

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE STUART CITY COMMISSION
MAY 12, 2025
AT 4:00 PM
COMMISSION CHAMBERS
121 SW FLAGLER AVE.
STUART, FLORIDA 34994

CITY COMMISSION

Mayor Campbell Rich
Vice Mayor Christopher Collins
Commissioner Eula R. Clarke
Commissioner Laura Giobbi
Commissioner Sean Reed

ADMINISTRATIVE

City Manager, Michael J. Mortell
City Attorney, Lee J. Baggett
City Clerk, Mary R. Kindel

ROLL CALL

4:00 PM

PRESENT: Mayor Rich, Vice Mayor Collins, Commissioner Clarke, Commissioner Giobbi, and Commissioner Reed

INVOCATION

Pastor Frederick James, St. Paul A.M.E. Church of East Stuart, gave the Invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1. ARTS MOMENT - SONG PERFORMANCE

Leila Pierre sang "Rise Up" by Andra Day.

PROCLAMATIONS

2. PUBLIC WORKS WEEK - MAY 18-24, 2025

Bob Carlsen, City of Port St. Lucie Drainage Supervisor and American Public Work Association District Representative, Chris Corrado accepted the Proclamation.

3. SAFE BOATING WEEK - MAY 17-23, 2025

Dr. Robert Hess, Flotilla 59 Commander, and several Auxiliaries accepted the Proclamation and announced free boating safety classes and their theme this year is

"Wear It".

4. FAMILY ABDUCTION AWARENESS DAY - MAY 25, 2025

Landyn Exarhos, National Parents Organizations, accepted the Proclamation.

5. LUPUS AWARENESS MONTH - MAY 2025

Pamela Kilinger-Milazzo, Lupus Foundation of America Ambassador, accepted the Proclamation.

6. FLORIDA EMANCIPATION DAY - MAY 20, 2025

Reverend Frederick James, St Paul A.M.E Church, accepted the Proclamation and announced the upcoming celebration event.

7. HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH - MAY 2025

Joette Lorion Rice, on behalf of the Historic Preservation Board, accepted the Proclamation and promoted the various historic events and celebrations taking place in the month of May.

8. HONORING KENNETH MARKS WITH PRESIDENTS VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Kathleen Stacey, on behalf of AmeriCorps Seniors and United Way, introduced Kenny Marks for his volunteerism and accepted the Proclamation.

9. HONORING MORGAN MCKEEVER WITH PRESIDENTS VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Kathleen Stacey, on behalf of AmeriCorps Seniors and United Way, honored Morgan McKeever with the President's Volunteer Service Award and accepted the Proclamation.

PRESENTATIONS

10. SERVICE AWARDS - MAY 2025

Kathleen Lannon	Police Department	25 years	Present
Robert Jackson	Utilities & Engineering	5 years	Present

11. FDOT DISTRICT 4 - US1 AND PALM CITY ROAD

Ms. Geysa Sosa, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), provided an informational presentation that included the history of the intersection, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) recommendations, and various considerations.

A brief discussion on the alternatives proposed by the FDOT and MPO included comments by representatives, Juan Calderon of the Caltran Engineering Group and Beth Beltran of the MPO. City Manager Mortell requested Beth Beltran to send the original five (5) alternatives presented at the public meetings to his attention.

12. 2025 FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE SESSION REVIEW

Ben Hogarth, City of Stuart Communications Liaison, provided a brief Legislative update, identifying and reviewing the bills that recently passed.

Vice Mayor Collins asked the Commission to write a letter from the City Commission to Governor Desantis to veto the Emergency Bill. A discussion continued regarding the

Affordable Housing Bill SB180. Commissioners agreed to have Mr. Hogarth produce a letter by tomorrow to include the will of the voters.

COMMENTS BY CITY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Giobbi

- Commented on Municipal Clerk's Week and complimented the City Clerk's Department.
- Announced that the City of Stuart has two Martin Leadership graduates, Susej Meleqi, Deputy Clerk and Derek Ortado, Captain of Police Department.
- Read an email into the record that was received by a concerned resident with regard to an article from the Friends & Neighbor newsletter, she continued expressing her thoughts on the importance of local elections. (Attached is the full statement).

Commissioner Clarke

- Commented on the organization National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and it's importance.
- Announced the Women's Club event tomorrow, May 13th at 4 p.m.
- Announced the Historic Preservation Month marker dedication on May 17th dedication at New Menrovia Park at 11 a.m.
- Announced Emancipation Day in Florida and asked Commission to support the event scheduled for May 20th at 5 p.m. at the St. Paul A.M.E. Church, requested City support for the Program with a message from the Mayor and a Proclamation.

5:58 PM MOTION: Approve that the City support the Emancipation Day event.

MOVED BY: Eula Clarke

SECONDED BY: Laura Giobbi

Motion approved unanimously.

Vice Mayor Collins

- Commented on Brightline parking, requested clarity that such decisions would not take place administratively and that it would come before the Commission. [City Manager Mortell commented on his parking proposal, his intention was to make 3-hr parking on Stypmann, MLK, and East Ocean Blvd.] Vice Mayor Collins requested the City Manager put together a proposal and bring something back as a D&D.

COMMENTS BY CITY MANAGER

City Manager Mortell

- Announced this is Police Chief Tumminelli's last Commission Meeting as he is retiring on May 23rd.
- Commented on the Business Development Board (BDB) appointment, no recommendations by the Commission have been received to date.
- Commented on the Stuart Housing Authority vacancies, he hopes to have them provide a presentation at an upcoming meeting.
- Commented that community members are invited to the City Commission Chambers on

May 22nd at 5:00 p.m. for community input on 10th Street traffic calming.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

6:10 PM MOTION: Approve.

MOVED BY: Christopher Collins

SECONDED BY: Eula Clarke

Motion approved unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (Non-Agenda Related) (3 Minutes Max.)

1. Ron Ausner - Stuart; Complained about the excessive signage and blow-up signs for businesses on US 1 public right-of-ways.

CONSENT CALENDAR

13. APPROVAL OF 04/16/2025 SCM EAST STUART ZONING MINUTES, 04/22/2025 SCM ENVIRONMENTAL ATTORNEY INTERVIEWS MINUTES, AND 04/28/2025 CCM MINUTES

END OF CONSENT CALENDAR

6:16 PM MOTION: Approve.

MOVED BY: Eula Clarke

SECONDED BY: Christopher Collins

Motion approved unanimously.

COMMISSION ACTION

14. MARTIN COUNTY PUD MINOR AMENDMENT (QUASI-JUDICIAL) (RC):

RESOLUTION No. 50-2025; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA GRANTING APPROVAL OF A MINOR PUD AMENDMENT TO THE "MARTIN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT PUBLIC SERVICE PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT" TO EXPAND THE MARTIN COUNTY BUILDING DEPARTMENT ON PROPERTY LOCATED ON THE SOUTHEAST SIDE OF S.E. WILLOUGHBY BOULEVARD AND S.E. RUHNKE STREET, THEREBY PROVIDING FOR CONDITIONS; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Quasi-Judicial - Five (5) people sworn; Michelle Arbuzow, Planner I, Jodi Kugler, Development Director, Jeff Dougherty, Director of Martin County (MC) Building Department, David Baggett, Engineering Design & Construction, Inc., Chris Zimmerman, President of CPZ Architects, Inc.

Michelle Arbuzow presented the item.

Jeff Dougherty, Director of MC Building Department, spoke about the project and provided history on the MC Building Department.

6:37 PM MOTION: Approve.
MOVED BY: Eula Clarke
SECONDED BY: Christopher Collins
Motion approved unanimously.

15. SUPPORTING THE RESCUE THE RIVER OF GRASS PETITION BY THE FRIENDS OF THE EVERGLADES, INC. (RC):

RESOLUTION No. 51-2025; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA, IN SUPPORT OF THE RESCUE THE RIVER OF GRASS PETITION AS INITIATED BY THE FRIENDS OF THE EVERGLADES, INC.; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Eves Sample, Executive Director of Friends Of The Everglades, gave a presentation.

Commissioner Clarke read a poem into the record.

Commissioners and Ms. Sample continued discussion.

6:53 PM MOTION: Approve.
MOVED BY: Eula Clarke
SECONDED BY: Laura Giobbi
Motion approved unanimously. [Roll Call - 7:03PM]

16. SELECTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ATTORNEY (RC):

RESOLUTION No. 52-2025; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA, SELECTING AN ENVIRONMENTAL ATTORNEY AND DIRECTING THE CITY STAFF TO NEGOTIATE A CONTRACT TO BE APPROVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Roz Johnson Strong, Human Resources Director, stated all the interviews had concluded, and it was now up to the Commission to discuss and select a candidate.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Mac Stuckey - Stuart; Stated he believes that Ruth Holmes would be the perfect candidate for this position and provided details on what the person in this position could do.

Commissioner Giobbi thanked the Human Resource staff and all the attorneys who took the time to interview.

City Manager Mortell reviewed and clarified the Commissions direction to bring back a contract at the next Commission meeting.

7:05 PM MOTION: Select Ruth Holmes as Environmental Attorney and negotiate a contract to bring back at the next Commission Meeting May 27th.

MOVED BY: Christopher Collins

SECONDED BY: Sean Reed

Motion approved unanimously. [Roll Call 7:17PM]

ORDINANCE SECOND READING

17. CODE AMENDMENT ADDING LANGUAGE RELATED TO TRESPASSING (RC):

ORDINANCE No. 2542-2025; AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA AMENDING PART II, CHAPTER 30 (PARKS AND RECREATIONAL AREAS), SECTIONS 30-3 THROUGH 30-5, OF THE CITY OF STUART'S CODE OF ORDINANCES, BY ADDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS RELATED TO TRESPASS WARNINGS AND THE APPEAL PROCESS FOR TRESPASS WARNINGS UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES FOR PUBLIC PROPERTY AND OTHER PROPERTY GENERALLY OPEN TO THE PUBLIC; PROVIDING FOR THE REPEAL OF PRIOR ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Lee Baggett, City Attorney, explained the process of trespassing and how to appeal.

Commissioners, Staff and Police Captain Zenelovic discussed the issue.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Guy Calvert - Jensen Beach; Addressed how his church has assisted the homeless population and does not believe homeless should be made criminal.

2. Oats Reis - Stuart; Runs Tent City Helpers, provided statistics and stated that this ordinance criminalizes homeless people that are victims.

3. Gail Harvey - Stuart; Stated most homeless people are handicapped, and we need to find solutions and not criminalize them, they need help.

4. Althea Wiley - Stuart; Asked where do the homeless people go and stated that anyone can be one situation away from being homeless and the City should have a plan.

Commissioner Clarke would like the Commission to take some time to sit down and speak to the people and see what can be done for them.

City Attorney Baggett read the Florida statute and stated the housing has to be initiated by the County.

PUBLIC COMMENT CONTINUED:

5. Mr. Reis stated the different ways surrounding counties are addressing the homeless population.

6. Althea Wiley - Stuart; Stated that at the MLK Park there are boards around the picnic tables and asked why the Kiwanis Park does not have boards around the tables.

7. Helen McBride - Stuart; Stated we need to do something and should get together and go to the County.

7:31 PM MOTION: Approve.
MOVED BY: Laura Giobbi
SECONDED BY: Sean Reed
Motion approved unanimously.

ORDINANCE FIRST READING

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

ADJOURNMENT

8:09 PM

Mary R. Kindel, City Clerk

Campbell Rich, Mayor

**Minutes to be approved at the Regular Commission
Meeting this 9th day of June, 2025.**