



City of Margate

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

Meeting Minutes City Commission Workshop

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

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

Wednesday, May 11, 2022

11:30 AM

Leonard Weisinger Community Center
6199 NW 10th Street Margate, Florida 33063

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

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

The panel introduced themselves.

MOMENT OF SILENCE - INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1) DISCUSSION

A. [ID 2022-234](#) DISCUSSION WITH BROWARD SHERIFF GREGORY TONY

BROWARD COUNTY SHERIFF OFFICE (BSO) GREGORY TONY introduced his team members. He spoke of his attendance at yesterday's Broward County Commission meeting pertaining to communications where he highlighted an incident that occurred in Hollywood. He continued to discuss that incident together with BSO's response times and referenced articles written in newspapers which he indicated were not always accurate. He addressed and rectified issues concerning the communications and the 911 calls and said that BSO answers over 2,600,000 service calls per year. He advised that the national protocols and standards which were in compliance required their dispatch personnel to answer 90% of incoming calls within 15 seconds. He indicated that better and consistent staffing could help improve that data and not operate under the current model of minimum staffing protocols. His philosophy was to change that approach and focus on how to get to maximum staffing at the dispatch centers which would cost money. He conducted a PowerPoint presentation which highlighted:

- The emphasis for an increased budget;
- Compared BSO's data and employee salaries to those in neighboring cities and counties;
- Advised that the Association of Public Safety Communication Officials (APCO)

recommended approximately 534 for staffing which would be needed over time;

- Recruitment strategies; and
- Public-safety answering point (PSAP) needed to be within a BSO independent structure such as a state of the art facility.

A question and answer session ensued between the City Commission, City Manager and BSO Tony and his team members which included:

- The recent meeting with Broward County's (BC) Commissioners;
- Budgets;
- BSO's quality of service;
- Returning funds to BSO, to BC and under funding;
- Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) union re-negotiating contracts;
- BSO transferring emergency calls to the local cities;
- Improving BSO's technology;
- BSO's continued problems which had not been repaired since their last attendance at a City Commission meeting approximately one year ago; and
- Staffing and training issues.

Meeting went into Recess.

Meeting Reconvened at 1:55pm.

MAYOR ANTONIO V. ARSERIO thanked BSO Tony for attending. He indicated that the City Commission could share their thoughts and ideas for the future. He acknowledged that the City Commission would need some more information and that they could not make any decisions today.

COMMISSIONER ARLENE R. SCHWARTZ requested the link of yesterday's BC's City Commission meeting with BSO Tony.

Discussion ensued on yesterday's BC's City Commission meeting.

CHIEF OF POLICE, JOSEPH GALASKA, informed Commissioner Schwartz that Margate did not have the capability to dispatch from their Police Department. He advised that the current telecommunications staff were not certified nor had the equipment to properly dispatch. He continued to discuss the process of non-emergency calls received in his department.

Discussion ensued on BSO's 911 Communications.

MAYOR ARSERIO advised that today's Workshop was originally planned to discuss the potential of the BSO contract but they incorporated the 911 Communications which he emphasized was very important regardless of whether the City did this independently or through BSO. He said that either option was not a quick fix solution to the 911 system. He discussed the infrastructure if the City decided to operate the 911 system independently which would probably have to be paid for if they went through a public safety bond in 2024. He said that if this passed, then the City would have to execute it. He liked BSO's Tony proposal of utilizing space that they would gain by building a training center. He indicated that if 911 Communications got released from BC back to the BSO and BC properly funded BSO Tony's budget, then BSO could possibly implement this within two years. He said that he was not opposed to the City doing their own communication but they would need to be able to pay for it. He explained that if BSO was able to consolidate their PSAP system and get it into one facility and that they

were able to fully staff it and work out all the kinks, in a perfect world, the City would have a quicker path to a better 911 system versus doing it independently. He summed up by saying that he was looking for more information to make an educated decision and referenced numbers. He explained that the City Commission would have to make a decision on which route they wanted to go.

VICE MAYOR ANTHONY N. CAGGIANO advised that he had a one-to-one conversation with BSO Tony where he queried expectant increases in the budget on an annual basis. He explained that BSO Tony said that he tried to keep the increase to five percent or less. He forewarned that if Margate went to BSO, every year, the City would be expecting an increase of costs of approximately five percent. He indicated that in another 12 years, there was a possibility of that increase doubling and that they would have to explain this to their residents.

Discussion ensued on cost and technology.

MICHAEL WALLACE, PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER, indicated that the technology used to be replaced every 10 years. He explained that Internet Protocol Address (IP) was used but from an industry standpoint, technology was now replaced on a five - seven year basis which was also dependent on the type of equipment used such as a phone, Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) or radio system.

Discussion ensued including conducting a resident survey to include the appetite for applying for a bond and whether they would prefer to be independent or join with BSO.

COMMISSIONER ARLENE R. SCHWARTZ indicated that it was not a good time to talk about BSO and referenced the Sun-Sentinel article pertaining to unanswered calls and a property burning to the ground were not explained. She was also shocked that the Police Union had never asked for a pay rise. She indicated that after listening to BSO's problems, she would not go to them but would support any funding. She indicated that it would be difficult to ask residents to give up Margate Fire Department to BSO.

Discussion ensued on the continued problems at BSO and whether the City should be independent.

CITY MANAGER CALE CURTIS read the results of a previous residential survey pertaining to BSO and 911 dispatch. He said that they could survey the residents again.

Discussion ensued on conducting surveys.

COMMISSIONER JOANNE SIMONE explained that she would like to do a survey which needed to be very specific and then they would be able to establish if the residents wanted to pay for a 911 Communication system. She indicated that the City did not have the money to do the 911 Communications. She informed that the City had the \$10,000,000 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds as a start-up for the 911 Communications but they would not have the money for the reoccurring costs and spoke on the importance of letting the residents decide.

Discussion ensued including providing transparency to residents of the yearly costs if they wanted the City to independently run the 911 Communications.

COMMISSIONER SIMONE said that she would like to believe BSO Tony that things would improve.

Discussion ensued including BSO obtaining a functioning Communication system.

COMMISSIONER TOMMY RUZZANO did not have a problem with a survey but did not believe that the City would be able to sustain their own 911 Communications. He said that the in-house 911 Communications was a great theory but highlighted potential maintenance difficulties. He questioned if the City could devise a 555 telephone number where it went directly to Margate. He also discussed his concerns that BSO did not have the funding to maintain or recruit staff as opposed to neighboring counties that offered a better salary. He said that the City should give BSO Tony a little more time to see if he could obtain more funding from BC, failing which, he could go to the State Governor.

Discussion ensued on BSO's funding, salaries and training and the City independently running their own 911 Communications.

MAYOR ARSERIO said that he thought that the City Commission got a CONSENSUS to obtain further information, conduct a survey and come up with some concept questions that they would review and provide input.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS explained that he would work with Chief of Police Galaska on getting a better process, factor in a cost to the residents and then start building the questions for a survey. He explained that the timing of the survey was very important as they were in a very economically strained period of time, regardless of the situation, and that any sort of increase could prove difficult. He also expressed that he would like to seek further survey expert opinion.

Discussion ensued on surveys.

MAYOR ARSERIO invited the public to make comment on this Item.

RICHARD ZUCCHINI, 380 LAKEWOOD CIRCLE E, #B disagreed if it resulted in an increased millage. He said that he would not use the ARPA funds for this Item which he believed should be used for structural issues that the City would ordinarily be able to do.

MAYOR ARSERIO responded to Mr. Zucchini's comments on the Fire Assessment fee.

Discussion ensued.

MAYOR ARSERIO questioned the City Commission if they had any next steps on the BSO contract and whether there was more information that was required or outstanding questions that needed to be reverted back to BSO Tony.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ indicated that there were still outstanding questions from the 14 other cities that needed to be addressed before Margate acted further.

MAYOR ARSERIO explained that they did not want to get drawn into any political situations that the other 14 cities may have. He suggested that they should contact BSO Tony if they had any further questions for Margate's perspective without the need to involve the other cities.

Discussion ensued including ad valorem taxes for other cities and the pros and cons of joining BSO versus being independent.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO explained that he was a strong believer in regionalization but was unsure if this would ever happen. He referenced staff morale and said that if

Margate's firefighters wanted to go to BSO and that they could afford to do so at a lower rate than what they were currently paying together with trying to establish what the increase was over the past years and also try and negotiate something where it would be more economical for BSO to take it over and liability issues, then the City could go from there. He said that if it could be worked out, he was in favor of that proposal.

MAYOR ARSERIO concurred with Commissioner Ruzzano subject to receiving the data so that he could demonstrate to their constituents that this was the most cost effective way for the City.

Discussion ensued on whether they would receive a better service by going to BSO in comparison to being independent and to organize a publicly noticed meeting to discuss regionalization.

MAYOR ARSERIO concluded by explaining that the City Commission Workshop had been productive and that they have provided some direction. He explained that as there was a lot of information and moving parts, this Item was never easy. He appreciated everybody's input and said that hopefully, the staff could get them some more information.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS said that he would touch base with the City Commission to provide updates.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ requested a Workshop on Code.

MAYOR ARSERIO said that they discussed specific Code items at the last City Commission Workshop and asked if Commissioner Schwartz was referring to the general Code.

Discussion ensued on the City's Code.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:51pm.

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 Boards may be in attendance and may participate at the meeting.