



Fort Myers Beach Town Council

Town Hall Council Chambers
2731 Oak Street
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931

Minutes

Monday, April 29, 2024

9:00 AM

ORDER OF BUSINESS

FINAL

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (9:00 AM)

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

Town Manager Andy Hyatt talking about having a strategic plan. He explained that a strategic plan should be reviewed every three to five years and it was a living, breathing document that could change from year to year.

Angela Crist, Director of the Florida Institute of Government of the University of South Florida, described how a strategic plan was created to determine the town's goals, objectives and action items. She stated that meeting agenda items should reference strategic goals and budget decisions should be made based on their vision of the strategic plan. She utilized PowerPoint for the presentation. Slides included USF School of Public Affairs & USF Florida Institute of Government and Today's Agenda.

II. INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY: MILESTONES AND SUCCESSES (9:10 AM)

Ms. Crist instructed council members to write one item per sticky note regarding people and events that made a difference in the history and success of Fort Myers Beach. She put the notes on a flip chart and grouped them into a timeline. She stated they had a huge opportunity to set the vision for where they wanted the town to go.

III. STATUS UPDATE: CURRENT WORK PLAN ACTIVITIES (9:25 AM)

Town Manager Hyatt reviewed the current work plan activities as noted on the slide. He indicated that it was crucial to get as prepared as they could by having policies in place for the next group to follow. He noted his philosophy was to leave it better than he found it and the need to be prepared for the unexpected. Ms.

Crist stated that visioning was the foundation of strategic planning and the strategic plan should be updated quarterly.

IV. BREAK (10:05 AM)**V. GROUP DISCUSSION: TREASURES OF FORT MYERS BEACH (10:15 AM)**

Ms. Crist asked council members what things should remain and not change in Fort Myers Beach. Topics mentioned were the sense of community, the water and protected areas around the island, a balance between tourism, residents, businesses and seasonal residents, the wide variety of socioeconomic populations, which created an interesting place to live and a welcoming and inclusive community. The treasure of the island was the balance of the four groups, but now businesses were suffering and people had to leave the island more often, which created more traffic.

VI. GROUP ACTIVITY: BEGINNING TO DEVELOP THE VISION (10:30 AM)

Ms. Crist asked council members to pretend it was 2034 and write an article about the town's accomplishments over the past ten years and what it was like to live there now. Council members broke into two groups, wrote their articles and read them out loud. Similarities between the two articles were identified and Ms. Crist asked them to point out the vision or desired future state. She suggested that the desired future state could be that they were the premier destination where tourists could become residents and live there forever. Council members discussed the town being unique, inclusive, diverse, and welcoming, with boutique hotels and funky bars like Key West, but not Key West. Vice Mayor Atterholt summed up the discussion with: experience everything that Florida has to offer on Fort Myers Beach.

VII. KEYS TO STRATEGIC DECISION MAKING (11:00 AM)

Ms. Crist referred to the slide concerning the Keys to Strategic Decision-Making and balancing strategic planning and action planning, along with strategic planning versus operational planning. She indicated they may know where they wanted to go, but the critical point was how to get there. What they might want to accomplish would depend on other things that were not under their control.

VIII. MAYOR AND COUNCIL: OPEN DISCUSSION (11:10 AM)

No discussion.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT (11:25 AM)

Christy Thorton commented on what the town could look like in ten years. Mathew Thorton explained why he was running for County Commissioner for District 3 and what his plan was. He felt that a strategic plan and communication with the county and state were dire. He offered to help in any way he could.

X. NEXT STEPS (11:50 AM)

Ms. Crist displayed and described the strategic plan process for Tarpon Springs and Cape Coral.

She explained how she would create a scope of work based on the community's needs. Methods included online resident surveys, employee surveys and focus groups, community forums and key stakeholder interviews. She indicated that key stakeholder interviews were usually conducted first. Ms. Crist stated the timeline to complete the process should be nine to ten months, excluding implementation. She will produce a report based on discussions today and be in contact with Town Manager Hyatt. She thought they were in a good place and recommended they identify five action items over the next year. Council Member Woodson received support to add the topic to the next M&P. Ms. Crist ended with a quote from Robert Jordan, "The oak fought the wind and was broken. The willow bent when it must and survived."

XI. ADJOURN (12:00 PM)

Council Member King moved to adjourn, seconded by Council Member Safford. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:14 a.m.

Minutes adopted as presented, May 20, 2024. Motion by Council Member King and seconded by Council Member Safford. Passed 4-0, Woodson excused.



Amy Baker, Town Clerk