



**Fort Myers Beach Town Council
Joint Session with Public Safety Committee**

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

Minutes

Thursday, November 4, 2021

11:00 AM

ORDER OF BUSINESS

FINAL

I. CALL TO ORDER

Members present: Mayor Murphy, Vice Mayor Hosafros, Council Member Allers, Council Member Atterholt and Council Member Veach.

PSC Members present: Chair Thomas, PSC Member Bahan, PSC Member Childs, PSC Member Goggin, PSC Member Jungwirth and PSC Member Knickle.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Open Items for Council Prioritization

Discussion with Public Safety Committee members on open items Chair Thomas stated their goal was to develop ideas and solutions to keep the town and its residents and visitors safe. She suggested that Council and the PSC work together on finding solutions to action items.

Council Member Allers suggested that they start by discussing items they could control first. PSC Member Goggin clarified that items not under their control, such as pursuing an interlocal regarding the number of crosswalks, were a good example. If Council were not interested in pursuing an interlocal, PSC would drop it from their agenda. Chair Thomas questioned removing street lighting since a decision was made. Vice Mayor Hosafros did not think there was anything else they could do concerning lighting. Council Members recommended they remove lighting from their agenda. Council Member Veach brought up consulting with their Council Liaison.

The sidewalk project was scheduled to be completed in 2022 and the PSC was not involved anymore. Town Manager Hernstadt questioned whether they wanted to work on evaluating sidewalks on other streets. He mentioned the uproar from Connecticut St. residents regarding adding sidewalks in front of their houses. Mayor Murphy thought it would be worthwhile to explore adding sidewalks to neighborhoods without them. Council Member Veach felt that neighborhoods without a lot of traffic should be last on the list. Vice Mayor Hosafros described the Connecticut St. blowback. The sidewalk from the parking lot to the Mound House was crucial, but because the residents disagreed, Council dropped it. PSC Member Goggin stated that if Council was not interested in adding sidewalks to certain areas, the PSC should not do the research. Vice Mayor Hosafros preferred that they work on something that could be accomplished. Council Members Veach and Atterholt agreed.

Chair Thomas inquired about crosswalks. Council Member Atterholt discussed controlling their destiny and working in sync with the PSC to advocate for a solution that benefited the Town. Council Member Veach stated that the crosswalk issue was settled and could be removed from their agenda. Vice Mayor Hosafros agreed.

PSC Member Goggin reported that the county asked them to look at where additional crosswalks should be located. They discussed flashing lights, eye fatigue and excessive signage. The county did not act on their suggestions. Because of the cost, he did not think the county would change or add any crosswalks down Estero Blvd. He reported that results from their survey indicated that 77% of people stated that markings on crosswalks were insufficient and supported more flashing lights. PSC Member Goggin disagreed that the current RRFBs (Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons) on Estero Blvd. caused eye fatigue. He indicated that he was supposed to meet with Mr. Phelan regarding the foot of the bridge to compare the green book with the options they wanted. The discussion was delayed due to Covid, but the meeting was never rescheduled. He felt that Council should tell the county what they wanted and why. PSC Member Knickle commented that RRFBs did not flash simultaneously, so eye fatigue was not an issue. He felt that adding RRFBs to certain crosswalks would be beneficial. Council Member Atterholt felt there was a chance they could be successful if they worked together to prioritize RRFBs in certain intersections. Discussion was held regarding pedestrian safety islands and RRFBs on a three-lane road. PSC Member Goggin reported that they met with Mr. Phelan and identified three places where they would be appropriate. PSC Member Jungwirth noted that she would forward their crosswalk map to Director O'Riley for distribution. Mayor Murphy stated that the town should own Estero Blvd. and he wanted to take it back after the improvements were completed.

Town Manager Hernstadt suggested they pare down their list before meeting with the county because they would not get RRFBs everywhere they wanted. PSC Member Jungwirth replied that they had prioritized their list and she would forward it to Director O'Riley. Town Manager Hernstadt reminded Council Members that a previous Council had endorsed one of the maps presented by the county. PSC Member Jungwirth commented that the PSC

submitted a map to Council previously.

Chair Thomas stated that they would take crosswalks off their list and offered to work with Council in the future if needed. She received support from Vice Mayor Hosafros.

Chair Thomas brought up the lack of emergency calling equipment in the safe haven shelter on Bay St. She noted funding was not allocated in the budget. Vice Mayor Hosafros commented that the county insisted on advertising to pay for them, but the Council did not approve advertising. Chair Thomas remarked that the PSC identified six locations and the Bay St. location was their prototype. The cost of the shelter was approximately \$9,500.00. Council Member Allers questioned allowing advertising. Vice Mayor Hosafros remembered the county telling them that they would have to pay the entire amount for the safe havens with emergency equipment and allow advertising. PSC Member Goggin stated that the emergency calling equipment was free-standing and located close to the shelters. He noted that visitors with cell phones did not know where they were. Council Member Veach argued that 911 knew where the caller was located. He questioned whether the shelters were lightning safe and wondered whether the PSC discussed other options. Council Member Allers expressed concern regarding liability for an emergency shelter. Town Attorney Herin, Jr. replied negatively and added that LeeTran would not add shelters without advertising. Council Member Allers supported allowing advertising. PSC Member Jungwirth stated that a code blue safety shelter was approved two years ago, but the shelter still did not have the emergency equipment installed. Mayor Murphy questioned whether the code blue equipment could be installed for the existing shelter without advertising. Town Manager Hernstadt offered two potential options from Lee County but felt that Council had to clarify their policy before deciding to move forward.

PSC Member Goggin explained that the code blue shelters were a public safety issue for visitors and residents. He questioned whether they wanted to move forward with the safe-haven shelters. Vice Mayor Hosafros received support to add the topic to a future agenda. Chair Thomas will remove the item from her list.

Chair Thomas questioned whether they could mandate that rental companies install bells and lights on their bicycles. PSC Member Jungwirth noted that state law required lights and bells on bicycles. Town Attorney Herin, Jr. stated that unless someone was caught riding a bike without a light at night, they could not issue a citation. The town could adopt an ordinance requiring bike rental companies to install bells and lights on all rental bicycles. Council Member Allers received support to add the item to a future agenda.

PSC Member Goggin questioned whether the Council wanted them to expand restrictions on riding bikes in congested areas other than Times Square. Council Member Allers responded that they were trying to promote bicycles. Chair Thomas agreed to table the topic.

Vice Mayor Hosafros stated that sidewalk markings should be removed from their list due to safety issues. Chair Thomas agreed.

The next item was bike lane markings down Estero Blvd. Council Member Allers commented that the county was looking at options and he would continue to push the county. Chair Thomas deleted it.

Chair Thomas brought up the homeless community. Vice Mayor Hosafros remarked that the ministerial group was looking forward to a meeting that was canceled. PSC Member Goggin noted that it was canceled due to PSC reorganization and the joint meeting. He received an extensive list of activities from the group and indicated they would move forward with another meeting if Council determined it a priority. Vice Mayor Hosafros reported that the ministerial association was waiting to hear from the PSC. PSC Member Goggin replied that he updated the representative. Chair Thomas stated that they would keep the topic on their list.

Chair Thomas deleted crossing aids and the parking app. Neighborhood watch programs would remain on the list. She stated they would work with Communications Coordinator concerning educational programs and training regarding short-term rentals. PSC Member Goggin described how short-term rental registrations could be linked to educational materials provided by the fire department since short-term rentals with fewer than three units did not require an inspection. Vice Mayor Hosafros supported providing information, but inspections were under the fire department's jurisdiction. Town Manager Hernstadt pointed out that the rental registration was public information and was available to the fire department. He noted that if the fire department wanted the town to distribute their materials they would be happy to. PSC Member Jungwirth that fire inspections were not free and property owners were charged based on the size of the home.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m. by Mayor Murphy.

Minutes adopted, November 15, 2021; Motion by Vice Mayor Hosafros and seconded by Council Member Veach. Adopted 5-0.



Amy Baker, Town Clerk