



CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FL CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, April 15, 2025 * 6:30 PM
MINUTES

Present was:

Mayor – Jason Carson
District 2 – Holly Bobrowski
District 5 Commissioner – Beth Lowell
District 6 Commissioner – Stan Smith
District 7 Commissioner – Jim Partin

Absent was:

District 1 Commissioner – Frank Vertolli
District 3 – OPEN
District 4 – OPEN

1. Call to Order and Confirmation of Quorum

Mayor Carson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm, and the Clerk confirmed quorum.

City Manager Rick Rudometkin, Attorney Langley, Chief Grimm, DC Millis, Public Works Director Phil Price, and City Clerk Yolanda Quiceno were also present.

2. Invocation and Pledge to Flag

Comm Partin gave the Invocation and led the Pledge to the Flag.

Mayor Carson asked for a motion to excuse Comm Vertolli.

Comm Smith moved to excuse Comm Vertolli from tonight's meeting.

Comm Lowell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 4:0.

3. Public Comments & Announcements

Mayor Carson opened public comments.

- Garrett Phillips, owner of 6001 S. Orange Avenue, shared his concerns about parents using his parking area as a cut-through during the pickup and drop-off of Cornerstone Charter Academy students. He is worried about the safety of the children and his clients. The Police Department said they cannot do anything other than place signs and cones. CCA stated that they have sent out notices in their newsletter. He is asking for the City Council's help in keeping everyone safe and stopping his business from being a cut-through option.
- In support of appointing Bobby Lance as District 4 Commissioner, the following individuals spoke in favor of the appointment,
 - Brian Pikalow, residing at 4809 Fayann Street
 - Drew Brown, residing at 6615 Matchett
 - Pete Clarke, residing at 7600 Daetwyler Drive
 - Jennifer Wright, residing at 6906 Daetwyler Drive
 - William Morgan, residing at 1916 Elizabeth Street
 - Rainey Conduff, residing at 6908 Willoughby Lane
 - Dan Drummond, residing at 540 Mandalay Road
 - Paul Lance, residing at 2806 Trentwood Blvd
 - Roy Rause, residing at 2423 Nela Avenue
 - James Lance, residing at 3333 Flowertree Road
 - Pete Madison, residing at 4908 Oak Island Rd

There being no further comments, Mayor Carson closed the public comment section.

4. Presentations – N/A

5. Consent Items

- a. March 2025 Monthly Reports: Finance, Code Enforcement, Fire, and PD
Comm Lowell moved to approve the consent item as presented.
Comm Bobrowski seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 4:0.

6. Unfinished Business

a. 3904 Arajo Court Condemnation Update

City Manager Rudometkin gave an update on the 3904-property condemnation. He stated that Mr. Giles said the owner is looking to contract with another company and will no longer be assisting with the construction and repair of the home. Ms. Lizar Armstead Stovall has contracted with a construction company to clean the property and vegetation and has rented a dumpster to start the cleanup. The City staff have not spoken with the contractor and cannot confirm the action plan to repair the home. CM Rudometkin asked for Council direction on moving forward with the condemnation or allowing the homeowner more time to gather the necessary contracted services.

Comm Smith said he favors allowing more time as long as the homeowner gives dates and guarantees for completion.

Comm Lowell shared her concerns about allowing more time due to a safety issue without finite completion dates. She further noted that this has been a discussion for the last three to four years.

Comm Partin said this has deviated from the last Council meeting discussion with Mr. Giles. He is in favor of allowing a couple of weeks. However, the Council will have to decide sooner rather than later. Comm Partin asked if the City could file an amendment to the lien to include reimbursement of the additional funds the City spent to date and the demolition cost.

Attorney Langley said there is a recorded lien for Code Enforcement funds. Once the City spends the money on demolition, a second lien will be recorded for reimbursement, along with the attorney's costs.

Comm Bobrowski said she is an advocate for Seniors. The house is a teardown. Could the City make a humanitarian gesture and provide an independent inspection of the home? CM Rudometkin said he had suggested to the homeowner that she should invest in an inspection report before she spends any more money.

After further discussion, the Council agreed to give the homeowner a couple more weeks to provide the contract and dates and guarantee a plan of action at the May 6th City Council meeting.

Comm Bobrowski moved to revisit the discussion at the next City Council meeting on May 6th to allow the City Manager to meet with the contractor and report back to the Council. Comm Smith seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 4:0.

7. New Business

a. Applicant Interviews and Possible Appointments of District 3 & 4 Commissioner

City Manager Rudometkin discussed the open City Council vacancies. He presented the applications for District 3 and District 4 candidates and provided a copy of the Charter language on appointing vacancies.

Attorney Langley said that per the Charter, once a quorum is established, the majority of the quorum present is necessary to move an item; it will take three affirmative votes to appoint a candidate. The Council is compelled to act within 90 days of the vacancy occurring to avoid any legal issues.

Comm Lowell shared the concerns of many residents about the many appointments on the Council. She asked if it would be possible for the City to process a special election as part of the process and within the 90 days. Attorney Langley said the Charter specifies a process, and there is only one method: the Council appointing a candidate. If the Council deviates from the process in the Charter, it can be seen as a violation of the Charter and not the process of the referendum passed by the citizens. If the Council would like to hold a special election for vacancies, the Council will have to submit an ordinance and a referendum for the residents' approval.

Comm Bobrowski has also received correspondence from residents on all the Council appointments, stating that the process has no integrity. She believes the system is broken, the Charter needs to evolve, and we have too many commissioners. She suggests reducing the number to five and extending the qualifying period. As a matter of principle, she stated that she would vote "no" to all the candidates until the system was fixed. Mayor Carson agreed that changes must be made to get more people involved.

The Council discussed and agreed to interview the candidates. During the interview, the other applicants will be asked to leave the room and call back in when it is their turn.

The Council interviewed the following candidates,

1. Karl Shuck – District 3
2. Danny Otterbacher – District 3
3. Bobby Lance – District 4

Comm Partin said he understands Comm Bobrowski's position that she wants to see change and that voting "no" to all candidates is a big statement. He asked that she consider voting on the applicants and move forward with necessary modifications at a later date. He stated that her vote is important and necessary. Comm Bobrowski said that over two years, she spoke about the size of the commission and does not know how to get across to the Council that they need to change the Charter and step up on their game; it is a way of having a silent protest. So far, it has been very frustrating, and I would like the Council to commit to making an effort and agree that a change needs to be made.

Mayor Carson said the Council should ask the City Attorney to present draft Charter changes for discussion. Comm Partin said discussing the changes with the full Council would be beneficial.

Comm Smith moved to appoint Karl Shuck for District 3.

Comm Lowell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously upon roll call 4:0.

Comm Partin moved to appoint Bobby Lance for District 4.

Comm Smith seconded the motion, which passed 3:1 upon roll call with Comm Bobrowski, nay.

Comm Lowell called a motion for a two-minute break. Comm Smith seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved. The meeting reconvened at 8:20 pm.

Chief Grimm swore in Comm Karl Shuck as District 3 Commissioner.

Mr. Pete Clarke swore in Comm Bobby Lance as District 4 Commissioner.

b. Applicant Interview and Possible Appointment of Chad Rocheford to the Budget Committee

For the record, Comm Partin shared a resident's concern that he and another applicant for the P&Z Board are on the PACK committee and may be used to influence the City. Mr. Rocheford said he doesn't believe a budget committee member will have enough influence. He would focus on bringing more tax revenue and annexing opportunities to offset the tax revenue.

Comm Smith moved to appoint Chad Rocheford for the District 3 Budget Committee seat.

Comm Partin seconded the motion, which passed unanimously upon roll call 6:0.

c. Approval to Host the October Tri-County League of Cities Board Meeting

CM Rudometkin called for a motion to approve Comm Vertolli to spearhead the City's sponsorship of the Tri-County Meeting. CM Rudometkin mentioned a few locations in mind, such as Regal, Wyndham Hotel, and El Potro. He and Comm Vertolli will contact those businesses for more information. The meeting will be held on the third Thursday in October.

Comm Partin moved to appoint Comm Vertolli as the Belle Isle representative to facilitate the Tri-County Leagues of Cities Board meeting. Comm Lowell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 6:0.

8. Attorney's Report – No report.

9. City Manager's Report

a. City Manager's Report

The City Manager presented,

- City Manager's Task List
 - CCA will discuss the carve-out contract of the Lancaster House at their April 23 meeting for approval.
 - Golf Cart Ordinance's second reading will be on the May 6th agenda.
 - The lot split/ flag lot discussion will be on the agenda later to allow the city staff to gather information, and will be presented at the second meeting in May. The applicant has been notified.
 - Staff is working on the credit card policy vs. procurement cards with rewards allocation.

Comm Smith moved to extend the meeting an additional 15 minutes. Comm Bobrowski seconded the motion, which passed unanimously 6:0.

b. Chief's Report

- Chief Grimm announced
 - He has attended the monthly Joint Terrorism Task Force and hosted the Chief's April meeting at the Wyndham hotel.
 - Scooter Flyer and Golf Cart Education Flyer to be posted on social media
 - Easter Egg Hunt update and street closing – April 19th from 9-10 am
 - Shout out to Danny and Jennifer Dell for their candy donations
 - Drug Take Back – April 26th from 10am-2pm
 - PD Canine will join the force on April 23rd (picture was provided)

c. Public Works Report

Phil Price reported that

- The Jade Pump Station generator has been installed, awaiting final inspection.
- Completing painting at City Hall.
- OC project - three phases by St Partin Place/Judge/Conway and Gondola. Community meeting at Shenandoah Elementary on April 16, 2025.
- He attends the TSMO/TAC meeting and will provide updates.
- Currently, finishing Oak Island sidewalk repair.
- Council thanked staff for replacing the duck hunting signs

Comm Smith moved to extend the meeting an additional 15 minutes. Comm Lance seconded the motion, which passed 5:1 with Comm Bobrowski, nay.

10. Mayor's Report - na

11. Commissioners' Report

- Comm Bobrowski said some of the crossing guards asked for consideration to add a traffic light at Wallace and Fairlane, and are not comfortable crossing where there is no light. Chief Grimm said he would review the request; however, they would have to wait for the new traffic pattern before making any decisions.

Comm Bobrowski said she had been speaking with a constituent about building a home on her lot. She noted that it has been going on for six years and will request to have it added to the agenda for discussion.
- Comm Lance said they discussed placing the Stop sign at the HOA meeting at the corner of Daetwyler Shores/ Via Flora.
- Comm Lowell said, based on the completion of the sidewalks, she would like to send information to the communities to inform and educate the residents that they are responsible for the sidewalk update, clearing, upkeep, and repair.
- Comm Lance reported that the homeless are defecating and smoking marijuana at the back wall of Via Flora.
- Comm Smith noted that he cannot attend the May 6th meeting.

Comm Smith asked for the RFP implementation dates, Grant updates/startup, and to schedule a workshop to review the Biotech consultant report received in November.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Carson called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, which passed unanimously at 9:30 pm.