



**MINUTES
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 1, 2024, 6:00 P.M.
NEPTUNE BEACH CITY HALL
116 FIRST STREET
NEPTUNE BEACH, FLORIDA 32266**

Pursuant to proper notice, a Regular City Council Meeting of the City Council of the City of Neptune Beach was held on Monday, April 1, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., at Neptune Beach City Hall, 116 First Street, Neptune Beach, Florida 32266

Attendance:**ATTENDANCE:**

Mayor Elaine Brown
Vice Mayor Kerry Chin
Councilor Lauren Key
Councilor Nia Livingston
Councilor Josh Messinger (via CMT)

STAFF:

City Manager Richard Pike
City Attorney Zachary Roth
Chief of Police Michael Key
Community Development Director Heather Whitmore
Public Works Director Deryle Calhoun
Parks and Sustainability Director Colin Moore
City Clerk Catherine Ponson

**Call to Order/Roll
Call/Pledge**

Mayor Brown called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Water Conservation
Month Proclamation**

Mayor Brown read and presented a proclamation declaring April 2024, as Water Conservation Month. Jeff Reindl, Engineer, representing the St. Johns River Water Management District was on hand to receive the proclamation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes

Made by Livingston, seconded by Key.

MOTION: TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING, AS AMENDED:

March 4, 2024, Regular City Council Meeting
March 18, 2024, Workshop City Council Meeting

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: 5-Key, Livingston, Messinger, Chin, and Brown
Noes: 0

MOTION CARRIED

ORDINANCES

**Ord. No. 2024-03,
Spending Threshold**

Ordinance No. 2024-03, First Read and Public Hearing. An Ordinance of the City of Neptune Beach, Florida, Amending Chapter 2, Article VI, Section 2-378, Written Request to Council; Approval; Bid Invitations; Providing for Severability; and Providing an Effective Date.

Public Hearing

Mayor Brown opened the public hearing. There being no comments from the public, the public hearing was closed.

City Attorney Zachary Roth explained that this ordinance updates Section 2-378 of the Code of Ordinances to reflect the increase in the spending threshold for Council approval.

Made by Key, seconded by Chin,

MOTION: TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2024-03, AMENDING CHAPTER 2, ARTICLE VI, SECTION 2-378, AT FIRST READ

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: 5-Livingston, Messinger, Key, Chin, and Brown

Noes: 0

MOTION CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS

Res. No. 2024-02,
Solid Waste Fees

Resolution No. 2024-02, A Resolution of the City of Neptune Beach, Florida, Establishing Certain Charges or Fees for Solid Waste Collection and Disposal Services

City Manager Richard Pike stated that there had not been an increase in solid waste fees to residents since 2009. The current rate for residential service, two times a week, is \$22.05. The current rate for commercial service is \$7.21 per cubic yard. These are the rates charged to the customers from the City. At this time, the rate being charged to the City from Waste Pro for residential service, two times a week is \$32.60. The City is proposing a fee of \$38.08 in order to break even. This was not addressed during the pandemic.

Mayor Brown added that these fees have gone up over the years to the City and have been kept down for the residents.

Vice Mayor Chin commented that there admittedly were a number of jumps in rates post-COVID and this is one of those cases where rates have not been able to keep up since 2009. Several Councils were unwilling to adjust the rate incrementally so that any increase now would be minimal. There was nothing done to meet the cost of business and cost of living increases at all. Sadly, this Council is faced with having to do this instead of being out \$300,000 to \$400,000 per year.

Councilor Key asked if it was accurate that most cities make money off of their garbage fees and that this increase would have the City breaking even?

Mr. Pike stated that other cities do make money and prior to the renewal of the contract, City staff was putting in a lot of time, effort and money dealing with Waste Pro.

Councilor Key remarked that she would like to see the City get to a point where it needs to be. She is not a proponent of raising rates, but when we have to look at our sustainability as a city, it is important to remember that these are the things we cannot afford to subsidize. That burden has be shared by all of us. She is in favor of a break-even proposal.

Mr. Pike pointed out that Waste Pro has built in their contract a percentage of increase as their costs increase.

Councilor Key questioned how would we combat that as the City essentially has to operate as a business and not always be in the red?

Mr. Pike stated this could be addressed yearly or every two years, however Council wants to move forward.

Councilor Livingston agreed with the other Councilors. She added that these fees had not been raised over the last 10 to 15 years and now we are seeing these big jumps. She expressed that moving forward, we need to look at fees yearly to every two years so we don't put ourselves in a position that we are in the red. She is comfortable with this, but she thinks that we need to look at it again in a year. If we slowly start budgeting over time we can meet with what has happened due to inflation.

Councilor Messinger remarked he is in agreement with what has been said. He added that the City cannot afford to subsidize this at a detriment to other aspects of the City and this is entirely appropriate.

Mayor Brown summarized that the increase to \$32.60 is the cost from Waste Pro and \$5.48 is the indirect cost for a total of \$38.08. She does not want to raise the fee but we have to keep up with that in the future, so we are not subsidizing so much. She is favor of the break-even proposal.

Made by Livingston, seconded by Messinger.

MOTION: **TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2024-02, ESTABLISHING CERTAIN CHARGES OR FEES FOR SOLID WASTE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL SERVICES**

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: 5-Messinger, Key, Livingston, Chin, and Brown

Noes: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Lighty Lane Pump
Station Force Main
Replacement

Lighty Lane Pump Station Wastewater Force Main Replacement. Public Works Director Derlye Calhoun explained that this request is to replace an existing force main that serves the Lighty Lane Wastewater Pump Station. There was a break on that line several months ago and was patched. This is the package and proposal for the replacement of that transite pipe from 1961. He reported that this would be for 200 feet of 4-inch diameter force main that crosses Penman Road. He added the City wants to be proactive and responsive to any overflows. This is a piggyback contract with T.B. Landmark and St. Johns County.

Mr. Calhoun pointed out that there is about 1,300 feet or ¼ mile of wastewater force main and 12 miles of potable water pipe that is also transite pipe.

Vice Mayor Chin asked about the 12 miles of pipe and Mr. Calhoun advised that staff is monitoring using the model being developed by our consultant.

Councilor Messinger thanked Mr. Calhoun and his team for what has been accomplished since he has been with and encouraged anyone to reach out to Council or to Mr. Calhoun if there are any questions.

Made by Key, seconded by Chin.

MOTION: **TO APPROVE THE LIGHTY LANE PUMP STATION WASTEWATER FORCE MAIN REPLACEMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$34,500.00**

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: 5- Key, Livingston, Messinger, Chin, and Brown

Noes: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.


Elaine Brown, Mayor

ATTEST:

Catherine Ponson, CMC
City ClerkApproved: 05/06/2024