



City of Margate

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

Meeting Minutes Regular City Commission Meeting

Mayor Anthony N. Caggiano

Vice Mayor Tommy Ruzzano

Commissioners:

Antonio V. Arserio, Arlene R. Schwartz, Joanne Simone

City Manager Cale Curtis

Interim City Attorney Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman

City Clerk Jennifer M. Johnson

Wednesday, October 4, 2023

6:30 PM

Commission Chambers and Zoom.us

Webinar ID: 864 2530 8125

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86425308125>

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

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

MOMENT OF SILENCE - INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1) PRESENTATION(S)

STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF THE MONTH

A. [ID 2023-322](#) ABUNDANT LIFE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY: ASHTON ROYAL (Student), MICHELLE WALTERS (Teacher), (Ms. Latoya Dean, Principal and/or Ms. Renate Ramirez, Assistant Principal)

BROWARD MATH AND SCIENCE SCHOOLS: EVANGELINA DIAZ (Student); NICHOLAS SAMMARITANO (Teacher), (Mr. Hasan Kose, Principal and/or Assistant Principal Ms. Fabricia Santos Maraclo)

LIBERTY ELEMENTARY: JOYCE GUERISMA (Student); MARJORIE RODRIGUEZ (Teacher), (Ms. Vicki Flournoy, Principal and/or Ms. Donna Styles, Assistant Principal)

MARGATE ELEMENTARY: GABRIELA DURAN (Student); TARA O'BRIEN (Teacher), (Mr. Thomas Schroeder, Principal and/or Ms. Donna Rucker, Assistant Principal)

MARGATE MIDDLE: LEONARDO DELGADO (Student); BRANLY

FERNANDEZ (Teacher), (Mrs. Sabine Phillips, Principal and/or Mr. Roderick Daniel, Assistant Principal)

PHYL'S ACADEMY PREPARATORY SCHOOL: GABRIELLE ISMAEL (Student), CHRISTINE MULLINGS (Teacher), (Ms. Afua Baptiste, Principal)

PROCLAMATION(S)

- B.** [ID 2023-304](#) FIRE PREVENTION WEEK - OCTOBER 8 - OCTOBER 14, 2023 (presented to Roberto Lorenzo, Fire Chief)

FIRE CHIEF ROBERTO LORENZO spoke on this Item.

FIRE CODE OFFICIAL/FIRE MARSHAL, DAVID R. SCHOLL, spoke on this Item.

- C.** [ID 2023-321](#) ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH - OCTOBER, 2023

ANTHONY P. FINNO, spoke on this Item.

DONNY VO ON BEHALF OF DISTRICT 96 – FLORIDA STATE REPRESENTATIVE CHRISTINE HUNSCHOFSKY delivered an update from her office. He provided details that the Florida State Representative Hunschofsky would be hosting a pre-session town hall and the Mobile Driver's License Renewal event. He also informed that the Florida House of Representative members were preparing for their upcoming Committee weeks.

MAYOR ANTHONY N. CAGGIANO asked for CONSENSUS to move Item 7) B. ID 2023-335 to be brought forward.

CONSENSUS was given by the City Commission to move Item 7) B. ID 2023-335 before Item 2) Public Comments.

MAYOR CAGGIANO advised that this meeting was going into recess.

MAYOR CAGGIANO reconvened this meeting.

7) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

- B.** [ID 2023-335](#) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION - STATUS AND MAXIMUM ALLOCATIONS OF BROWARD COUNTY ADMINISTERED HOME REHABILITATION AND PURCHASE ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAMS (PRESENTATION BY BROWARD COUNTY HOUSING FINANCE DIVISION)

BROWARD COUNTY'S (BC) HOMEOWNERSHIP AND REPAIR SECTION MANAGER, SUZANNE WEISS introduced her colleagues and provided a PowerPoint presentation. She advised that they had been managing the City's home rehab program and the Purchase Assistance program since 2017 with great success but they had made some recommendations to improve the program to work better and more efficiently. She explained that most of the program pertained to windows, roofs and doors and that the City's current program was \$25,000 for State Housing Initiatives Partnership program (SHIP) which she did not believe was enough. She said that they would love for Margate to match Broward County and recommended \$60,000 for minor home repairs with the service delivery fees on top which would be \$66,000 but with a very minimum, they believed that the City's SHIP and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) should

match at least, \$40,000 plus fees of \$46,000 cap. She believed that \$40,000 for special needs, would not allow them to do what was necessary to hurricane harden the outside of a house plus to also do interior renovations which were necessary and their recommendation was to bring this up to a budget of \$70,000 with the fees on top. She also recommended for residents that were mortgage-free and unable to obtain property insurance, that they should allow them to continue to do the work. She advised that they always conducted equity evaluation in every County. She summed up her presentation and repeated that they would like the City to:

- Increase the levels;
- Consider doing this without requiring insurance (if they did not have insurance and could not obtain any); and
- Consider going into a junior lien position.

A question and answer session ensued between the City Commission and the BC Homeownership staff which included application numbers, prioritizing special needs projects, residents not being insured, foreclosure, allocations of liens on properties and replacing electrical panels of a house.

BC'S HOMEOWNERSHIP AND REPAIR SECTION MANAGER, SUZANNE WEISS said purchase assistance was one group and rehab was another. She said that when they started to do the City's work, they had a list of 138 people with some applicants being on the list for 12 years. She explained that they went through that list and started advertising when they had new contracts and incoming funds and they started to do an advertisement in all the cities that were accepting free applications and they received approximately 200 pre-applications and applications. She explained that when they received so many names, they terminated the list unless there was someone in a special needs household. She explained that they were going through the remaining pre-applications that they took in 2022 and were determining whether they were still interested, eligible or if they had done their work and that they would probably open up an application period again next January/February.

VICE MAYOR TOMMY RUZZANO said that the funds were a lot more money than what he initially thought. His preference would be only to do external repairs but questioned about replacing roofs and electrical panels of a house.

BC'S HOMEOWNERSHIP AND REPAIR SECTION MANAGER, SUZANNE WEISS explained that if they received rehab from Margate and reapplied, they could never receive rehab again which operated differently to other municipalities. She also explained that they were not trying to spend money unnecessarily and indicated that renovation costs had increased significantly. She said that they would have to install roofs pertaining to replacements and air conditioning as well as replacing electrical panels of a house. She explained that their organization would not do a deal if there was a reverse mortgage due to uncertainty pertaining to equity.

COMMISSIONER ARLENE R. SCHWARTZ believed that the flat fee of \$6,000 was 25% of the \$25,000 was unconscionable and questioned what it covered. She also asked how many houses they did this year.

BC'S HOMEOWNERSHIP AND REPAIR SECTION MANAGER, WEISS said that the profit was \$1,500 but it covered four different components. She said that they did zero houses in rehab and that the program was closed during the height of the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

Discussion ensued which included the allocation of funds having to be utilized within two years.

COMMISSIONER ANTONIO V. ARSERIO liked many of the recommendations that had been made and also had no problem raising a threshold but believed it should only be for one item.

Discussion ensued on whether the program should be limited to one item and insurance pertaining to a four point and wind mitigation projects.

CITY MANAGER CALE CURTIS understood the City Commission did not want to do a full wind mitigation project. He recognized that construction costs had increased and believed there was a need to increase the maximum allocation on the SHIP side to at least match the CDBG side of \$40,000. He said that if a resident received a BC grant, they would not be eligible for grants from the City or the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA).

Discussion ensued.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS advised that this Item would return to the City Commission in a Resolution in the form of a program amendment and he was looking for CONSENSUS to make the change.

BC'S HOMEOWNERSHIP AND REPAIR SECTION MANAGER, WEISS, questioned if the City and Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) had recorded grant agreements.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS replied no.

Discussion ensued.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO referenced the BC Homeownership to get them up to a four point wind mitigation inspection approval and thought that no one on the City Commission was willing to do this. He believed that the priority was to repair those homes with the blue tarps on the roof or those that were in dire need of this money. He thought that the fairest process would be to abolish the list and start afresh and commented that some homes had not be done in four years. He also believed that the money was being under utilized and that they should be looking for more money for next year. He suggested that they should review the list and if they did not require what was available in the program, they should move onto the next applicant.

BC'S HOMEOWNERSHIP AND REPAIR SECTION MANAGER, WEISS explained that they finished homes at the very beginning of 2021 and that the jobs started before that but their contracts with this money for the whole program only got signed with these vendors in April 2023.

Discussion ensued on the applicants on the list, programs being halted for rehab during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and the life expectancy of a roof.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS repeated if the:

- City Commission had CONSENSUS to increase the SHIP funding from \$25,000 to \$40,000 to match the CBDG funding;
- There would be CONSENSUS to drop down to the third position in certain scenarios as long as the equity was protected;

- There would be CONSENSUS not to require the insurance component in certain scenarios; and
- Those limits would be exclusive of the service delivery fee and that the full amount went towards construction.

Discussion ensued on increasing the set amount for special needs and bathroom renovations.

MAYOR CAGGIANO polled the City Commission if they agreed to increase the set amount for special needs.

CONSENSUS was given by the City Commission to increase special needs to \$70,000 plus the \$6,000.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO sought advice from the City Commission on doing roof and windows or whether it should just be one item.

CONSENSUS was given by the City Commission to just do ONE project.

BC'S HOMEOWNERSHIP AND REPAIR SECTION MANAGER, WEISS questioned what would happen to those applicants that had already applied for more than one.

Discussion ensued.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ agreed with Commissioner Arserio and said that the money should be spread around to the things that more people could use.

Discussion ensued on the program being limited to one item.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS recommended that for the first year, the City Commission should give them the opportunity to address the applicants who were on the list with the increased maximums, evaluate it over the next year and report back with what type of properties they were able to impact and what they had been able to do and make some adjustments in the next year. He advised that year by year, they have significant money set aside and they do have some expenditure deadlines that they have to meet or they would lose the funding.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ indicated that when the program first started, both her and Vice Mayor Ruzzano recommended replacing as many roofs as possible which she believed was more important than the windows. She referenced the COVID-19 pandemic and suggested that they required an extension to whoever administered this program at the federal government.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS informed that as the City was the lowest maximum allocation within the BC, it would be difficult to expend the funds.

INTERIM CITY ATTORNEY DAVID N. TOLCES advised that there would be a mortgage on the properties and if the property sold within the 10 year period, the money would go back to the program.

Discussion ensued.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS recapped that the City Commission gave CONSENSUS to:

- Increased limits;
- Increasing the special needs limit;
- Insurance; and
- Third position on the lien

CITY MANAGER CURTIS questioned if they had CONSENSUS on it being multiple projects.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO said it was his thing to do one item but they had a lot of money on the table and had until June 2024 to spend it. He announced to BC that they were going to ask for a very big favor and that he would accept for this cycle to make the June/July 2024 deadline but he would be the first one to vote against it if they did not change it thereafter.

Discussion discussed.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO repeated that he was still for the one project but forewarned that they should keep in mind that the air conditioning was electrical as well so if the panel led into that area, they would cover that too.

MAYOR CAGGIANO concurred with Commissioner Arserio's comments on how the money should be utilized for this year and recommended that they should help as many people with hardening their property as possible.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ responded to Mayor Caggiano's comments by saying that they would not be helping as many residents and said that she agreed with Vice Mayor Ruzzano.

COMMISSIONER JOANNE SIMONE said that if there were leaks in either the roof, windows or both, they should replace them respectively as she was there for helping the people and agreed to multiple items.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS confirmed that he would bring back this Item at the next City Commission meeting in a form of a Resolution and change the program back again.

MAYOR CAGGIANO thanked City Manager Curtis and the BC'S Homeownership team.

Discussion ensued.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ requested a total number of how many people had been helped and to what extent.

BC'S HOMEOWNERSHIP AND REPAIR SECTION MANAGER, WEISS confirmed to Commissioner Schwartz they would provide her with that information and advised that they would expand their quarterly report, pertaining to the Purchase Assistance but currently, they did not have anything finished as of September 30th, 2023.

2) PUBLIC COMMENTS

MAYOR CAGGIANO explained the protocol for speaking under Public Comments and the Consent Agenda and questioned if there was any one on Zoom.

RICH ALIANIELLO, 7631 NW 23RD STREET, discussed how he was selected last year for the Italian American Heritage Month and saluted the gentleman who accepted the award tonight. He referenced insurance premiums increasing.

TRACY VAN WINKLE, 1020 SW 61ST AVENUE questioned and discussed various issues concerning Item 7) B. ID 2023-335.

ELSA J. SANCHEZ, 6930 NW 15TH STREET, discussed the conduct of the lack of answers to questions raised from the public at the City Commission meetings and also, the lack of attendance. She thanked Chief of Police Galaska and Fire Chief Lorenzo for the Coffee with a Hero and she also discussed the same.

3) COMMISSION COMMENTS

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO highlighted the forthcoming Fall Festival and Trunk or Treat events. He referenced Ms. Sanchez's comments and explained that it was irresponsible for the City Commission to make kneejerk reactions without establishing the facts and information. He said that the City's staff were continuing to do a good job.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO confirmed that it was a good event today. He said not to watch the news. He agreed with Mr. Alianiello's comments on property insurance and discussed the effects of a possible strong hurricane. He highlighted the increase in property values in South Florida and discussed the forthcoming Trunk and Treat event.

MAYOR CAGGIANO concurred with some of the previous comments made by Commissioner Arserio and Vice Mayor Ruzzano. He asked the public to attend the City's events. He explained how the public could communicate with elected officials and the City staff and highlighted that he meets or talked with members of the public to discuss problems they have encountered but forewarned that he researched the topic before they met in person. He thanked the City department heads for assisting in the research.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ indicated that either her or the City Manager could usually answer less complex questions straightway and that she responded to texts and telephone calls. She highlighted that Walgreens was partaking in the National Prescription Drug Take Back Day event. She discussed today's Coffee with a Hero which she said was a lot of fun and referenced that the City should organize a similar event to Coral Springs - Slice of the Springs event.

COMMISSIONER SIMONE discussed the forthcoming International Folk Festival at the Northwest Focal Point Senior Center (NWFPSC). She highlighted the lack of visibility of a digital marquee sign and suggested that it could have been erected higher. She advised that if further digital marquee signs were installed in future, they needed to carefully consider the positioning of the same.

INTERIM CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES requested a shade session for Jonathan Shaw vs. City of Margate.

4) CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

CITY MANAGER CURTIS thanked the Police and Fire Department for the Coffee with a Hero event.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ thanked the City Manager Curtis for the newly replaced wall on 77th.

Discussion ensued.

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 2023-325](#) MOTION - APPROVAL OF CITY COMMISSION MINUTES: SEPTEMBER 6, 2023 REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING AND SEPTEMBER 11, 2023 CITY COMMISSION BUDGET HEARING

APPROVED

- B. [ID 2023-311](#) A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA, APPROVING AN AGREEMENT WITH H&H LIQUID SLUDGE DISPOSAL, INC. FOR THE TRANSPORT AND DISPOSAL OF DOMESTIC WATER AND WASTEWATER RESIDUALS FROM WATER AND WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANTS; PROVIDING FOR INITIAL ONE-YEAR TERM AND FOUR ONE YEAR RENEWAL PERIODS; AUTHORIZING THE ADMINISTRATION TO RENEW THIS AGREEMENT UNDER THE SAME TERMS WITHOUT FURTHER COMMISSION ACTION; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

APPROVED

- C. **ID 2023-329** ~~A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA, APPROVING A SOFTWARE-AS-A-SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH NEPTUNE TECHNOLOGY GROUP, INC. FOR WATER METER READING AND BILLING SERVICES, PROVIDING FOR INITIAL ONE-YEAR TERM WITH AUTOMATIC ANNUAL RENEWALS, PROVIDING FOR RENEWALS WITHOUT FURTHER COMMISSION ACTION, PROVIDING FOR TERMINATION~~

This Item was not heard.

- D. [ID 2023-336](#) RESOLUTION - APPROVING A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF \$400,603.00 OF SURPLUS FEDERAL FUNDS FROM FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 EDWARD BYRNE MEMORIAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT-COUNTYWIDE (JAG-C) PROGRAM TO BROWARD COUNTY FOR THE BROWARD COUNTY COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP DIVISION

APPROVED

Approval of the Consent Agenda

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

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

6) RESOLUTION(S)

- A. ID 2023-334** ~~A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA, APPROVING PARKS BOND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT CALYPSO COVE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PHASE I ACTIVITY CENTER AT A COST NOT TO EXCEED \$604,727.32; UTILIZING A PIGGYBACK OF LEAGUE OF OREGON CITIES RFP 2060 PARK, PLAYGROUND, AND RECREATION EQUIPMENT; PROVIDING FOR CONTINGENCY FUNDS; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE~~

This Item was not heard.

7) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

- A. [ID 2023-337](#)** DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION - SELECT A CHARITY TO RECEIVE CIVICPLUS DONATION OF \$1,500 AS PART OF THE CITY'S CIVIC EXPERIENCE GOLD AWARD

CITY MANAGER CURTIS explained that as well as being the Annual Award Winner for the Civic Experience Awards, the organization would make a \$1,500 donation to a charity of the City's choice and that he looked for the City Commission to make a motion for a charity in Margate and sought CONSENSUS to make that donation.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO congratulated the staff and City Commission for putting the program together and submitting and winning the award. He explained that he was unsure that he could pick an organization tonight and suggested that the candidates could submit a general application, essay or letter for review by the City Commission.

MAYOR CAGGIANO suggested giving it to NWFPSC.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ disagreed with Commissioner Caggiano's suggestion of the NWFPSC and indicated that they received funding from other sources.

Discussion ensued.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS said that he conversed with the City Commission respectively and a couple of charities within Margate were discussed which would also help the City give back to the Community. He identified the organizations of the American Legion and Cats Exclusive, Inc and indicated that although they could ask for applications, this would prolong the process.

MAYOR CAGGIANO liked Cats Exclusive, Inc.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO did not have a problem with Cats Exclusive, Inc.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO explained that his wife had dealt with Cats Exclusive, Inc. and said that they were a great company that went above and beyond in their City. He said that the City Commission all shared a love for animals and that Cats Exclusive, Inc. would be a good choice but was unsure if they would accept the donation. He believed that the City would not necessarily receive the best applicant but thought the NWFPSC or the veterans were also both great ideas.

Discussion ensued on Cats Exclusive, Inc.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ said she was fine with Cats Exclusive, Inc.

COMMISSIONER SIMONE said she was fine with Cats Exclusive, Inc.

A motion was made by Commissioner Arserio, seconded by Commissioner Schwartz, that the CivicPlus donation of \$1,500, should be awarded to Cats Exclusive, Inc.

MS. VAN WINKLE advised that the animals did not go to any place that was not a non-kill shelter in the City.

Discussion ensued.

The motion carried as follows:

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

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:01pm.

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: 864 2530 8125 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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