.

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.

No items under Consent Agenda.

7) RESOLUTION(S)

- A. [ID 2024-236](#) RESOLUTION - APPROVING A FOUR PERCENT (4.0%) BASE WAGE ADJUSTMENT FOR THE PERIOD FROM OCTOBER 1, 2024 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2025, FOR ALL NON-BARGAINED FOR PERSONNEL; PROVIDING FOR IMPLEMENTATION AUTHORITY; PROVIDING FOR EFFECTIVE DATE

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

MR. KRALJIC read a statement stating that the City Commission should be excluded from this Item.

MAYOR RUZZANO responded to Mr. Kraljic's comments.

MS. SANCHEZ read a statement on the City Commission's pay increase and benefits.

MS. BERACHA discussed the City Commission's pay increase.

MS. FELLOWS alleged that Margate had the lowest paid Police Department and that they should receive the money they deserve.

MS. VAN WINKLE wished Rosie a Happy Birthday and expressed her thoughts on whether the Police Department deserved a pay increase.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO responded to Ms. Van Winkle's comments.

The motion carried as follows:

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

- B.** [ID 2024-241](#) A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA, APPROVING THE SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT TO PROGRAM FUNDING FOR THE SW 6TH STREET TRAFFIC CALMING AND PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS; PROVIDING FOR THE FUNDING ELIGIBILITY THROUGH THE BROWARD METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) COMPLETE STREETS AND OTHER LOCALIZED INITIATIVES PROGRAM (CSLIP).

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

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO explained that they wanted to do this approximately two years ago.

Discussion ensued.

The motion approved by the following vote:

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

8) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

- A.** [ID 2024-240](#) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION - INVESTIGATION OF EMPLOYEE COMPLAINT

MAYOR RUZZANO thanked Ria Chattergoon, Police Major Banatte and everyone else involved for conducting this.

A motion was made by Commissioner Caggiano, seconded by Vice Mayor Schwartz, to adopt the findings of the independent investigation report prepared by Ria Chattergoon dated July 9th, 2024 and the report prepared by Major Alain Banatte, dated June 28, 2024, regarding the complaint dated May 5th, 2024 and to make a determination of not sustained with no further disciplinary action as to the allegations for all the following violations:

**Interim Chief of Police, Michael Palma, for workplace discrimination;
Workplace retaliation and harassment;
General Order 7.3.44 - workplace violence;
General Order 7.3.63 - Harassment;
City Manager, Cale Curtis, for veracity, moral turpitude, ethics violations and**

workplace violence policy; and City Attorney, David Tolces, for veracity, moral turpitude, ethics violations and workplace violence policy.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO explained that although he was not a fan of conducting this investigation, he voted to support the same and thanked everyone who was involved. He thought that both reports were very thorough and complete.

MS. FELLOWS informed that she did not know the nature of the complaint and could not therefore make comment.

MAYOR RUZZANO responded to Ms. Fellows' comments.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO continued to discuss why this complaint could not be disclosed at this stage.

Discussion ensued.

MS. VAN WINKLE alleged that in the past, residents in Margate knew more than what the City Commission did.

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 8:34pm.

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.

[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.

Members of the public are invited to view this meeting through Zoom using Webinar ID: 843 7070 7473 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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