

The Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Panama City Beach, Florida, and when permitted or required by the subject matter, the Panama City Beach Community Redevelopment Agency, held on April 9, 2020.

ROLL
MAYOR MIKE THOMAS

COUNCILORS:
PAUL CASTO
PHIL CHESTER
GEOFF MCCONNELL
HECTOR SOLIS

CITY MANAGER:
TONY O'ROURKE
INTERIM CITY CLERK:
JO SMITH
CITY ATTORNEY:
COLE DAVIS

Mayor Thomas called the Regular Meeting to order at 6 P.M. with all Councilmen, the City Manager, Interim City Clerk, and City Attorney present. City Attorney Myers attended virtually.

Councilman Casto gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor announced the Early Voting schedule and Super Tuesday Election Day. He also spoke of the anniversary of Sgt. Kevin Kight's death in the line of duty on March 27th, with his son now a full-time Police Officer at PCBPD. He asked Chief Whitman to come to the podium. Councilman Casto presented Chief Whitman with the Proclamation designating April 12-18, 2020 as "National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week" and read the Proclamation in its entirety. Chief Whitman thanked the Council on behalf of his men and women in the Comm Room.

Mayor Thomas asked if there were any additions or deletions to the Agenda. Councilman Casto asked for Agenda Item 11, *Resolution 20-93, Extension of COVID-19 Closures*, to be moved to the front of the Agenda. There were no objections.

Councilman Casto made the motion to approve the Agenda as amended. Second was by Councilman Solis and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:

Councilman Casto	Aye
Councilman Chester	Aye
Councilman McConnell	Aye
Councilman Solis	Aye
Mayor Thomas	Aye

PUBLIC COMMENTS (REGULAR NON-PUBLIC HEARINGS AND CONSENT ITEMS)

Mayor Thomas opened the Public Comments section at 6:06 P.M.

- 1 Mr. Mark Tate. Mr. Tate referred to an email he had sent to the Councilors and asked them to pay close attention.
- 2 Mr. Mark Mazarelli, 9820 Windbridge Lane. Mr. Mazarelli asked the Council to consider opening the sandy beach until noon for walking or jogging.
- 3 Ms. Debbie Ward, PIO. Ms. Ward recapped the emails, with one asking that the City should not contract for landscaping but perform the service itself. She said Mr. Shane Boyette was here from Gulf Power if any questions for him. She said she had twenty-seven emails to open the beach, largely from surfers. Seven were to keep the beaches closed. Four emails complained that the pool and pier were open, one email asked that the new Council choose the City Clerk. She encouraged the community to complete the 2020 Census. Ms. Ward added that the social media since March 1st was up seven thousand viewers, with now forty-two thousand followers. Mayor Thomas said he had received a text that the meeting broadcasting on the City website was good, while the Facebook reception was poor but not something the City could fix.

Mayor Thomas closed the Public Comments section at 6:14 P.M.

CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Smith read the Consent Agenda Items by title.

ITEM 1 RESOLUTION 20-91, BID AWARD- UTILITIES DEPARTMENT LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE SERVICES. "A Resolution of the City of Panama City Beach, Florida, approving an Agreement with Grass Cutters Lawn and Landscape of PC ,Inc., for Utilities Department Landscape Maintenance Services in the total amount of \$54,905.00".

ITEM 2 RESOLUTION 20-92, BID AWARD- CRA STREET SWEEPER. "A Resolution of the City of Panama City Beach, Florida, approving an Agreement with Ingram Equipment Company for the purchase of a street sweeper in the basic amount of \$243,412.50".

Councilman Casto made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilman Chester said he had received a telephone call from bidders not included, and Mr. Campbell replied that other bidders had not met the specs for the bid. **Second was by Councilman McConnell and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:**

Councilman Casto	Aye
Councilman Chester	Aye
Councilman McConnell	Aye
Councilman Solis	Aye
Mayor Thomas	Aye

REGULAR AGENDA

ITEM 11 RESOLUTION 20-93, EXTENSION OF COVID-19 CLOSURES. Mr. Davis read Resolution 20-93 by title. Councilman Chester said he favored keeping the beaches closed because the County had voted to keep the unincorporated areas closed. He suggested keeping them closed until the next meeting. Mr. Davis explained all were COVID Closures expired onl May 1st except for the sandy beach which expired noon tomorrow. He said the only action needed related to the sandy beach closure.

Councilman Solis said if the sandy beach was opened, it would not only be locals. He reminded that thousands of condo owners lived out of state and they would rather be here at the beach. He said people should shelter in place. He reminded about Mexico Beach where people were coming in shuttles to the sandy beach. He said the virus cases were rising, and the ERs were only testing if being admitted to the hospital. If not, they were advised to go home for fourteen days. He said the virus would reignite if opening the beaches too early. He recommended staying closed at least two more weeks.

Councilman McConnell said he had not seen any change in the last two weeks. He concurred in delaying the opening until the next meeting.

Councilman Casto agreed with the Bay County Commissioners in keeping the beaches closed and it was important to be in lockstep with the County, not having two sets of rules. He recommended keeping the beaches closed until April 23rd.

Mayor Thomas said he disagreed. He said Bay County closing the beaches for another two weeks put a strain on the City and we almost had to follow their lead. He said the City has the pool and pier open but closes our largest park. He said he thought that action was wrong.

Councilman Solis made the motion to approve Resolution 20-93 and closing the sandy beaches until April 23rd. Second was by Councilman Chester and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:

Councilman Casto	Aye
Councilman Chester	Aye
Councilman McConnell	Aye
Councilman Solis	Aye
Mayor Thomas	Aye

Councilman Solis asked about the May events which drew large crowds. Councilman McConnell asked if any large events were at the first of May. Mr. O'Rourke responded that the Jeep Beach Jam had been asked to reschedule to mid-June and discussions were being held due to a conflict with already scheduled Frank Brown Park league games. Mr. O'Rourke said they were determining good dates.

ITEM 1 ORDINANCE 1511, ST. JOE FOUR CORNERS LARGE-SCALE COMP PLAN AMENDMENT, 2ND READING, PUBLIC HEARING. Mr. Davis read Ordinance 1511 by title. Mayor Thomas opened the Public Hearing at 6:30 P.M. and invited comments. There were none. He closed the Public Hearing at 6:31 P.M.

Councilman McConnell made the motion to approve Ordinance 1511. Second was by Councilman Solis and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:

Councilman Casto	Aye
Councilman Chester	Aye
Councilman McConnell	Aye
Councilman Solis	Aye
Mayor Thomas	Aye

ITEM 2 ORDINANCE 1512, ST. JOE FOUR CORNERS REZONING, 2ND READING, PUBLIC HEARING. Mr. Davis read Ordinance 1512 by title. The Mayor opened the Public Hearing at 6:32 P.M. There were no comments. Mr. Davis asked that the Public Hearing be continued until June 10th. There were no objections.

ITEM 3 ORDINANCE 1516, GULF POWER FRANCHISE, 2ND READING, PUBLIC HEARING. Mr. Davis read Ordinance 1516 by title. The Mayor opened the Public Hearing at 6:33 P.M. and said the Gulf Power representative was on the line if there were any questions or comments. There were none. He closed the Public Hearing at 6:33 P.M.

Councilman Casto made the motion to approve Ordinance 1516. Second was by Councilman Chester and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:

Councilman Casto	Aye
Councilman Chester	Aye
Councilman McConnell	Aye
Councilman Solis	Aye
Mayor Thomas	Aye

ITEM 4 RESOLUTION 20-77, LANCE DUKE REVENUE CERTIFICATE. Mr. Davis read Resolution 20-77 by title. The Mayor asked for questions or comments. There were none.

Councilman Chester made the motion to approve Resolution 20-77. Second was by Councilman Solis and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:

Councilman Casto	Aye
Councilman Chester	Aye
Councilman McConnell	Aye
Councilman Solis	Aye
Mayor Thomas	Aye

ITEM 5 RESOLUTION 20-88, BID AWARD- PCB FIRE RESCUE CARDIAC MONITOR/DEFIBRILLATOR. Mr. Davis read Resolution 20-88 by title. The Mayor asked if any questions or comments; there were none.

Councilman Chester made the motion to approve Resolution 20-88. Second was by Councilman Casto and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:

Councilman Casto	Aye
Councilman Chester	Aye
Councilman McConnell	Aye
Councilman Solis	Aye
Mayor Thomas	Aye

ITEM 6 RESOLUTION 20-89, BID AWARD- RECRUITMENT AND TRACKING SERVICES AND BUDGET AMENDMENT #26. Mr. Davis read Resolution 20-89 by title. The Mayor asked if there were any questions or comments; there were none.

Councilman McConnell made the motion to approve Resolution 20-89. Second was by Councilman Chester and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:

Councilman Casto	Aye
Councilman Chester	Aye
Councilman McConnell	Aye
Councilman Solis	Aye
Mayor Thomas	Aye

The Mayor said this would allow online job applications and with the new website, make online payments easier.

ITEM 7 RESOLUTION 20-58, PARKING RATES. Mr. Davis read Resolution 20-58 by title. The Mayor asked if there were any questions or comments; there were none.

Councilman Casto made the motion to approve Resolution 20-58. Second was by Councilman Chester and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:

Councilman Casto	Aye
Councilman Chester	Aye
Councilman McConnell	Aye
Councilman Solis	Aye
Mayor Thomas	Aye

ITEM 8 RESOLUTION 20-94, BID AWARD- WEBSITE REDESIGN. Mr. Davis read Resolution 20-94 by title. The Mayor called for comments; there were none.

Councilman McConnell made the motion to approve Resolution 20-94. Second was by Councilman Casto. Councilman Solis said this was already a previously approved budgeted item. Councilman McConnell said the big ticket items were on hold. **With nothing further, the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:**

Councilman Casto	Aye
Councilman Chester	Aye
Councilman McConnell	Aye
Councilman Solis	Aye
Mayor Thomas	Aye

ITEM 9 RESOLUTION 20-90, TEMPORARY CITY CLERK CONTRACT. Mr. Davis read Resolution 20-90 by title. The Mayor called for comments; there were none.

Councilman Casto made the motion to approve Resolution 20-90. Second was by Councilman McConnell and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:

Councilman Casto	Aye
Councilman Chester	Aye
Councilman McConnell	Aye
Councilman Solis	Aye
Mayor Thomas	Aye

Mayor Thomas thanked Ms. Smith.

ITEM 10 CITY CLERK SEARCH- DISCUSSION. Mr. O'Rourke explained the plan for three models available for Council selection, inhouse, using an executive firm, or the vetting process. He said he had spoken with Mr. Colin Baenziger and a plan could be his searching for the candidates, vetting them and narrowing the total to seven to ten of the strongest applicants, and the Council interviewing the top five. The interviews would tentatively be mid-June, using ZOOM if necessary. To lower the costs, the City would do the advertising in the Florida League of Cities, Florida City Clerk Association, and NEOGOV. A steering committee could be formed which would drive the process as it was the Council's decision and employee. The applications would be due June 1st. Mr. O'Rourke said this was a fair and reasonable contract with the firm's level of vetting outstanding. He said the plan would be for the new Clerk to start August 1st.

Mayor Thomas said Mr. Baenziger researches very deep. He said if the Council followed the process, a good qualified person would be found.

Councilman McConnell said he favored the hybrid process. There were no further comments.

ITEM 12* CITY COUNCIL ACCOMPLISHMENTS, PAST FOUR YEARS-DISCUSSION. Mr. O'Rourke listed the top ten accomplishments for the current Council over the last four years: included on the list were construction of the new City Hall (with no debt), construction of the third Fire Station, Bay Parkway Phases 1 and 2, completion of the CRA Segment 2, approved a CRA Assessment for the continued maintenance of

the Front Beach Road CRA, purchased land for the new Wastewater Treatment Facility, implemented mandatory garbage collection, approved a Fire Assessment to fund the operations for the third Fire Station, created new positions within City Hall, and revamped Code Enforcement and added employees.

DELEGATIONS

Mayor Thomas opened the Delegations portion of the meeting at 6:50 P.M.

1 Mr. Michael Steinkirchner, Evergreen Street. Mr. Steinkirchner thanked Mayor Thomas and Councilman Solis for their service. He said he thought using the Colin Baenziger firm was an excellent idea. He recommended a gradual reopening of the beach.

With no further comments, this section was closed at 6:53 P.M.

ATTORNEY REPORT

Mr. Davis clarified that the County had closed the beach for two weeks. He thanked the Council for its service and their trust over the past four years. He applauded the accomplishments of the Council. Mayor Thomas said it had been a pleasure working with the Counselors after working many years with their boss, Mr. Doug Sale.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Mr. O'Rourke thanked the staff who provided the essential core services to the community. He said the Fire Department continued to provide daily temperature checks and masks were available for the employees working outdoors. He said the City had obtained rooms at the Holiday Inn Express for quarantine purposes if needed for the Police and Fire Departments. Lowes had built two decontamination units to keep our people safe.

Mr. O'Rourke said the Employee Survey was due April 15th. He suggested postponing the Community Survey until mid-summer.

He planned for Ms. White to have the Financial Management Policy ready by May 7th, which would highlight the accounting, reporting, and auditing operations. It would include the five-year financial plan and cash management. The Council would review and adopt which would provide safeguards.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Solis said he had not served in the military but it had been an honor and privilege to serve this community. He spoke of the citizens who helped in his election, the 600 who demanded changes and encouraged him to run for office. Those changes brought families to the beach in March along with college students who respected the City. He also thanked the visitors and encouraged everyone to be safe.

Councilman McConnell thanked Mayor Thomas and Councilman Solis for the work they did for the four years and that he had learned a lot over his two years with them. He said Mayor Thomas had done a lot of work for both the County and City. He said he looked forward to the Financial Management Plan. He also encouraged everyone to complete the Census as the 16% return rate to date was abysmal.

Councilman Casto thanked Mayor Thomas and Councilman Solis for their public service and sacrifice. It was not always easy and many hard decisions were made. He said the City had survived Hurricane Michael and would survive the pandemic. He thanked Mayor Thomas for his thirty years of public service, beginning with Civil Service in the City. He wished them both a happy retirement.

Councilman Chester said it had been a pleasure working with the Mayor and Councilman Solis, even if they had not always agreed. He thanked the City employees, going through these uncertain times, and the community would get through it.

Mayor Thomas said he agreed with self-distancing for everybody's health but that he felt the government was telling the people too much to do. He recommended not allowing the people on the beach to lay on towels but use the sand for exercise. He said bad things happened to people when they were confined to their homes. He recommended that the Council meet with the Bay County Commissioners before voting again, to work something out. He said the County understood the role that the City played in funding, and that plans needed to be better. He continued that his tenure had been an experience, this being the first time in twenty-four years that his name was not on the ballot. He said he enjoyed being on the Council, the many accomplishments for the community over the past years.

With nothing further, the meeting was adjourned at 7:21 P.M.

READ AND APPROVED this 14th of May, 2020.

- Any item noted with an asterisk are taken both by the City Council and the Panama City Beach Redevelopment Agency jointly and concurrently.

IN THE EVENT OF A CONFLICT BETWEEN THE FOREGOING MINUTES AND A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT OF THESE MINUTES, THE FOREGOING MINUTES SHALL CONTROL.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk (Interim)