



# 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*

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Wednesday, April 27, 2022

10:00 AM

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

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### CALL TO ORDER

### ROLL CALL

**Present:** 4 - Commissioner Joanne Simone, Commissioner Arlene R. Schwartz, Commissioner Tommy Ruzzano and Mayor Antonio V. Arserio

**Not Present:** 1 - Vice Mayor Anthony N. Caggiano

### MOMENT OF SILENCE - INVOCATION

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MAYOR ANTONIO V. ARSERIO asked if they could move Item 1D. to the top of the Agenda.

CONSENSUS was given by the City Commission to move Item 1D. up after the Pledge of Allegiance.

MAYOR ARSERIO explained the protocols and procedures for the City Commission Workshop.

COMMISSIONER TOMMY RUZZANO questioned whether there was a timeframe to utilize The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

MAYOR ARSERIO believed that at the last City Commission meeting, they declared how they were using the funds for the purposes of the ARPA funds which had freed up their budget.

CITY MANAGER CALE CURTIS confirmed that at the last City Commission meeting, they had met their reporting deadline of April 30th based on the City Commission adopting the Resolution of the revenue loss. Now that the funds were freed up, there was still an expense timeline which was approximately in 2026. He advised that they had some significant time to go through this which was going to be a living, breathing, expense document that changed based on their needs and actual incoming costs but it

was an expense plan for the next few years.

MAYOR ARSERIO introduced the panel.

Discussion ensued.

## 1) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

### D. [ID 2022-190](#) DISCUSSION - REDEVELOPMENT OF CENTENNIAL PARK AT 7800 NW 19TH COURT

MAYOR ARSERIO explained that he would take comments from the public first. He believed that at the last City Commission meeting, there was an overwhelming CONSENSUS that they were not going to do a major redevelopment to Centennial Park (CP). He advised that the public had one minute to talk on this Item.

BRAM BOTTFELD, 7702 NW 19 CT., discussed his concerns on this Item and requested that they did not install new restrooms.

RUBI A. BARAD, 7905 NW 18 CT., only wanted an improvement to the playground.

GAIL POLICELLA, 1801 NW 80 AVE, requested the City to consider downsizing the plans for CP.

LESLEY A. WILLIAMS, 7843 SUNFLOWER DRIVE, outlined his concerns and discussed the proposed plans for the park.

NORMAN GRAD, 7460 NW 18TH STREET, PALM SPRINGS III, had concerns if this Item would increase the traffic and discussed restrooms.

TRACY VAN WINKLE, 1020 SW 61ST AVENUE, suggested that if the proposed restroom installations was not needed at CP, it could be moved to Southgate.

BILL S., MARGATE RESIDENT, explained that he was only interested in minimal changes in CP. He indicated that Calypso Cove's courts had not been cleaned in over one year.

ANGELA CLARK read a statement on the potential of traffic increase and said that she was against the restrooms.

MADALINE EPSTEIN, 1904 NW 78 AVE, indicated that there were many incidents at CP.

PAT GOONAN, discussed fears of potential nighttime activities and referenced lighting, restrooms and a walking path.

MAYOR ARSERIO wrapped up the Public Discussion and said that Chief of Police Galaska and Parks and Recreational Director Jones had taken notes of the comments made. He said that initially, he was not a fan of doing huge improvements to a neighborhood park. He indicated that there was CONSENSUS from the residents that they did not want a splash pad, extra parking or restrooms. He said that there was a CONSENSUS to improve the playground and he discussed lighting. He said it was a neighborhood park and preferred to have limited lighting and leave it as it was but would

not be opposed to making improvements to a walkway or creating a new walking path.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO appreciated the residents attending this meeting and indicated that they did not have to worry about a new restroom being installed. He outlined the concerns of the residents which was refurbishing and possibly covering the basketball court. He said that he would like to see the installation of a continuous PVC fence on one side, a covered playground and more shade coverings. He also referenced benches, more trees and landscaping, widening the path and some exercise equipment which they could probably get from Banks Fields which was never used.

COMMISSIONER JOANNE SIMONE explained that after further analyzing this park and speaking and listening to residents, she agreed that if she lived nearby, she would not want the lighting, traffic or the restrooms. She heard that the residents wanted the walking path and agreed that installing a fence around the basketball court was the right idea. She asked whether it was possible to install some shade coverings possibly over basketball courts. She did not believe the other amenities planned were necessary and referenced Pickleball.

COMMISSIONER ARLENE R. SCHWARTZ explained that she always saw CP as a neighborhood community park and said that the only reason those amenities were thought of was because no one wanted them to think that it had been ignored. She asked the audience to raise their hands if they wanted Pickleball, a walking trail, exercise and shade pavilions. She fully supported not to spend the money at CP and retain it as a neighborhood park.

Discussion ensued on lighting and transferring the proposed amenities to another park.

VICE MAYOR ANTHONY N. CAGGIANO arrived and apologized for his temporary absence at the City Commission Workshop. He discussed the Light Emitting Diode (LED) being less intrusive on residents' homes and did not have a problem with cutting out some of the proposed items. He said that he was happy with what the residents wanted.

Discussion ensued on the covered shade pavilions and LED lighting.

PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR MICHAEL A. JONES explained that he did not need any further clarification and indicated that he had direction from what the residents had requested and also received the City Commission's feedback. He advised that they would analyze their current construction documents and see how they could either modify them or whether they could come up with a new plan in terms of pulling permits and getting shovels in the ground. He questioned whether they wanted lights in the playground.

MAYOR ARSERIO recommended motion sensor lights and also discussed boat ramps.

PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR JONES confirmed that there was no boat launch in the plan and Public Works Storm Water used their boats for maintenance purposes but he did not believe they utilized that location.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO discussed close circuit television (CCTV).

Discussion ensued on installing CCTV.

MAYOR ARSERIO summed up this Item by explaining to Parks and Recreation Director

Jones said that he should have received enough clarification from them to continue to move forward although it was not a final decision. He advised that when the new plans were crafted, it would be presented at a future City Commission meeting and that they would have some form of notification specific to the surrounding areas. He thanked the public for attending and reminded them that they could contact the City Commission or staff if they require updates.

**A. [ID 2022-192](#) DISCUSSION - AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT FUNDS**

CITY MANAGER CURTIS gave a brief synopsis of this Item and introduced Joseph Sheets who provided a presentation at the last City Commission Workshop. He indicated that this presentation would be similar but they had changed the expense plan which did not need to be voted upon, approved nor adopted today. He sought ideas and opportunities for utilizing the ARPA funds where they could be put into the community for future City projects.

MAYOR ARSERIO explained to the public that the City received \$10,000,000 from the ARPA funding that could go towards revenue loss. He advised that the City had met their requirement which would be utilized for some of the items that they would discuss today and recapped what was discussed at the previous City Commission meeting pertaining to the 150 items the funds could be used for.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES GROUP (GSG) INC., SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER, JOSEPH SHEETS, gave a PowerPoint presentation. He discussed projects and presented a spending plan for the ARPA Funds.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS thanked Mr. Sheets for his presentation and explained that what they had before them was the draft expense plan for the City's different pockets of funding. He indicated that based upon the feedback from their last City Commission meeting, they wanted to ensure that the funds were there to help businesses, residents and City infrastructure. He asked the City Commission for feedback and direction. He explained that Public Works' Quonset hut replacement was a round storage unit at that was falling apart and that they were replacing it with a storage facility.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO queried the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) relief grant.

Discussion ensued.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO discussed a return on investment (ROI) and provided a detailed priority list of areas which he believed the money could be utilized which included:

- Storm water piping lining;
- Driveway expansions with matching grants;
- Roofs;
- Improving the City's canals;
- City-wide digitalized customer service program;
- Cross walk in school zones;
- CCTV;
- The 911 system; and
- Solar energy.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ informed that she invited a representative from AT&T to talk about the fiber network and the WiFi in the City.

VICTOR BENINATE, REPRESENTATIVE FROM AT&T, said that ARPA was a work in progress. He understood the goals of the City and would see if AT&T could respond. He provided a business card to Commissioner Schwartz and said he was available 24/7 with any questions or assistance.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ discussed the poor WiFi in the City's buildings and parks and she learned during the heights of the pandemic, that many children did not have access. She referenced a shelter for police vehicles and asked whether fire trucks were sitting outside in the rain.

FIRE DIVISION CHIEF ESTEBAN ERCHED explained that the intent would be to have a centralized area to park their fire trucks in a covered area where the sun did not destroy the paint. He explained that quint fire trucks was a line of defense to fight fire to keep the residents safe which was also utilized for commercial use.

Discussion ensued on the covered area for the City trucks.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ also discussed about cleaning up the City's waterways.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS advised that the City had a couple of different resources for canal cleaning and explained the process.

Discussion ensued.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR, GIOVANNI BATISTA, explained that there were multiple ways of being able to dispose of all the eelgrass and tapegrass that was growing in the canal system.

Discussion ensued on the waterways.

COMMISSIONER JOANNE SIMONE advised that safety was paramount and that many of the items were more of a wish list and not necessarily things that the City needed to spend money on. She discussed the 911 Communications and referenced a recent meeting between Broward County Sheriff Office (BSO) Tony and the BSO. She said that she would like to see the funding go to public safety and infrastructure and referenced roads, unlevelled sidewalks and curbs. She indicated that the budget needed a thorough review to where it could be freed up to fund other projects. She discussed her concerns about allocating money to businesses and also said that the City needed to be looking for grants. She said that storm water lining was really essential and that she was a big proponent of the school zones.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS explained that the majority of their plan accomplished that as the funding would go towards public safety and infrastructure.

Discussion ensued including whether the ARPA funding should be spent exclusively on the 911 Communications.

MAYOR ARSERIO informed that he wanted to ensure that the ARPA funding that the City Commission gave City Manager Curtis had some form of direction. He indicated that the City Commission agreed on the public safety aspect for the City's communication and it appeared that most of them were in agreement with what was listed. He asked the City Commission if they generally approved of the items listed and at a later date, they could assess how much they needed to spend on each item.

Discussion ensued on what items could be eliminated.

VICE MAYOR CAGGIANO said that he would like to remove \$500,000 for the COVID-19 relief grant and would prefer to use the funds towards relining. He agreed with Commissioner Simone's comments on the 911 Communications system and referenced Coral Springs.

MAYOR ARSERIO asked for CONSENSUS to either move forward with a COVID-19 grant or eliminate it. He said that he would like to see some relief go to Margate's businesses.

The City Commission poll carried as follows:

VICE MAYOR CAGGIANO – No.

MAYOR ARSERIO – Yes.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO – Yes.

COMMISSIONER SIMONE – No.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ – Yes, but as a low priority.

MAYOR ARSERIO was not opposed to the Quonset hut but that the number needed to be significantly less.

CONSENSUS from the City Commission that the Quonset hut number should be lower.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ asked about the process for Local Business Tax Receipt (LBTR).

CITY MANAGER CURTIS explained that the City did not have a software program that appropriately tracked LBTR.

Discussion ensued on the LBTR system, general fund costs and public safety.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS advised that this would have to come back to the City Commission in the form of a budget amendment. He said that he had received some direction on shifting funds around but indicated that it would be impossible to make all five City Commissioners happy with the revised expense plan. He informed that there was a variety of different priorities and that he would try to accommodate for each of the City Commissioners which he believed was somewhat close and he would tweak it to make it better.

Discussion ensued including narrowing down the list to 10 items and the 911 Communications.

MAYOR ARSERIO questioned if he could poll the City Commission to see if they could put the \$10,000,000 exclusively towards the 911 Communications.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS thought that they could put money towards start-up costs and the infrastructure but he would need time to work with the Chief of Police and the Communications Manager for a timeline and costs and then he would revert back to the City Commission.

Discussion ensued on the City looking at the start-up costs and drafting up a revised priority list.

COMMISSIONER SIMONE requested the status of the bridge on Margate Boulevard.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR BATISTA, explained that the Margate bridge was covered under the surtax and that the City was seeking funding to cover the complete expense of the Margate bridge which had some repair needs. He advised that they were completing a design for it which was a Broward County requirement.

MAYOR ARSERIO advised the City Commission to submit their top 10 items that they wanted to see aside from 911 Communications.

Discussion ensued.

REPRESENTATIVE FROM AT&T explained that he did not know what they could do for \$250,000 in reference to improving the City's WiFi.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS indicated that it would be dependent on the number of parks to improve on the WiFi.

Discussion ensued on City parks having WiFi.

Meeting went into Recess.

Meeting Reconvened.

CONSENSUS was given by the City Commission to move Item 1E above Item 1B.

**E. [ID 2022-204](#) DISCUSSION - CHARTER AMENDMENT TO PROVIDE FOR AN ELECTED MAYOR**

MAYOR ARSERIO invited the public to speak on this Item.

ELSA J. SANCHEZ, 6930 NW 15TH STREET, requested further information on this Item before it was put on the ballot.

EDWARD A. DECRISTOFARO, 7805 WEST ATLANTIC BOULEVARD, questioned the benefit to Margate residents in having an elected Mayor and the cost to put this Item on the ballot.

JULIE JONES suggested how this Item could be processed.

TRACY VAN WINKLE suggested that the elected Mayor should have a term limit of two years and discussed the salary and bonus.

DONNA L. FELLOWS, 6108 NW 9TH COURT, believed that current City Commissioners should give up their seat if they want to run for Mayor.

LAUREN BERACHA, 6950 NW 14TH PLACE, agreed with Ms. Sanchez that all the information should be available prior to the election.

MAYOR ARSERIO thanked the public for their feedback. He believed that this Item should be as transparent as possible but indicated that the City would have to adhere to statutory requirements before it was put on the ballot.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO requested that at this stage, this Item should go on the ballot for the residents to vote on. He recommended either two or four year term limits

and advised that the Mayor was the highest paid, followed by the Vice Mayor so those positions were already receiving an increase in pay. He referenced how much this Item would cost and explained that every year, the City had budget Ordinances where it would have to come back for two readings. He sought clarity about the cost of advertising the Ordinance in the newspaper.

Discussion ensued on the Mayor and Vice Mayor's salaries.

CITY CLERK JENNIFER M. JOHNSON advised that the City had budgeted \$33,100 which included one extra page and she had discussed with Interim City Attorney Tolces as to whether the ballot question could fit on one page.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO indicated that there would be no increase or more money for the Margate residents to pay in terms of the Ordinance. He repeated that the Mayor should be chosen by the electorate and that they should stop the rotation. He believed that voting for a Mayor elect would add stability and proposed that this should come into effect in 2028 where the City would have at least three seats available.

MAYOR ARSERIO agreed with Commissioner Ruzzano's comments and believed that the residents should ultimately make that decision and that 2028 was ideal with the way that the seats worked. He explained that four years for an elect Mayor was no more or less than a City Commissioner.

Discussion ensued.

VICE MAYOR CAGGIANO stated that he was absolutely against this Item.

MAYOR ARSERIO asked to take a poll of who was for or against this Item.

VICE MAYOR CAGGIANO – said he was 100% against it.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ discussed this Item.

MAYOR ARSERIO – Yes.

Discussion ensued.

INTERIM CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES explained that he used the direction from the City Commission meeting to draft an Ordinance and said that he had copies and that sections would need to be discussed. He continued to outline the details on the Ordinance.

Discussion ensued on the language of the Ordinance and ballot.

INTERIM CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES repeated that if the City Commission wanted it on the November 2022 ballot, it would have to have a Second Reading no later than June 1st and in addition to that, the City would need time to advertise and that it would also need to have the correct Ordinance title. He advised that they could bring this Item back for further discussion at the next City Commission meeting and then they would just need to ensure that they had enough time for First and Second Reading.

Discussion ensued.

MAYOR ARSERIO said that they needed some sort of CONSENSUS to not do this or to move forward and to continue the process.

Discussion ensued.

**B. [ID 2022-189](#) DISCUSSION - CODE COMPLIANCE/RESIDENTIAL RENTAL UNIT INSPECTION PROGRAM**

CITY MANAGER CURTIS explained that they sent out notices for rentals for their registration and inspection program. He advised that many people had complied and paid but it also created some questions about the program. He also informed that this program was discussed at the previous City Commission Workshop.

MAYOR ARSERIO invited the public to speak on this Item before the City Commission.

PHILIP MORENO was concerned about condominium owners having to pay the inspection fee plus the registration and explained that he represented two other property owners' in Margate who were being charged these fees.

MAYOR ARSERIO explained that this Item pertained to the Rental Registration program that both he and Commissioner Ruzzano voted against. He informed that he was not against the Residential Rental Registration program but being a realtor and having also worked with the Board of Realtors who were involved in some of the discussions with this, he had some concerns on the fee structure and said their biggest objection was the annual inspection. He appreciated the winning side bringing back this Item and indicated the concern was with the renewal and annual inspection fees.

COMMISSIONER SIMONE requested City Manager Curtis to explain how the fee structure came about and the purpose of this program.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS explained that the purpose of the program was to address, for the most part, absentee landlords that allowed their properties to come out of compliance. He advised that the landlord registration program was widely used in neighboring cities and that the intent of the fee was to cover the cost of the administration fee and the cost of the inspection. He indicated that they would have additional Code Officers who would be able to go and address those rental properties and get them to come into compliance and improve the neighborhood. He also advised that their intent was to go heavy into the neighborhoods that had dilapidated rentals. He thought that in large, the program was successful and that they had received many registrations.

VICE MAYOR CAGGIANO explained that at the time, Code needed more resources. He also indicated that having the inspections performed encouraged people to fix their property.

COMMISSIONER SIMONE understood Vice Mayor Caggiano's comments pertaining to the single-family homes but the concern she heard from the condominium owners was that they did not maintain their ground.

Discussion ensued.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ commented on the roll call vote on Resolution 21-034 as being a 3-2 vote and Resolution 21-048 as being a 5-0 vote. She also suggested that they should do something with the renewal part of this Item.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS explained that they could re-evaluate but he suggested that they should keep the registration process in place for single family and multi-family. He advised that they would evaluate the fee structure both separately and there would be an

inspection and that they would be looking at exteriors. He said that they would look at the fee structure to see if they could create some way of separating single family and multi-family.

Discussion ensued.

CONSENSUS was given by the City Commission to move forward.

**C. [ID 2022-191](#) DISCUSSION - DRIVEWAYS AND SIDEWALKS**

CITY MANAGER CURTIS explained that over the last few months, the City had heard a variety of directions and questions on Code pertaining to replacement, width and setbacks of driveways and how they were also tied to parking issues. He informed that this Item was added to the Agenda to seek further discussion.

MAYOR ARSERIO sought clarification on the term driveways and sidewalks as to whether they were referring to single-family homes.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS informed that as this Item related to the topic of sidewalks, the City's Code was silent on who was responsible for maintaining this. He explained that in other cities, maintenance was making sure that it was clean and free of debris, pressure cleaned and that structural repairs was the responsibility of the City.

Discussion ensued on the number of cars per household and boats, driveway expansions, the width and cleaning of the sidewalks, a grant for driveway extensions, a fast-track permit process, residents maintaining sidewalks and involving the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA).

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES (DEES)  
DIRECTOR CURT KEYSER discussed Code issues pertaining to driveways and sidewalks.

Discussion ensued.

VICE MAYOR CAGGIANO requested Building Department Code Compliance Supervisor Scimeca to devise a document outlining his concerns, issues and solutions.

BUILDING DEPARTMENT CODE COMPLIANCE SUPERVISOR, JOSEPH H. SCIMECA, said that he was here for the City Commission.

Discussion ensued.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS referenced driveways and suggested that the City should adopt a sensible improvement to their driveway widths and once established, they could then change their Code that restricts parking on the grass.

Discussion ensued.

CONSENSUS was given by the City Commission for the City to get more information.

VICE MAYOR CAGGIANO left the meeting.

**E. [ID 2022-204](#) DISCUSSION - CHARTER AMENDMENT TO PROVIDE FOR AN ELECTED MAYOR**

CITY MANAGER CURTIS recapped on Item ID 2022-204 and discussed the process for the Ordinance.

Discussion ensued.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 2:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Transcribed by Salene E. Edwards

  
Jennifer M. Johnson, City Clerk

Date: 6/7/2022

**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.