



Fort Myers Beach Management & Planning Session

**Council Chambers
2525 Estero Blvd.
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931**

Minutes

Monday, December 12, 2022

9:00 AM

ORDER OF BUSINESS

FINAL

I. CALL TO ORDER

Members present: Mayor Allers, Vice Mayor Atterholt, Council Member King, Council Member Veatch and Council Member Woodson.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Environmental Update

Update on Beach Damage and Recovery

Vice Mayor Atterholt listed the people who assisted him in contacting the proper people regarding establishing mail services on the island.

Richard Fermo, District Manager of the Florida 2 District, introduced Manager of Operation Integrations Jesse Hobson and Corporate Retail Customer Support person Rob Roddie. Mr. Fermo stated that after the hurricane hit, post office operations on the islands that were affected were moved to the Jet Loop Road location in Fort Myers. He indicated that they would inspect the island to determine where to move postal operations. The landlord was restoring the previous USPS location, but his group was looking at available options for a temporary post office on the beach. He was not sure whether post office boxes would be available. He did not think it would take very long to set up a temporary trailer.

Environmental Projects Manager Chadd Chustz stated that the seawall integrity and tie-backs were not compromised at Newton Park and the two switchback accesses. A lot of the debris on the beach was removed, tens of thousands of cubic yards of sand were recovered from Estero Blvd. and the county sand was returned from Lynn Hall to Crescent Park. The debris contractor was starting to return the sifted sand to repair town assets and

shore up seawalls. The engineer estimated they had 220,000 cubic yards of damage to the beach on the north segment. Project Manager Chustz referred to a map of the damaged area and a summary of recovery projects and public assistance requests. He described the beach renourishment project and noted the project had been adjusted due to the hurricane. Mayor Allers questioned whether the town could recoup some of the money regarding the cost share portion. Interim Town Manager Holley was unsure but stated the town should move forward with an appropriation request.

Project Manager Chustz remarked that the entire beach would be considered an engineered beach, which meant a berm would be created to reduce impacts from future storms. He noted that about 250 feet of sand would be added in front of the Leonardo Arms.

Council Member Veach noted that the budget table did not include FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) allocations. Project Manager Chustz explained the breakdown of the different phases of the project and noted that the FEMA project was described in the attached email. He stated that a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit was submitted for review and he was waiting for confirmation. The governor allocated \$20 million from past renourishment budgets to the four counties affected by Ian and Nicole. The town asked the FDEP (Florida Department of Environmental Protection) for 30 thousand cubic yards of sand to shore up the north segment since it did not qualify as an engineered beach. He mentioned other locations that needed sand. He hoped that sand would be returned before the sea turtle season. He added that sand had been returned to the area around the Lutheran Church and the condominium easement documentation regarding the renourishment project was being reworked and will be presented to the Council at the first meeting in January.

Mayor Allers questioned what private property owners who lost sand on the bay side needed to do to get their sand replenished. Project Manager Chustz replied that he would find out. He explained how the beach was cleaned up to current conditions. Vice Mayor Atterholt indicated another beach cleanup was scheduled for next Sunday and encouraged volunteers to sign up.

Project Manager Chustz was authorized to send thank you letters to all who helped clean the beach.

Interim Town Manager Holley stated that the pier and the park restoration were discussed at the delegation meeting last week and would be coordinated with the town and county.

B. Utilities Billing

Discussion regarding stormwater fees

Utilities Director Christy Cory reported that 262 accounts were closed, which decreased the water revenue by an estimated \$72,000.00 per year and stormwater revenue by about \$180,000.00 per year. She noted that the impervious area has changed with some homes gone. She questioned whether the town wanted to continue to bill for stormwater or hold off for a while. She indicated that properties would have to be remeasured and the

number would be based on the slab if the home was gone. Mayor Allers questioned the average cost per property. She replied that one ERU was \$31.94 and she factored in one and a half ERUs. She added that bare sand was not completely pervious, even if nothing was left on the property. Interim Town Manager Holley suggested that the town continue to charge for stormwater where appropriate. Consensus was reached to continue charging for stormwater.

C. Hazard Mitigation Grants Program

Town of Fort Myers Beach HMGP projects

Interim Town Manager Holley stated that the deadline to identify projects was mid-January and \$500 million was available through the state. Hazard mitigation planners were on the beach today and a meeting was scheduled for the afternoon. He noted that a county committee would meet in late January to look at all projects submitted by all the cities in the county. He was unsure how the committee would prioritize projects, but a 406 plan described by Mr. Guthrie was not competitive and the town could submit their application for a town hall. He will have more details about the 406 plan after the meeting. He noted that hazard mitigation grants typically had a 25% match requirement, but the town had already made a request to the delegation that the match be covered.

D. FL House Appropriations

FY23-24 Legislative Appropriation Request

Interim Town Manager Holley was in contact with lobbyist Ron Books' office staff and they would be on site next week. The house appropriations paperwork was out and Mr. Brooks suggested that appropriation items be identified by mid-January. Interim Town Manager Holley anticipated property tax relief and that the town would be held harmless in that process. The state would backfill whatever ad valorem tax breaks were doled out. He noted that he had the League of Cities legislative platform available. He was told that the state would preempt workforce or affordable housing for a housing bill.

He stated that he focused on revenue replacement, beach renourishment and a town hall. Tidal Basin estimated it would cost \$16 million for a new town hall and Interim Town Manager Holley will get details on how they determined that number. Council Member Veatch questioned whether the Bay Oaks campus could be added to an appropriation request. Interim Town Manager Holley replied affirmatively. He assumed that the town hall would be rebuilt on the same property. He added that a bid to repair Bay Oaks would come before the Council on January 9, 2023.

Vice Mayor Atterholt suggested adding lighting and community policing to the appropriation request. Interim Town Manager Holley reported that he contacted representatives to push FP&L (Florida Power and Light) to install lights without financial exposure to the town. Vice Mayor Atterholt revealed that FP&L could seek cost recovery.

Council Member Woodson questioned whether having planners come to the town was an item for the appropriation request. Interim Town Manager Holley replied that urban planning help could be a legislative ask. He mentioned that

the general engineering bid packet typically contained a list of people to pick from.

Vice Mayor Atterholt brought up density concerns from investors and stated that he challenged them to address traffic mitigation with pedestrian bridges. He pushed businesses on the bay side to consider a water ferry service. He felt that businesses with requests to the town should involve ideas that address traffic mitigation.

Mayor Allers felt the town should be proactive and questioned what the Council could do to help the Interim Town Manager. Interim Town Manager Holley replied that he would come up with some options.

Council Member Veach stated that the community generally did not support more density on the beach. Vice Mayor Atterholt asked him to keep an open mind because people were coming up with innovative ideas. Council Member Veach brought up allowing density bonuses for people on the first mile of Estero Blvd. to give up land to expand Estero Blvd. Interim Town Manager Holley discussed the state giving density bonuses for building permanent residential apartments downtown to help mitigate traffic.

Council Member Woodson questioned whether meeting with local realtors would be feasible. Mayor Allers and the Council encouraged her to move forward.

IV. AGENDA MANAGEMENT

A. December 2022

Start thinking about rebuilding Times Square and reaching out to businesses and property owners.

Add commercial zoning issues. Add installing parking signs.

Add rental fee assessment to the next regular agenda on January 9, 2023.

Add permitting to the next M&P agenda on January 12, 2023.

Interim Town Manager Holley requested support for hiring a consultant at \$13,000.00 for three months to determine salary ranges for different positions. Mayor Allers and Council Member Woodson supported the request. Interim Town Manager Holley revealed that the Pink Shell offered a meeting room for the January 9, 2023 meeting. Mayor Allers and the Council supported moving the meeting.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Allers moved to adjourn; second by Council Member Veach. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:11 a.m. Minutes adopted, January 9, 2023; Motion by Council Member King and seconded by Council Member Veach. Passed 5-0.



Amy Baker, Town Clerk