

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR WORKSHOP MEETING  
CITY COUNCIL  
BOCA RATON, FLORIDA  
MONDAY, JANUARY 22, 2007  
1:30 PM

The Workshop Meeting of the City Council of the City of Boca Raton, Florida was called to order by Mayor Abrams at 1:30 p.m.

**ATTENDING THE MEETING WERE:**

Mayor Steven L. Abrams  
Deputy Mayor Susan Whelchel  
Council Member M. J. Mike Arts  
Council Member Peter R. Baronoff  
Council Member Bill Hager

Also attending the meeting were:

City Manager Leif J. Ahnell  
Deputy City Attorney Jeffrey Sheffel  
City Clerk Sharma Carannante

**PRESENTATIONS:** Motivational Posters Presentation

Mayor Abrams presented the following awards to those City departments that won the Motivational Posters Contest. Third Place went to Municipal Services and Second Place went to Development Services; Fire/Rescue Services and Police Services tied for First Place.

**1. BOARD INTERVIEWS:**

- a. Citizens' Pedestrian & Bikeway Advisory Board – 2 vacancies

There were no applicants.

- b. Education Advisory Board – 2 vacancies

Steve Wallace, Jeff Snow, and Tom Gill expressed interest in serving on the Board.

- c. Elder Affairs Advisory Board – 2 vacancies

There were no applicants.

- d. Pearl City Blue Ribbon Committee – 2 vacancies

There were no applicants.

- e. Downtown Boca Raton Advisory Committee – 9 vacancies (New Committee)

Michelle Bellisari, Mary Czar, Leo Fox, Elizabeth Grinnan, Mitch Kirschner, Bruce Retzsch, Constance Scott, Clem Storch, Derek Vander Ploeg, Lenore Wachtel, Steve Wallace, Dawn Zook, and Dave Gury interviewed for positions on the Committee.

**2. PUBLIC REQUESTS:**

John Stetz commented on branding, parking in the downtown, the proposed ice rink, the Wildflower restaurant, high real estate taxes, and water consumption as it relates to future development.

**3. REVIEW OF REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:**

- a. Questions relating to the agenda.

(Consent Agenda Item No. 3.a.1. – Recycling Trucks {Replacement}) Council Member Hager questioned whether the figure listed represented the best pricing. Mr. Ahnell advised that the City is piggybacking on a contract with Venice, Florida, and the vendor is keeping the price for us.

**4. FUTURE AGENDA MATTERS/ITEMS OF COUNCIL/PUBLIC CONCERN:**

- a. Ice Rink Research Report

Recreation Services Director Mickey Gomez gave the PowerPoint presentation and stated that staff recommended a public/private partnership to construct an ice rink (approximately 90,000 square feet) with two and a half sheets of ice, located east of the Spanish River Library on Spanish River Boulevard. The site is currently comprised of 5 to 8 acres of undeveloped City property and would include parking. He indicated that there is a shortage of ice rinks in relation to the regional population; in addition, the growing popularity of ice hockey and figure skating would make construction of an ice rink in Boca Raton an attractive community asset. Mr. Gomez provided statistics and information in support of these statements. He also advised that petitions and emails from citizens are strongly in support of the proposed arena. He then summarized his comments, stating that, at Council's direction, an RFP (Request for Proposal) would be issued. Any RFP submitted to the City must demonstrate financial feasibility. In general, the City would provide the land and the private entity would be responsible for construction costs; additional details related to revenue, etc. would be worked out. Mr. Gomez clarified that issuance of an RFP would not bind or obligate the City in any way.

Questions from Council focused on how much undeveloped City land would be left available should the arena be built; whether the arena should be built on the other side of Spanish River Boulevard; whether City residents would get first use of the facility; how much revenue might be produced; whether ice skating would be as popular in 20 years; whether the ice could be removed (in later years, if necessary) and the arena used for something else; whether there was a restaurant component; and what type of seating would be available. Mr. Gomez and Mr. Ahnell provided information in relation to the above. Regarding placement of the facility on the north- or south-side of Spanish River Boulevard, Mr. Ahnell indicated that different rules come into play, such as zoning and restrictions dictated by the bond issue; details were provided. Ultimately, Council gave direction to staff to issue an RFP.

- b. Multi-Modal Transportation District (MMTD) White Paper

Whit Blanton, Vice President of Renaissance Planning Group, gave the PowerPoint presentation. He indicated that implementation of MMTDs within the City would establish an interconnected automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit network to improve mobility and quality of life. Areas designated as MMTDs would have multimodal level of service standards that evaluate alternative modes of transportation, not just roadway level of service standards. This interconnected system or network would address commuting and non-commuting traffic. Mr. Blanton spoke to problems currently facing the City, which include increased traffic congestion, regional transportation constraints, and County constrained roadways; details were provided.

Speaking to proposed solutions for the future, Mr. Blanton delineated mobility strategies, such as transit-focused concurrency and impact fees, linking workforce housing with transit-oriented development, shared and maximum parking development standards, an FEC corridor passenger rail initiative, and removing traffic concurrency constraints to livable design. An overview of the project vision included use of urban design and transportation to enhance quality of life, providing accessible and financially feasible transportation options, increasing linkages between local and regional transportation, improving management of existing corridors, providing a complementary mix of desirable land uses, and support for travel options with site planning and community design. He also noted that a continuing dialogue with a number of public and private participants, or key stakeholders, would be necessary.

Mr. Blanton explained that the proposed MMTD for the City would achieve concurrency by establishing five sub-districts, which would reflect travel markets and needs within the City, be centered on a major community focal point, and allow for intermodal gathering points for multiple transportation options. He then outlined the proposed sub-districts before focusing on the topic of funding and financial feasibility; public/private partnerships were advocated. A project schedule and the steps necessary to effectuate the MMTD vision were reviewed. It was revealed that an amendment to the City's Comprehensive Plan would be needed; the proposed adoption date of same was given as Fall 2007.

Mr. Blanton concluded his presentation and answered questions from Council. Attention focused on what other communities had successfully implemented a similar program (Destin, Florida and Charlotte, North Carolina were given as examples); how success would be measured; what the City would look like 20 years from now; and whether the community could be "retrofit" to accommodate other modes of transportation. Mr. Ahnell advised that this initiative would basically put transportation needs ahead of development construction, whereas years ago, development came first with transportation as more of an afterthought due to the availability of land. Responding to comments that the City does not have control over a large amount of traffic, which is just passing through, Mr. Blanton and Mr. Ahnell provided details related to a regional shuttle system.

**5. CITY MANAGER REPORTS:**

The City Manager had nothing to report at this time.

**6. CITY ATTORNEY REPORTS:**

The City Attorney had nothing to report at this time.

**7. MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBER REQUESTS AND REPORTS:**

Council Member Hager advised that the Department of Insurance reported that the City of Boca Raton had not signed up for a certain building code grading schedule; he noted that without showing compliance, citizens pay higher property insurance rates. Mr. Ahnell explained that ISO (International Organization for Standardization) ratings are issued in multiple categories; this one targeted the building department. When the City was approached by the State a few years ago, they wanted to mandate a doubling of building inspectors and other personnel; at that time, a cost/benefit analysis was conducted, which did not show any benefit to the City. In addition, the State could not demonstrate that insurance rate relief would be provided to City residents. Mr. Ahnell concluded by stating that the City did not participate in that part of the survey but did participate in all other aspects. Council Member Hager asked that staff continue to monitor this issue, indicating that, should participation become feasible, it might be beneficial to City residents.

Referring to BRET (Boca Raton Educational Television), Council Member Hager advised that they had recently turned down grant money. Acknowledging that City taxpayers provide primary funding for this entity, he asked for some background information. Mr. Ahnell confirmed with Mr. Hager that he was referring to the cultural bond money that County Commissioner Mary McCarty was disbursing to various cultural groups and stated that he did not believe BRET's Board had taken official action on the proposal. He provided a brief history of BRET, saying that the City allocates \$135,000 annually to provide programming on Channel 19. Council Member Hager asked Mr. Ahnell to follow up.

The regular workshop meeting of the City Council of the City of Boca Raton, Florida, adjourned at approximately 3:55 p.m. on Monday, January 22, 2007.

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Vanessa Hines, Assistant City Clerk