

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 26, 2018.

ROLL

MAYOR MIKE THOMAS

COUNCILORS:

PAUL CASTO
PHIL CHESTER
GEOFF MCCONNELL
HECTOR SOLIS

CITY MANAGER:

MARIO GISBERT

CITY CLERK:

JO SMITH

CITY ATTORNEY:

AMY MYERS

Mayor Thomas called the Regular Meeting to order at 9 A.M. with Councilman Chester and Councilman Solis, the City Manager, City Clerk and City Attorney present. Mayor Thomas said the meeting would begin with the investiture of the new Council members.

Councilman-elect Paul Casto, accompanied by his wife Cathi, took his Oath of Office administered by Pastor Gregory George. The audience responded with applause. He then assumed his seat on the dais. Councilman-elect Geoff McConnell and family came to the podium and he introduced his son Jordan who administered the Oath of Office. The audience responded with applause. He then assumed his seat on the dais.

Pastor Gregory George of the Gulf Beach Baptist Church gave the invocation and Councilman Casto led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Thomas announced the upcoming Community Events.

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 12, 2018 were read. **Councilman Chester made the motion to approve the Minutes as prepared. Second was by Councilman McConnell and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:**

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

Mayor Thomas asked if there were any additions or deletions to the Agenda. Councilman Solis asked to add a discussion about investment opportunities and options. The Mayor asked to add a discussion about Spring Break. There were no objections. **Councilman Solis made the motion to approve the Agenda as amended. 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 |

PRESENTATIONS

1 PRESENTATION TO PAUL WOLFORD AND RESORT COLLECTIONS GROUP FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT. Councilman Casto asked Chief Whitman and Mr. Paul Wolford to join him at the podium. Mr. Wolford was accompanied by other members of the Resort Collections group. Chief Whitman praised Mr. Wolford and his team for their assistance to the Police Department and presented him with a plaque of Appreciation for their efforts. Mr. Wolford thanked Chief Whitman and stated they wanted to help in every way possible. The audience responded with applause.

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

Mayor Thomas opened the Public Comments section of the meeting at 9:10 A.M. and invited comments.

1 Mr. Tom Klomps, 614 Poinsettia Court. Mr. Klomps asked about Consent Item #2, *Bid Award- CRA Landscape Maintenance Services Agreement*, and commented about the landscaping on the existing CRA roadways being overgrown and Blocking drivers' views. He recommended low self-maintaining foliage for the roads. He also nominated Councilman Casto for Vice-Mayor.

2 Mr. Neel Bennett, 15238 Front Beach Road. Mr. Bennett said it had been a good Spring Break and March with a new class of people, and that it would be a mistake to extend the no drinking ban. He mentioned the complications of using Easter as the deadline as the date changed every year.

3 Mr. Paul Dalton, 107 Manistee. Mr. Dalton asked how long the CRA Landscaping Maintenance Services Agreement would last.

4 Mr. Tom Trossen, 107 Heron Turn. Mr. Trossen asked about the economic impact of the alcohol ban on businesses and the City, and if that impact drove other decisions made by the City. He asked if an economic study had been prepared for the alcohol ban.

With no further comments, the Public Comments section was closed at 9:18 A.M. Mayor Thomas asked Mr. Gisbert if a study had been prepared. Councilman Solis spoke of the cost for additional emergency services during March 2015 and the lost revenue for March in 2016 and 2017. The numbers for 2018 were not yet available but revenue had improved in 2017 and he had heard from businesses that their revenue this year was better. Regarding the City, he said there were not the additional emergency services costs from the prior years. Councilman Solis said the City was going in the right direction.

Mr. Trossen spoke of the City promoting itself and the improved image. Mayor Thomas replied that the TDC did the promotions.

Ms. Myers responded to Mr. Dalton that the CRA Landscape Maintenance contract was a two-year contract with three one-year renewals. Councilman Solis commented that the issues mentioned by Mr. Klomps were important and that anything viewed as an obstruction should be checked by Staff. Ms. Myers said if this item was to be discussed, it should be moved from Consent to the Regular Agenda. Councilman Casto said he would like to talk further about the item. Mayor Thomas said it would be added to the Regular Agenda as Item 1A.

AMENDED CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Smith read the Amended Consent Agenda Item by title.

1 RESOLUTION 18-81, JEEP BEACH JAM BLOCK PARTY SHOW & SHINE ROAD CLOSURE. *"A Resolution of the City of Panama City Beach authorizing temporary road closure of a portion of Pier Park Drive on Saturday, May 19, 2018, for the "Jeep Block Party Show & Shine"; and providing an immediately effective date."*

Councilman Chester made the motion to approve the Amended Consent Agenda. 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 |

REGULAR AGENDA

ITEM 1A RESOLUTION 18-82, BID AWARD- CRA LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE SERVICES AGREEMENT. Ms. Myers read Resolution 18-82 by title. Mr. Gisbert explained the limits of the CRA project and that he would direct the Street Department to focus on the plant heights. He said the roads must meet FDOT standards and with this contract, it would be cheaper because all of the maintenance was combined into one contract.

Councilman Solis said this was a resort area and everyone wanted to see a beautiful look. He agreed with Mr. Klomps that some views were obstructed and the City would be cognizant of those areas.

Councilman Casto suggested looking at the areas of North Pier Park, North Richard Jackson Blvd., and the gateways installed by the developers, and that these areas would need to be included in the future contracts. He suggested meeting with St. Joe to discuss the City having to assume more landscaping areas. Councilman Solis said some resorts were maintaining their own right-of-ways and suggested possibly the entrances remain with the HOAs. Mr. Gisbert said Edgewater Beach Resort and Laketown Wharf maintained their own property which helped the City. **Councilman Solis made the motion to approve Resolution 18-82. Second was by Councilman Chester and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:**

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

ITEM 1 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-MAYOR. Councilman Casto said historically, the Vice-Mayor had been chosen by seniority. **Councilman Solis made the motion to appoint Councilman Chester as Vice-Mayor. Second was by Councilman Casto and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:**

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

ITEM 2 RESOLUTION 18-83, RANKING OF FIRMS FOR BAY PARKWAY SEGMENT 2 ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES. Ms. Myers read Resolution 18-83 by title. The Mayor asked if there were any questions or comments; there were none. **Councilman Casto made the motion to approve Resolution 18-83. Second was by Councilman Chester and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:**

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

ITEM 3 RESOLUTION 18-78, RANKING OF FIRMS FOR MAJOR WASTEWATER FACILITIES ENGINEERING SERVICES. Ms. Myers read Resolution 18-78 by title. The Mayor asked if there were any questions or comments; there were none. **Councilman Solis made the motion to approve Resolution 18-78. Second was by Councilman Chester and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:**

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

ITEM 4 RESOLUTION 18-85, LAW ENFORCEMENT PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WTH SCHOOL BOARD. Ms. Myers read Resolution 18-85 by title and explained that the Agreement would supersede other Agreements between the School Board and individual officers as this Agreement was between the City and the School Board. The Mayor asked if there were any questions or comments; there were none. **Councilman McConnell made the motion to approve Resolution 18-85. Second was by Councilman Chester and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:**

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

ITEM 5 APPOINTMENTS TO TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (TPO), HALF-CENT SALES TAX CITIZEN'S OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE, BAY COUNTY LEAGUE OF CITIES- DISCUSSION. Mr. Gisbert explained the Committee members for the TPO and recommended a strong voice from the City on that board. He elaborated. Regarding the Half-Cent Sales Tax Citizen's Oversight Committee, that appointment was made by the new Council members and did not have to be today. Councilman McConnell said he was prepared today. For the Bay County League of Cities, Councilman Reichard had volunteered for that Board and had coordinated quarterly meetings. Councilman McConnell stated he was highly interested in the TPO and would volunteer for the TPO Board. **Councilman Casto made the motion to appoint Councilman McConnell to the TPO. Second was by Councilman Chester and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote recorded as follows:**

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

Councilman Solis made the motion to appoint Councilman Casto to the Bay County League of Cities. 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 Casto said he would appoint Mr. Jeromey Gillespie, current Board member, as his choice for the Half-Cent Sales Tax Citizen's Oversight Committee. Councilman McConnell said he would appoint Mr. Jeremy Martin as his choice for the Half-Cent Sales Tax Citizen's Oversight Committee. **Councilman Solis made the motion to approve the appointments to the Half-Cent Sales Tax Citizen's Oversight Committee. 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 6 INVESTMENTS- DISCUSSION. Councilman Solis spoke of the merits of the Florida Fixed Income Trust (FLFIT) with other options for CD's and T-Bills paying a higher rate of return on the City's cash. He said he hoped the City Council would consider an Investment Committee that could consider options for a ladder approach to investments. He gave examples of potential higher income using the reserves, CRA funds, and utility reserves. He said these extra funds would fund more positions in accounting. Councilman Solis mentioned accounting being overwhelmed with work, dealing with the annual audit. He urged the Council to move quickly as it seemed the City was losing possibly Forty to Fifty Thousand Dollars additional revenue every month.

Mayor Thomas said he understood Councilman Solis suggested forming an Investment Committee and Councilman Solis replied yes with a quick cycle due to the potential additional revenue being lost. He continued that these would be fully insured investments with no risk. Mayor Thomas suggested for the next meeting, each Council member bring a name of someone to serve on the Committee.

Councilman Solis said a draft Resolution had been prepared to move funds into the FL Fixed Income Trust. Councilman McConnell said it sounded like a good thing to do but he would need more information before forming an opinion. Mr. Gisbert said the focus right now was for the annual audit in order to be prepared on time. He reminded the Council of the limited staff. Councilman Solis explained the additional funds would pay for a budget and accounting officer to assist Ms. White as these new investments would complicate her job more.

ITEM 7 SPRING BREAK- DISCUSSION. Mayor Thomas said he received many calls about Spring Break and explained how his own business had been affected. He said revenue was coming back and moving in the right direction. He said areas of the beach still had problems and Chief Whitman worked to correct those problems.

Chief Whitman gave the Spring Break statistics, handling Seventeen Million visitors per year. He reported the statistics for this Spring Break in comparison to 2015. The Chief recommended keeping the current Ordinances in place and explained the Louisiana schools followed Easter more than other schools because it was a Catholic state. He said the big problem this year had been because Atlanta schools were out the first week of April, but he was prepared with more law enforcement presence. Chief Whitman also thanked the men and women of his command for their hard work. He explained the Mutual Aid from nearby communities who knew how to work our crowds. He continued that he was already planning for next year and that this year had been one of the safest Spring Breaks.

Councilman Casto said he thought the City was going in the right direction and thanked the previous City Council for their foresight in enacting tough laws which made the changes. Councilman Chester said the business owners and residents liked the direction of the City. Councilman McConnell said he was in favor of the March laws and would not support extending the drinking ban. He mentioned shifting resources if Easter was late and encouraged the HOAs to solve their problems inhouse. Chief Whitman said he shifted manpower as needed and that he and the City Manager had spoken to that HOA.

Councilman Solis asked Chief Whitman if he saw a significant increase of alcohol incidents the first week of April, and the Chief responded no. Councilman Solis said one problem in April was that Wal-Mart had not enforced the parking requirements. He said he had received many requests from citizens to extend the ban but he responded to keep the Ordinances as written. He had the 2019 Spring Break calendar and identified the colleges out in April. He suggested enforcing the current laws and have more Mutual Aid during the first week of April. He mentioned working with the private property owners and Wal-Mart next year but did not see the need for the alcohol ban extension.

DELEGATIONS

Mayor Thomas explained the delegations period and opened this portion of the meeting at 10:07 A.M.

1 Mr. Paul Dalton, 107 Manistee. Mr. Dalton congratulated Councilman Casto and Councilman McConnell for their election and urged their continued support for the Beach Police Department. He also urged higher pay for the officers.

2 Ms. Colleen Swab, California Cycles. Ms. Swab distributed a flyer where her business had donated a scooter to the Senior Center for the fundraising efforts.

3 Mr. Tom Klomps, 614 Poinsettia Court. Mr. Klomps asked what the City was doing to relieve the stress of the firefighters and their equipment now, other than the City implementing the Fire Assessment.

With no further comments, the Mayor closed the Delegations section of the meeting at 10:17 A.M.

Ms. Myers said with regards to the Fire Assessment, no revenue would be received until December or January. Mr. Gisbert said an architectural firm was under contract and Staff had been meeting diligently to discuss the drawings. He said the site was located and meetings held with St. Joe. He said it would probably be several months before completed drawings were ready for the new Fire Station. He mentioned next year's budget would include additional firefighters.

Mr. Gisbert explained that the firm was currently preparing a payplan study based on input from similar cities to determine future compensation. He said this study was showing that the City needed to make changes for Police and Fire, which would be brought back to the Council. Councilman Casto if this study was City-wide and Mr. Gisbert replied affirmatively.

Mayor Thomas asked about the status for the repairs to the existing Fire Stations. Mr. Gisbert explained the thousands of dollars needed and some repairs could be contracted out. He said some repairs were deferred to the next fiscal year. He also explained Chief Couch working on a grant for diesel removal.

Mr. Gisbert introduced Ms. Debbie Ward, the City's new Public Information Officer. He explained she would be able to correct misinformation. He elaborated and explained her experience.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Gisbert reported the job vacancies posted on the website as well as the Bid Openings on the website.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Solis mentioned the Warrior Beach Retreat and how the veterans were treated by the community. He mentioned it being a wonderful cause.

Councilman McConnell said he planned quarterly Town Hall meetings and would work on a schedule for those meetings. He urged some members of the community to set aside their anger to make positive changes and create viable solutions.

Councilman Casto thanked the community for their support. He said the City faced a lot of growing pains and challenges in the next four years.

Councilman Chester invited Mr. Ponek to the podium to explain about the new playground. Mr. Ponek said it had been a two year plan and that staff planned a soft opening this weekend. He said the grand opening and ribbon cutting was scheduled for May 25th and invited the community. Mayor Thomas commented how great the new flag looked.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 A.M.

READ AND APPROVED this 10th of May, 2018.

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