

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR WORKSHOP MEETING
CITY COUNCIL
BOCA RATON, FLORIDA
MONDAY, MARCH 12, 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
City Attorney Diana Grub Frieser
City Clerk Sharma Carannante

1. BOARD INTERVIEWS:

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

No one came forward to interview.

- b. Elder Affairs Advisory Board – one vacancy

No one came forward to interview.

- c. Marine Advisory Board – three vacancies (recreational boater, environmentalist, and professional engineer with experience in marine and coastal matters)

Donald Stone and Garry O'Donnell expressed interest in appointment. Mayor Abrams advised that Jack Johnson could not attend today or tomorrow but is interested in serving on the Board.

- d. Pearl City Blue Ribbon Committee – two vacancies (at-large vacancy and vacancy for resident of Dixie Manor, Pearl City or Lincoln Court)

No one came forward to interview.

2. PUBLIC REQUESTS:

No one came forward to speak.

3. REVIEW OF REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

- a. Questions relating to the agenda.

(Consent Agenda Item No. 3.b.1. – Trailer Mounted Generators) Council Member Arts questioned whether this item would be adding to the City's inventory of generators. Mr. Ahnell replied in the affirmative, advising that six large generators would be purchased for the water well and wastewater lift stations.

(Consent Agenda Item No. 3.c. – Resolution No. 22-2007 / Request the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) temporarily lease surplus property to the City for the purpose of constructing a bike path) Council Member Arts questioned whether there was a cost involved. Mr. Ahnell advised there was no cost to the City and explained that staff originally understood that this land belonged to the City; in actuality, it is controlled by FDOT. This item would allow the City to temporarily lease the land in order to connect the El Rio bike trail from the Tri-Rail station to FAU (Florida Atlantic University).

(Consent Agenda Item No. 3.f. – Resolution No. 27-2007 / Contract for sale and purchase with Valley Executive Associates, LLC for property in connection with the realignment of Dixie Highway at Hidden Valley Blvd) Council Member Baronoff asked whether there was a cost involved with this item. The City Manager stated that the cost is \$294,500 and advised that the intersection needs widening and improvement. If the City acquires the property, the County has agreed to make the intersection improvements, which are expected to cost in excess of \$1 million.

(Consent Agenda Item No. 3.a.1. – Printing and distribution of the Recreator) Council Member Hager questioned whether this was the only newsletter the City put out for bid. Mr. Ahnell replied in the negative and advised that this item was only for the Recreator, which is published three times per year at a cost of approximately \$35,000 or \$40,000. Mr. Hager then asked whether the City would save money by packaging all its printing needs in the aggregate and obtaining a single bid. Mr. Ahnell explained that staff has considered this suggestion; however, due to the variety of items the City publishes, staff has been unable to find one company with the expertise to take care of everything. Responding to another query from Mr. Hager, the City Manager stated it would be difficult to standardize the print materials to accomplish aggregate bids, due to the diverse nature of the printed material; details were provided. Mr. Hager concluded his comments by indicating that the City might wish to consider somehow economizing these smaller items, if at all possible, in light of the burdens faced by taxpayers.

(Consent Agenda Item No. 3.b.1. – Trailer Mounted Generators) Council Member Hager asked whether the City uses these generators outside of emergencies. The City Manager advised that they are used as needed, not only in emergency situations.

(Consent Agenda Item No. 3.c. – Resolution No. 22-2007 / Request the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) temporarily lease surplus property to the City for the purpose of constructing a bike path) Deputy Mayor Whelchel questioned whether this leasing concept could be applied to the FDOT property on North Congress Avenue, in terms of workforce housing, where the Tri-Rail Park and Ride parking lot is currently located. Mr. Ahnell indicated that staff could pursue this idea with FDOT, who has been a very good partner over the years. It was agreed that the City Manager would make inquiries in regard to the North Congress Avenue property. Responding to Council Member Hager, Mr. Ahnell explained that the City maintains inventories of all assets and properties it owns; details were provided. He stated that when a situation arises where another property owner may be impacted by a project, the City routinely conducts a complete record search to confirm that the City's records are accurate.

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

There were no items for consideration.

5. CITY MANAGER REPORTS:

The City Manager had nothing to report.

6. CITY ATTORNEY REPORTS:

The City Attorney stated that she would seek authorization from Council tomorrow evening to schedule an executive session related to the sober house litigation.

7. MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBER REQUESTS AND REPORTS:

Deputy Mayor Whelchel commented positively in regard to the Festival of the Arts, stating that it was an amazing week. She then thanked all those involved in making the event a reality.

Council Member Hager congratulated the Boca Raton Historical Society and all others connected with the Boca Bacchanal, stating that it was an outstanding event; details were briefly provided and thanks was tendered to all.

Council Member Baronoff spoke positively in regard to the Festival of the Arts and the Allianz Golf Tournament before turning attention to the proposed annexation of 2,000 acres, west of Boca Raton, (aka the Wedge or Golden Triangle) for incorporation into Broward County and, more specifically, the City of Parkland. He voiced concern as to the impacts the annexation would have on traffic. Mr. Baronoff acknowledged that State Road 7 (441) is the only major artery in the west connecting the north and south, stating that the annexation proposal does not include plans to expand University Drive, one of the only other north/south connectors. Since this annexation issue was expected to come before the MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) on Thursday, both Mr. Baronoff and Council Member Arts, who sit on that body, were asking for Council's position. Much discussion followed.

Council Member Arts advised that some people believed expansion of University Drive would stop future growth; he did not agree, advocating support for expansion. Mr. Arts opined that if the expansion did not occur, the traffic congestion on State Road 7 would be horrendous and ultimately spill into the City via Powerline Road, Military Trail, and Congress Avenue. He concluded by asking for Council's support.

Mayor Abrams clarified that the only issue of concern to Boca Raton is the way University Drive is configured; it does not go further north than Glades Road, due to environmental land, and ends there. He suggested that perhaps staff could provide a brief report tomorrow night on the impact to Glades Road.

Council Member Hager confirmed with Council Members Baronoff and Arts that they advocated support for expanding University Drive to Glades Road and providing upgrades, as necessary, along the way. Mr. Baronoff clarified that the annexation proposal expected to be presented at the MPO included the expansion of State Road 7, which he and Council Member Arts did not believe would be beneficial to the City.

Discussion touched on grid systems, the Military Trail connection to Broward County, and how that compares with the proposed University Drive expansion. It was noted that DCA (Department of Community Affairs) would make the final decision with regard to the annexation proposal. Responding to Council, Mr. Ahnell stated that there's a lack of road infrastructure in west Boca. Consequently, if more traffic came into that area with no additional roads, there would be a negative impact. However, staff would need to conduct a study to determine exactly how Glades Road would be impacted.

Ultimately, Council's consensus was in alignment with that of Representative Adam Hasner's bill, which indicates that road expansion is not tied to the proposed annexation; it is a separate issue to be decided at a later date.

Council Member Arts turned attention to the topic of branding. Mr. Ahnell advised that staff would report on that matter tomorrow night.

In closing, Mayor Abrams referred again to the Festival of the Arts and commented that everyone did a good job.

The regular workshop meeting of the City Council of the City of Boca Raton, Florida, adjourned at approximately 2:02 p.m. on Monday, March 12, 2007.

Vanessa Hines, Assistant City Clerk