



## MINUTES

### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR WORKSHOP MEETING APRIL 24, 2024 6:00 P.M.

The City of Madeira Beach Board of Commissioners held a regular workshop meeting at 6:00 p.m. on April 24, 2024, in the Patricia Shontz Commission Chambers at City Hall, located at 300 Municipal Drive, Madeira Beach, Florida.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** James "Jim" Rostek, Mayor  
David Tagliarini, Commissioner District 1  
Ray Kerr, Commissioner District 2  
Eddie McGeehen, Commissioner District 3

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Anne-Marie Brooks, Vice Mayor/Commissioner District 4

**CITY STAFF PRESENT:** Robin Gomez, City Manager  
Clara VanBlargan, City Clerk  
Andrew Laflin, Finance Director/City Treasurer  
Thomas Trask, City Attorney

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rostek called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

#### 2. ROLL CALL

City Clerk Clara VanBlargan called the roll. Vice Mayor Brooks was absent.

#### 3. PUBLIC COMMENT

John Hendricks, 569 Normandy Road, said the sanitation rates were increased a few years ago to keep the white glove service. The service they are now getting is not what they are paying for. He suggested cutting the rates or contracting sanitation out.

#### 4. BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

##### A. City Marina – Future Usage

Commissioner Kerr said he wanted the item on the agenda to discuss ways to improve the Marina. He suggested short-term and long-term improvements:

Short-term improvements include:

1. Install one additional gasoline pump and an additional short-term boat docking area for fueling to increase revenue.
2. Additional short-term floating docks for “6-pack” charter captains when they do not need fuel.
3. Remove the fence around the dry dock storage and make it green space to improve the look. The trailers could be securely locked down. Marina Manager Brian Crabtree said most thefts involve electronics.
4. Upgrade security cameras throughout the property.

Long-term improvements include:

1. Increase the sump in the fuel tank or add an additional fuel tank if needed.
2. Increase daily parking, which would allow charter captains to dock and increase revenue.
3. A two-story garage could be built above a Public Works area.
4. Add a restaurant or rentable meeting space.

The City Manager said the City Marina is its’ own enterprise, and any expenses would come directly from the Marina Enterprise Fund.

Mayor Rostek opened to public comment.

Jason DeLaCruz, a local business owner, asked where a new fuel dock would be built. Mr. Crabtree said it would be on the west side of the current fuel dock, on their submerged land.

Mayor Rostek asked if they could get a second pump approved, would there be enough room on both sides of the dock to get three to four boats in at the same time? Would they need to spend more money? Mr. Crabtree said there would be enough room as it is now, but adding an additional piece of the fuel dock would be helpful.

Mayor Rostek asked if the Marina had enough staff. The Marina Manager said yes.

## **B. Homestead Exemption, Property Tax Changes**

Commissioner Kerr said House Joint Resolution 1377 was successfully introduced into the Florida Legislature in 2021 and made it onto the Florida 2022 ballot. The bill was approved by a majority vote but did not get the 60% it needed to move forward. The Resolution says if you mitigate your home for flood, your property taxes would not be impacted. He thought the Legislature was looking to reduce the Homestead Property Tax increase from 3% to 2%.

Commissioner Kerr said he met with RJ Myers of Shumaker Advisors and shared an email he sent as a resident to Senator DiCeglie and Representative Linda Cheney requesting merging the Resolution and the reduction in the tax increase into a single bill to be introduced in the upcoming session. If they are considered two different initiatives they may not legally pass. He asked that the Board agree to collectively put a letter together stating that the City would like to have it considered.

- Commissioner Kerr said Mr. Myers did not know if it could happen.
- Commissioner Tagliarini questioned whether they should suggest it as a City in case it would not be legal to pass it as a combined bill. Commissioner Kerr said it would be up to the Legislature to determine it, but they could present it as favorable.
- If a resident's house floods and the damage is over 50% of the value of the structure, they would have to meet FEMA standards and mitigate it. If they could afford to raise their home, the property value would remain the same, but the new structure value would increase, so the property taxes increase.
- Commissioner McGeehen thought it was a great idea. Commissioner Tagliarini was in favor of it. Mayor Rostek was in favor but wanted the document to bullet point the issues and state their potential resolution. The Mayor said he would take it to the Big C to try to get all of the barrier island on board.

Mayor Rostek opened to public comment.

Chuck Dillon, 529 Lillian Drive, said FEMA has a program in place where they pay 75% of the rebuild, and the City has to follow the guidelines. He thought the City was part of the program a few years ago.

- A reduction in the increase of the Homestead Property Tax would be statewide.
- Mayor Rostek said Mr. Myers had a great idea to have the state front the money instead of the City to pay for the raising of the homes. He thought it could be a line item in the draft letter.

The Consensus of the Board was for Commissioner Kerr to begin drafting a letter to be sent to Senator DiCeglie, Representative Cheney, and RJ Myers.

## **5. CITY MANAGER**

### **A. RFP 2024-01 HR, Classification, Compensation Plans Study**

The City Manager said the Civil Service Commission suggested the City review its Classification and Compensation Plan and HR functions related to it. The recommendation from the Civil Service Commission was to proceed with negotiating an agreement with the Gehring Group for just under \$38,000. The study would take about twelve weeks. The agreement would be brought back for approval at the May 8<sup>th</sup> regular meeting.

- The Gehring Group would analyze the current plan, compare it with other similar cities, and bring back suggestions.

- The last study the City had done was in 2019. There have been significant economic changes since 2019
- Commissioner McGeehen said he was apprehensive about spending that amount for a twelve-week study. He would like to know the details so he can understand it. Commissioner Tagliarini agreed, but he wanted to make sure they stay competitive with other cities. The twelve weeks were broken down in detail on pages 41 – 43 of the agenda packet.
- Commissioner Kerr asked the City Clerk to send him a link to the 2019 study.

Mayor Rostek opened to public comment.

John Hendricks, 569 Normandy Road, said he thought the City had done a good job in staying very competitive, and it would be a waste of \$38,000.

The consensus of the Board was for the City Manager to negotiate an agreement with the Gehring Group.

## **6. FIRE**

### **A. Redington EMS Station Funding Agreement**

Fire Chief Clint Belk said it is the final agreement with the County for the Redington EMS station.

- There would be no financial burden to the City.
- Once the station is built, the County will provide EMS funding.
- There will be no duplication of apparatus purchases.
- The County will purchase the City's medic unit, and once it is moved to Redington, they can work collectively with other departments.
- It will not affect their ISO rating.
- The station is needed for EMS coverage north of Madeira Beach to meet the response time of seven minutes and thirty seconds.

Mayor Rostek opened to public comment. There were no public comments.

The consensus of the Board was to move forward with the agreement.

## **7. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

### **A. John's Pass Village Activity Center Zoning Workshop**

Community Development Director Jenny Rowen gave an overview of the PowerPoint presentation she presented at the three zoning workshops. Zoning refers to the Land Development Regulations and the Code of Ordinances.

- The zoning will be broken down into six different character districts.
- Director Rowen provided the Commission with a rough draft of the feedback they got from the round table discussions at the workshops.

Mayor Rostek opened to public comment.

John Connolly, 600 Normandy Road, said the workshops were excellent, but they are missing a medical center. He brought it up now so they can try to implement it in future plans.

- Commissioner Kerr said they need to understand the Design Flood Elevation (DFE), and he thought the height should be at the roof eve. They do not want future development to eliminate the roof lines. He thought it would be a good idea to have a public meeting at John's Pass so the Board could look at the structures and the height of the buildings.

The consensus of the Board was to schedule a Special Meeting for a walking tour of John's Pass Village.

### **B. Ordinance 2024-02 Open Accessory Structures**

Mayor Rostek opened to public comment.

Chuck Dillon, 429 Lillian Drive, said he was confused by the wording and asked the maximum.

- Director Rowan said the Code currently defines enclosed accessory structures, but it did not define open accessory structures. Chickee huts do not have to follow the Florida Building Code but must meet the planning and zoning standards and floodplain regulations. The ordinance creates multiple sections, which include the applicability of division, definitions, building permits required, accessory structure maintenance, things excluded from permitting, construction trailers, and outdoor kitchens. The final version allows for open accessory structures at 3.5% of the total lot size in addition to an enclosed accessory structure.
- Director Rowan advised looking at the noise ordinance if the Board wanted to adopt additional noise regulations for mechanical accessory structures in the C-4 zone near residential areas.
- The maximum height for an accessory structure is 20 feet, but they could reduce it to 15 feet.

Chuck Dillon, 429 Lillian Drive, said 12 or 14 feet would be very sufficient.

John Connolly, 600 Normandy Road, said the Planning Commission left it with staff to determine what would fit on a lot, but they never went above 14 feet.

- Commissioner Kerr said he wanted to be less restrictive. Commissioner McGeehen agreed.
- Mayor Rostek said there needs to be uniformity in order to make the City aesthetically pleasing.

The consensus of the Board was to make the maximum height in residential areas 14 feet and 20 feet for commercial properties.

The Board directed the Planning staff to look at the noise ordinance and bring it back at a future workshop.

### **C. Potential Fence Code Amendments**

Joe Petraglia, Planning Technician, reviewed a proposed fence ordinance that would help improve the existing fence ordinance.

- Mayor Rostek said he would like the ordinance to specify that super silt fencing be used all the time during construction. Mr. Petraglia said he would look at other sections of the Code to see if it is mentioned; if not, it could be added to the fence ordinance.
- Currently, it is not clear where the front yard, rear yard, and side yard starts. Staff proposed using the zoning district setbacks.
- Rear-fenced yards facing the water would require a three or four-foot fence. The four-foot fence would need to be an open fence. Shrubbery can grow up to natural height in rear yards on the water.
- Staff proposed adding a non-conforming section to the Code. All fences would have to meet the current Fence Code, there would be no non-conforming allowances.

Mayor Rostek opened to public comment. There were no public comments.

## **8. PARKING**

### **A. Parking - Residential**

The City Manager said Ordinance 2024-03, adopted on March 13, 2024, provided clarification on parking requirements. There were discussions about adding specific measurements.

- Parking Enforcement Supervisor Jamal Yahia said they measure distances through the Measuring App. The distance a car could park from a stop sign would be 30 feet and 15 feet from an intersection or fire hydrant.

- The City Manager said they would add stickers on signs and yard signs for improper parking.
- The Parking Supervisor said they would try to prioritize patrolling Madeira Way.

Mayor Rostek opened to public comment.

John Connolly, 600 Normandy Road, suggested the City charge for all the parking meters in Tom & Kitty Stuart Park \$4.50 for the first hour and \$3.50 for every hour after that. It could be a way to make up for the money being lost from the four “Resident Only” spaces.

The consensus of the Board was to add the measurements the Parking Division was using. The revision would be brought back for first reading at a future meeting.

## **9. PUBLIC WORKS**

### **A. Trash Collection – Residential**

The City Manager said the sanitation rate increase two years ago was the first in seven years. The process staff incorporated over the years was unsafe and labor-intensive. Because of staffing issues, the City has gone to an automated process. Yard waste and bulk items have always been collected on Wednesday. The City needs to stay with the most efficient schedule.

- Public Works Director Megan Wepfer said the intention is to run the side loader with one person if they are low on staff. Staff are still learning the truck and the routes, and she has plenty of staff, so there are three people on the truck.
- If the trash can fit in the container, staff will take it. Residents need to use their recycling containers. Trash pickup is two times per week, and residents have the option to get a larger can.
- Commissioner Kerr said the level of service has decreased because staff will not pick up anything that is not in the can like they used to. Director Wepfer said if something falls out of the container, staff will put it in the next can to be lifted to the truck. Commissioner Kerr said if there is no additional value in having it in-house, why have the additional cost?
- Mayor Rostek asked who stages the commercial dumpsters for pickup in the Redingtons. Director Wepfer said the tenants are required to do it, but the City does not have an area to do it. Staff go into the dumpster enclosures, pull the dumpsters out, and put them back seven days a week.
- Director Wepfer said prior to increasing the sanitation fee, Sanitation was losing money every year because Pinellas County raised its rates, but the City stayed at the same rate.
- The Board briefly discussed moving the bulk pickup day to Monday.

- Director Wepfer said if they outsourced sanitation, she would not be able to use her staff in a different department unless positions were created. She is almost fully staffed with one vacancy.

Mayor Rostek opened to public comment. There were no public comments.

## 10. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Rostek adjourned the meeting at 9:22 p.m.

ATTEST:

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James “Jim” Rostek, Mayor

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Clara VanBlargan, MMC, MSM, City Clerk