



MINUTES
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 15, 2024, 6:00 P.M.
NEPTUNE BEACH CITY HALL
116 FIRST STREET
NEPTUNE BEACH, FLORIDA 32266

Pursuant to proper notice, a Special City Council Meeting of the City Council of the City of Neptune Beach was held on Monday, April 15, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., at Neptune Beach City Hall, 116 First Street, Neptune Beach, Florida 32266.

Attendance:**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mayor Elaine Brown
Vice Mayor Kerry Chin
Councilor Lauren Key
Councilor Nia Livingston
Councilor Josh Messinger

STAFF:

City Manager Richard Pike
City Attorney Zachary Roth
Chief of Police Michael Key
Public Works Director Deryle Calhoun
Chief Financial Officer Jaime Hernandez
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.

**Res. No. 2024-03,
School Closings**

Resolution No. 2024-03, A Resolution of the City of Neptune Beach, Florida., Opposing Any Plans by the Duval County School District to Close Atlantic Beach Elementary or Other Schools at the Beaches and to Consolidate Any Such Schools with Neptune Beach Elementary.

Mayor Brown introduced Atlantic Beach Mayor Curtis Ford.

**Atlantic Beach
Mayor**

Mayor Ford stated the issue with Duval County Public Schools is about the quality of education for those at the beach. There is only one school in Atlantic Beach, and they are concerned. It is still just a proposal today. They are not willing to stand by and see how that goes. He would be devastated if Atlantic Beach was closed in favor of an ill-conceived consolidation plan. The plan does not look at quality of education, community engagement, or the life experience that comes from a child going to a school who can walk or ride their bike to attend. He pointed out that the Neptune Beach resolution states "while separate municipalities, the Beaches share a common sense of community." He stated this was so true. He is for all of the Beaches.

Mayor Brown read a statement submitted by Duval Public School District 2 Member April Carney who stated the proposal is only a first draft and to please keep emails and calls coming with thoughts, concerns, and wonderful ideas.

Councilor Key stated that Board Member Carney has been very responsive. She is our advocate and sits on the board with six other board members. It is just as important to advocate a position to all of the other board members. It is important to plead our case to the entire board. Board Member Carney has assured her she is listening and actively representing everyone and engaging with many parents and community representatives.

Councilor Livingston agreed with Mayor Ford that even though this is a long process, we can't sit back and wait to see what happens. We need to get involved now. She stated we should get hard numbers and facts to show this is how it would affect us.

Councilor Messinger commented that advocating the other school board members is important. We should continue the outreach and make sure it is going to the entire school board.

Vice Mayor Chin expressed that we need to stress that we support and continue to fund public schools closest to the community we serve. If those connections are removed, there would be no community. He supports this resolution.

Mayor Brown wants to make that sure that everyone understands that the negative impact there would be to traffic on Florida Boulevard that is pointed out in the resolution.

Made by Messinger, seconded by Key.

MOTION: **TO ADOPT RESOLUTION NO. 2024-03, OPPOSING ANY PLANS BY THE DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT TO CLOSE ATLANTIC BEACH ELEMENTARY OR OTHER SCHOOLS AT THE BEACHES AND TO CONSOLIDATE ANY SUCH SCHOOLS WITH NEPTUNE BEACH ELEMENTARY**

Roll Call Vote:

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

Noes: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Grit Removal
System –
Mechanical

Grit Removal System – Mechanical. Public Works Director Deryle Calhoun explained this is for the mechanical improvements necessary for the grit removal system to function. It was not included in the original award. The quote is for \$37,500.00 from Environmental Equipment Services (EES) who are already onsite for the installation.

Made by Messinger, seconded by Chin.

MOTION: **TO APPROVE THE WASTEWATER RECLAMATION FACILITY GRIT REMOVAL SYSTEM – MECHANICAL**

Roll Call Vote:

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

Noes: 0

City Hall
Landscape
Ground Covering

Mayor Brown stated this agenda item was deferred.

Dancin' in the
Street Event

Mayor Brown stated this agenda item was deferred and requested Chief of Police Michael Key give more information on the Dancin' in the Street event.

Chief Key reported that this agenda item is requested for postponement until the next meeting. As the event and the popularity of the Beaches Town Center continues to grow,

the volume of the populous that shows up on any Friday, Saturday, or Sunday is significant. This requires the planning team to need more time to ensure it is being done right. There are various new changes. There are three businesses that have requested to join which are The Lemon Bar, The Local and Pete's Bar.

Councilor Messinger stated this has always been a community event that is a fundraiser, and the proceeds go back into the Beaches Town Center. He expressed concerns that while we want the businesses to thrive and be part of the event, he does not want it to become too much of a party and a large event of that nature and lose the community character. He asked if the additional businesses had been approved and what impact it would have as the event has always been a smaller agency event?

Chief Key reported his responsibility is to make sure the security concerns are dealt with appropriately and planned for. It is his understanding that the new businesses have contributed monetarily to offset security aspects of the event as a whole. He also has concerns that the event space is only so big, and the event can only continue to grow so big. We want to make sure it is a safe, wholesome, family-friendly event while being successful for the businesses.

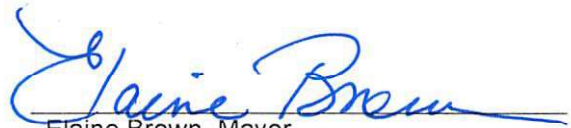
Vice Mayor Chin commented he would be concerned about extending the boundary to The Local as that would expand the boundary of where to police. The Local has had issues being compliant with our restrictions and we should be cautious about how we handle what they are doing. The Beaches Town Center Agency may have rules as well.

Chief Key confirmed Councilor Key's inquiry that adding The Local would change the footprint. Previously, it abutted that property, now it would incorporate it. Chief Key also confirmed there would be metal detectors.

Councilor Messinger added we also need to weigh in how expanding the footprint to include those bars would affect other businesses on that day.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Special Meeting adjourned at 6:29 p.m.


Elaine Brown, Mayor

ATTEST:


Catherine Ponson, CMC
City Clerk



Approved: 05/06/2024



MINUTES
WORKSHOP CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 15, 2024, 6:29 P.M.
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE SPECIAL MEETING
NEPTUNE BEACH CITY HALL
116 FIRST STREET
NEPTUNE BEACH, FLORIDA 32266

Pursuant to proper notice, a Workshop City Council Meeting of the City Council of the City of Neptune Beach was held on Monday, April 15, 2024, at 6:29 p.m., in Council Chambers, City Hall, 116 First Street, Neptune Beach, Florida, 32266

Attendance**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mayor Elaine Brown
Vice Mayor Kerry Chin
Councilor Lauren Key
Councilor Nia Livingston
Councilor Josh Messinger

STAFF:

City Manager Richard Pike
City Attorney Zachary Roth
Chief of Police Michael Key
Public Works Director Deryle Calhoun
Parks and Sustainability Director Colin Moore
Chief Financial Officer Jaime Hernandez
City Clerk Catherine Ponson

**Call to
Order/Roll Call**

Mayor Brown called the workshop meeting to order at 6:29 p.m.

**Police Chief
Report**

Chief of Police Michael Key reported that tonight is the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office Police Memorial honoring their fallen officers. Police Memorial Week is held in May, which is approaching. He announced that the 2023 Neptune Beach Police Department Annual Report had been released.

ISSUE DEVELOPMENT

**CDB
Subcommittees
Presentation**

Historical Preservation and Code Review Subcommittees Presentation. Will Hilton, former Chairman of the Community Development Board and current member, also Code Subcommittee Chairman recently formed in conjunction with the Historic Preservation Subcommittee, addressed Council. He reported that there had been a lot of variances heard over the years. He explained that recently there has been identified an underpinning of people with historic homes seeking a variance. The current Code would hinder some of those properties from seeking a variance because the property is not unique as compared to other properties. In order for them to keep the character of their unique historic home, the subcommittees wanted to make sure that they were being thought of for the variance process.

Mr. Hilton stated that the subcommittees are still working on what historically significant means. He wanted to come to Council to make sure this is something that can be considered to create a process for people who want to preserve their homes that have some historical significance and allow them to possibly get a variance where they could otherwise not get one.

Mr. Hilton reviewed scenarios for the historically significant variance. The property would be historically significant rather than unique. He added that a super majority vote would be needed for approval. He expressed that there are some unique homes, and this is worth having something in place for homeowners to improve their property. The approvals would also be heavily conditioned. The application would also come to Council for final approval.

Discussion included criteria needed to be met for a property to be determined historically significant and when to make that determination. Discussion also included frequency of the requests making sure an applicant does not take advantage of the process by calling their property historically significant.

This will go back to the subcommittees for further review and be brought back to Council.

572 Atlantic
Water Tank

572 Atlantic Boulevard Water Tank Update. City Attorney Zachary Roth stated that there was an amendment in 2023 to the Development Agreement for the new Publix on Atlantic Boulevard. The amendment provided that there would be 12 months to connect to the Atlantic Beach extension. This has not happened. The amendment provides that an alternative plan must be determined. Setting up periodic updates to Council to continue to keep this on the front burner and that things are moving along until there is a solution. There would be quarterly reports including all that has been done in that period. Tonight is the first report.

Mayor Brown pointed out that the Cherry Street residents have been part of this. Mr. Roth added that they would be kept in the loop as well.

Andrew Greene, Neptune Beach, FL Realty LLC, joined remotely and commented he had met with the City to strategize on next steps. He reported that there would be additional flow tests at the hydrants with both the City Water Tower and pumps. They would then look at options to reach the flow rate achievable for the National Fire Codes so they are not relying on the water tank and pump for life safety.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council
Comments

Mayor Brown announced the Water Tower Recognition Ceremony would be held on Thursday, April 25, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. at Stevens Park.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the workshop meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.


Elaine Brown, Mayor

ATTEST:


Catherine Ponson, CMC
City Clerk

Approved: 05/06/2024

