



CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, November 19, 2024 * 6:30 PM

MINUTES

Present was:

Mayor - Nicholas Fouraker
District 1 – Commissioner – Frank Vertolli
District 2 – Commissioner – Holly Bobrowski
District 3 – Commissioner – Danny Otterbacher
District 4 Vice Mayor – Jason Carson
District 5 Commissioner – Beth Lowell
District 6 Commissioner – Stan Smith
District 7 Commissioner – Jim Partin

Absent was:

1. Call to Order and Confirmation of Quorum

Mayor Fouraker called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm, and the Clerk confirmed quorum. City Manager Rick Rudometkin, Attorney Dan Langley, Chief Grimm, Public Works Director Phil Price, and City Clerk Yolanda Quiceno were also present.

2. Invocation and Pledge to Flag - Vice Mayor, Jason Carson-District 4

Vice Mayor Carson gave the invocation and led the Pledge to the Flag.

Mayor Fouraker said he could not stay for the meeting as he had a previous engagement. He said Vice Mayor Carson would continue with the agenda.

3. Citizen's Comments

Vice Mayor Carson opened for citizen comments.

- Anthony Carugno, residing at 2372 Hoffner Avenue, gave an update on the ANAC meeting. He noted that he would like to see the CCA City representatives give monthly or quarterly updates to the Council and residents so that the City residents can be updated on the construction and school events.
- Wood Johnson, Chairman of the Police Advisory Board, gave a brief on the topics and tasks the Advisory Board is currently discussing, i.e., annexation, study compatibility and comparisons, and vehicle lease vs purchase. He thanked the Council for approving the K9 Patrol. He announced the Board will present Officer of the Awards at a future Council meeting.

There being no further comment, Vice Mayor Carson closed citizen comments.

4. Presentations

- a. PD Recognition Award – Wawa
Chief Grimm presented the Proclamation to Wawa staff and thanked them for their continued support of the City and the Agency.
- b. FLC Announcement - Comm Frank Vertolli Completion of the Institute for Elected Municipal Officials
Comm Vertolli was presented with a certificate of completion from the Institute for Elected Municipal Officials.

5. Consent Items

- a. Approval of City Council Minutes - August 22, 2024
- b. Approval of City Council Workshop Minutes - October 1, 2024
- c. Approval of City Council Minutes - October 1, 2024
- d. Approval of City Council Minutes - October 15, 2024
- e. **Approval of Resolution No. 24-22** - A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2023, AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2024, PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

- f. Approval of the 2020 Bond Proceeds Closeout
- g. Approval of Amendment Standard Grant Agreement 23PLN26 Re: Comprehensive Vulnerability Assessment
- h. Approval of Amendment 1 FDEP 22FRP106 Re: Sol Avenue Rebuild Project

Vice Mayor Carson called for a motion to approve the Consent Items.
Council moved to pull items c, e, f, g, and h.

Comm Bobrowski moved to approve items a, b, and d as presented.
Comm Lowell seconded the motion.

Item c

Comm Lowell moved the following edits to the minutes of October 1, 2024, as follows,

Page 2 of 2, reads, "Mr. Hamstra said this originally started with Orange County and the major flooding areas. He does not feel like the County will not have any objections; it was not a personal slant against the city. They wanted to limit the audience to those most impacted.

Should read, "Mr. Hamstra said this originally started with Orange County and the major flooding areas. He does not feel the county will have any objections; it was not a personal slant against the city. They wanted to limit the audience to those most impacted."

Comm Vertolli seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Item e

City Manager Rudometkin explained that Resolutions 24-22 are presented to update and clarify amendments to the approved budget per State guidelines.

Comm Partin moved to approve Resolution 24-22 as presented.

Comm Lowell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Item f

Comm Smith asked if the 2020 Bonds closeout will be paid and closed on the books.

City Manager Rudometkin explained that the bond was for the Bank of America building, which was not built out. It has been on the books for two years with an unspent amount remaining. He is asking to use the remaining funds to pay the principal portion of the bond, with the balance coming out of the General Fund to allow the City to close the bond.

Comm Smith moved to approve item f, as presented.

Comm Lowell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Item g

City Manager Rudometkin explained that the vulnerability grant should open the door for other grants and has contacted a professional company for guidance. This was initially a resiliency grant used for the Sol project. The vulnerability assessment portion is a new program for stormwater funding, which has been denied in the past.

Comm Partin moved to approve item g, as presented.

Comm Otterbacher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Item h

City Manager Rudometkin provided an amendment to the Sol Project to amend the effective date of 2023 from February 4, 2022, and revised on April 4, 2024. He hopes this change will close out the Sol Avenue project and see the full reimbursement of \$196,000.

Comm Lowell moved to approve item h, as presented.

Comm Otterbacher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

6. Unfinished Business

- a. Resolution Waive Zoning & Buildings Fees Issued Due to Hurricane Milton

City Manager Rudometkin said that, as in years past, the staff is requesting, in the interest of public health and safety, to authorize the temporary waiver of zoning permit fees for hurricane Milton-related repairs or replacements for roofs, screened enclosures, fencing, HVAC and electric systems, pools, marine structures, and solar collectors ending December 31, 2024. To date, we have received one request to repair an electrical panel.

Comm Bobrowski requested an edit to the Resolution to remove the “building fee waiver.”

After discussion, Comm Lowell moved to approve the Resolution with the change to remove the building fee waiver from the Resolution and allow for waiving zoning fees only through December 31, 2024. Comm Bobrowski seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

7. New Business

a. Tree Board Presentation on Updated Application, Fees, and New Resident Program - Richard Weinsier

Richard Weinsier, Chairman of the Tree Board, presented changes to the Tree Permit process and new program initiatives as follows,

- Minimal increase in tree removal permit from \$25 to \$35
- Consideration of an Ordinance amendment for increasing the fines for residents who do not follow the code
- Raffling an oak tree on Arbor Day and at various events
- Provide new residents with tree and trash information on a memory card. magnet or QR code
- Provide a goodie bag with promotional items
- Provide recycling paper bags for purchase

After the discussion, Comm Smith moved to review and continue the conversation at the second meeting in January. Comm Lowell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

b. Approval of Bing Grant Application for Lake Conway Estates HOA

Jason Hunter, Lake Conway Estates’ HOA representative, presented the BING Grant application for upgrading the HOA Tennis Court. The council discussed the project with a 50/50 match. The district is split between Districts 1 and 7, and Mr. Hunter requested a split request to fund their project.

Comm Vertolli moved to approve the Bing Grant application, which includes \$7,500 from District 1 and \$4,500 from District 7, for a total of \$12,000.

Comm Partin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

c. Approval of Pioneer Days Acoustic Stage Sponsorship

Comm Smith moved to approve the Pioneer Days Acoustic Stage for \$600.

Comm Partin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

d. Appointment of City Council Member to the Audit Selection Committee

Comm Partin asked if the appointment of a Council member to a City Board goes against the Charter. Attorney Langley clarified that State Law requires a member of the governing body to be on the auditor selection committee, and the Code is superseded by State law. The appointment is a limited role, and the Council person will be the Chair of the Auditor Committee. After selecting an auditor, the appointed Council person will no longer sit on the Committee.

Comm Partin nominated himself to the Audit Selection Committee.

Comm Smith seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

e. Support letter for IOG in Central Florida and the Greater Orlando Area

Comm Otterbacher moved to approve the support letter for IOG as presented.

Comm Partin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

f. Discussion to Reschedule or Combine December 3rd and 17th Council Meetings

After discussion, Comm Otterbacher moved to cancel the December 3rd meeting.

Comm Partin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

8. Attorney's Report

Attorney Langley reported on the Cavedo Lot Split litigation, which the Council denied this year and was challenged with a Request for Relief. The magistrate agreed that the proceeding was brought improperly because the landowner had sued the City's circuit court before working on a solution. Mediation was not successful. There is a pending lawsuit that was abated. However, the Judge gave Cavedo 30 days to refile the proper documents. The City will continue to challenge the appeal.

Comm Partin asked if there was any recourse for reimbursement. Attorney Langley said that in Florida, a party in any lawsuit cannot recover attorney fees from the other party unless a contract or Statute is in place.

9. City Manager's Report

a. City Manager Task List

The City Manager's Task List was provided for review, and spoke briefly on

- Hurricane Clean Up
 - Hurricane Helene clean up – \$14,000
 - Hurricane Milton clean up – JJ's pick-up fee \$21,000 over their contract fee
 - Hurricane Milton clean up approximately \$262,500, not including debris removal/grinding at the drop-off location. Paperwork was received before payment was made. Staff will be seeking reimbursement of the \$262,500 from FEMA. Discussion ensued on the debris removal grinding process.
- CCA Board Appointments
 - City Manager Rudometkin said Mr. Brooks informed him that no seats were available for appointment because, as Chairman, he had reappointed Mr. Armstead and Mrs. Cross. Comm Partin said he would have liked staff to research further and asked that the City send apology letters to the three applicants.
- Credit Card Points—City Manager Rudometkin stated that the City has earned points on its credit cards and asked for approval to use the points to give employees a \$25 gift card for the holidays rather than losing them. Vice Mayor Carson asked how long we had been losing points before we came up with the option. Comm Vertolli learned by attending conferences that some cities pay for their services with credit cards and the earned cash back is used to pay off bills. The staff is looking into other programs that offer cash back vs points. After Council discussion, Comm Partin asked that it be returned for formal approval on December 17 and open discussion on how to distribute the points, i.e., place them back into the general fund, holiday auctions, charitable organizations, families in need, or staff holiday gift cards.

Comm Otterbacher moved that the \$25 gift card for employees should be approved this year if it is a use-it or lose-it scenario.

Comm Smith seconded the motion, which passed 6:1 with Comm Partin, nay.

Mr. Rudometkin announced,

- Comm Carson and former Comm Anthony Carugno qualified for Mayor
- District 2 qualified and was unopposed.
- No one qualified for Districts 3 and 4.

Mr. Rudometkin asked Attorney Langley to provide a brief overview of the process of appointing candidates to Districts 3 and 4 in the future. Attorney Langley said that given that there are no qualified candidates for those two districts, there will be two vacancies beginning April 1, 2025. There is a Charter process for filing vacancies. The Council can decide to start the process early and direct the City Manager to post the vacancies to fill the seats with appointments to commence in April. Applications will be provided to the Council for an interview, and the position will be filled with a majority vote of the Council within 30 days of the vacancy.

Comm Otterbacher said he was aware of the qualifying period on Wednesday and did his best to submit the paperwork. However, after reviewing the documents, he fell short on three petitions to qualify. He stated that he had all intentions of remaining in office.

b. Chief's Report

Chief Grimm congratulated the staff for the quick pick-up of Hurricane Milton debris.

Chief Grimm reminded all of the upcoming events and noted that they will be added to the flashing board signs.

c. **Public Works Report**

Phil Price, Public Works Director, reported,

- Sidewalk repair replacement will be winding down for the holidays.
- The sidewalk at City Hall is complete, and landscaping will commence,
- Christmas decorations will be up around the City in the next few days.
- St Partin Place piping is repaired and complete.

10. Mayor's Report – No report.

11. Items from Council

- Comm Otterbacher spoke about the alligator removed at South Lake. City Manager Rudometkin said he would forward contact information to the Alligator Hotline.
- Comm Lowell spoke on the FAA Tower (Orange County), which was contacted to repair a strobing white light.

12. Adjournment

With no further business, Mayor Fouraker called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was unanimously approved at 8:45 pm.