City Commission Meeting
February 11, 2025
6:00 p.m.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:
Adrian Petrila, Mayor
Joe Moholland, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, District 4
Karen Marriott, Commissioner, District 1
Lisa Robinson, Commissioner, District 2
Betty Rzewnicki, Commissioner, District 3 – present via Zoom

STAFF PRESENT:
Ralf Brookes, Interim City Attorney
Frances Robustelli, City Manager
Amber LaRowe, City Clerk
Jim Kilpatrick, Fire Chief
Andrew Laflin, Interim Finance Director
Camden Mills, Public Services Director
Denise Sanderson, Interim Community Development Director

Mayor Petrila called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
Commissioner Marriott requested a discussion item on the process of new ordinances coming before the City Commission; this is discussion item c.

Vice Mayor Moholland requested that consent item j. be removed for further discussion; this will be action item a.

Mayor Petrila requested a discussion item on the proposed noise ordinance; this is discussion item d.

Motion: **Commissioner Marriott moved, Vice Mayor Moholland seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the amended [February 11, 2025, City Commission] Agenda.**

2. HELENE AND MILTON RECOVERY EFFORTS – STANDING AGENDA ITEM
City Manager Robustelli explained that there are three presentations tonight on recovery efforts; the first is Fire Station 22, the second by Public Services Director Camden Mills, and the last will be an update to the ongoing presentation by Interim Community Development Director Denise Sanderson. Mrs. Robustelli asked the Commission to hold their comments until the end of each presentation as they are each timed.

a. Fire Station 22 Update
Fire Chief Jim Kilpatrick reviewed the presentation attached to the agenda. Due to some slight modifications to what was presented in the agenda packet, a copy of tonight's presentation is part of the record.

Staff recommends demolishing the current Fire Station 22, planning for long-term housing as the current rented station is not a viable long-term solution, and constructing a new Fire Station 22.

Chief Kilpatrick stated that the next steps involve demolishing the current fire station, finalizing engineering and compliance plans, securing funding and approvals, developing a transition timeline, and engaging leadership and the community.

Vice Mayor Moholland discussed the financing slide as part of the presentation and expressed opinions on the options and what he would be comfortable with. Debt for this project will be discussed before the Commission later.

Fire Chief Kilpatrick addressed the $12M cost to rebuild the fire station, stating that this is for a fundamental structure. Staff has requested the architect review the design to eliminate items to reduce the cost, but nothing has been signaled for removal that would make a significant difference in price.

The station's insured value is $1.25M, but the insurance company has not provided an amount for the City's receipt.

It was discussed whether the station needed to be rebuilt immediately or if it could be repaired at an estimated cost of $240,000. Chief Kilpatrick discouraged the repair, stating that the current structure is significantly outdated and does not provide adequate space to meet the staffing needs. A new station is necessary to continue providing service to the City.

b. <u>Storm Recovery Project Priorities</u>

Camden Mills, Public Services Director, gave a presentation on storm recovery project priorities. Topics covered in the presentation included:

- Wastewater System
  - The areas and systems with significant damage were discussed.
  - Preliminary damage assessment of approximately $7.6M
  - Recovery to date
    - Outline of projects completed and in process
    - FEMA site damage inspections scheduled for February 26 and 27
- Stormwater system cleaning and inspection – remaining work $750,908
- Fire Station 22: various costs were outlined
- Community and Recreation Center – remaining work of approximately $2.2M
- Public Services Building – remaining work $224,345
- Pass-A-Grille seawall – repair work estimated at $3.5M to $5M
- Gulf Way roadway and beach wall – remaining work of approximately $2.2M
- FEMA Public Assistance Program Delivery Process Steps

A copy of the presentation is made a part of the record.

Mr. Mills stated that if a project, as identified above, is not insured and does not receive any grants or financial assistance, staff would bring it to the Commission to decide how to fund it from the General Fund.

c. <u>Hurricane Helene and Milton Recovery Efforts Update</u>

Denise Sanderson gave a presentation on recovery efforts. Topics covered in the presentation included:

- Permit processing
  - A preferred approach versus an alternative approach
- Permit status update
  - 2,544 applications submitted
- Building Inspection Request Policy

- Substantial and non-substantial damage determinations
  - 2,883 assessments completed
- Appeals
  - 443 submitted
  - 370 approved
  - 0 denied
  - 73 in progress
- Historic preservation applications
  - 47 applications submitted
  - 33 applications approved
- Certificate of Appropriateness
  - 10 applications submitted for demolition
  - 3 applications submitted for restoration
- Long-term housing recovery
  - The Elevate Florida application portal has been launched
- Staffing update
- Mission request update
- Volunteer program
  - 26 volunteers
    - 2-hour training and 4-hour shifts
  - How to assist homeowners
  - Possible outreach program
- Code Enforcement H.U.G. Campaign – provides "Helpful, Useful Guidance"
  - Notices of Violation withheld until April 1st
- Beach debris update
  - 3 locations identified where sand with debris was moved to the beach
  - The City contacted the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)

A copy of the presentation is made a part of the record.

Commissioner Robinson requested that residents with open and/or pending permits be notified of the new "phasing" option.

Mayor Petrila complimented the H.U.G. program and suggested it be leveled up to encourage helping hands. The Commission agreed to ask the City Manager to expand the volunteer program to assist Code Enforcement and help those residents who had received the courtesy notice.

Mayor Petrila requested clarification on the $150 reinspection fee for the owner/builder permit and inspection and suggested a one-time fee waiver.

Motion: **Commissioner Marriott moved, and Commissioner Rzewnicki seconded the motion to move discussion 7.d., the proposed noise ordinance, to be heard after general audience comments.**

Motion: **Mayor Petrila moved, Commissioner Marriott seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to amend the motion on the floor to move the discussion item before the general audience comments.**

The motion on the floor with the adopted amendment carried 5-0.

<u>Discussion Item 7.d. Proposed Noise Ordinance - *added*</u>
Mayor Petrila explained why this was added to the agenda and the ordinance adoption process. He has heard from the public since the first read on this ordinance and is seeking the Commission to further discuss it before bringing it forward for adoption. He expressed his desire to hear from the public and is looking forward to hearing how to improve upon this ordinance. He also mentioned that the removal of the 500 feet distance, as motioned at the last meeting, is under consideration for removal.

Attorney Ralf Brookes summarized some of the changes to the noise ordinance as presented at the January 28th meeting. He stated that the Commission acted at that meeting to approve the proposed ordinance, which allows a 200-foot distance between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. and 500 feet for all other times [distance is from noise source to residential].

Commissioner Marriott stated she did not favor the distance during the daytime. She said that she did research last Friday during the concert in the park, which had no complaints and was audible about 1/3 of a mile into the residential neighborhood.

The following individuals spoke in opposition to the proposed noise ordinance, with many articulating why and providing some ideas for solutions:

- Jeff Caputo
- Mia Hartley
- Christopher Harman
- Curtis Wooderd
- Seth Campbell
- Taylor Jansen
- Bill Pruitt
- L.J. Harness
- John Kurzman
- Nick Holgash
- Dylan Witkowski
- Markus Allen
- Dave Arazmo
- Casey Allen
- Matt Fisher
- Jon Didier
- Lee Pons
- Tito D. Vallejo
- Grant Izzi
- Robert Czyszczon
- Karly Johnson
- Tania Navarro
- Tiffany Bender

Commissioner Marriott suggested holding a workshop to discuss this item with further data before the second reading. The Commission agreed that more discussion was warranted.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Grant Izzi, a resident, commented on the number of permits approved and provided feedback on ways to improve the approval rate with an express permit process and for inspections to be reviewed with a supplied video and photos.

Rob Czyszczon, a resident and business owner, said he applied for a simple fence permit in mid-January, which was not issued.

Mark Bailey, a resident, commented on elevating his home and the troubles he has experienced with the building/permitting department when doing that.

John Kurzman, a resident, commented on some processes over the years, such as micromobility, ticketing, and cycling on the beach.

Deborah Schechner, a resident, commented on neighbors helping neighbors. She complimented Commissioner Robinson on putting residents first.

Vincent Tormenia, a resident, requested a process to speed up permit approval. He opined that video and photo inspections are not appropriate.

4. CONSENT

a. Approval of the January 28, 2025, Joint Historic Preservation Board and City Commission Workshop Minutes and the City Commission 6:00 p.m. Minutes
b. Proclamations - Renewal State of Local Emergency - Hurricane Helene Approval of Extensions 20 and 21
c. Proclamations – Renewal State of Local Emergency – Hurricane Milton Ratify Extension 18 and Approval of Extension 19
d. Motion to approve the task order from Stantec Engineering in the amount of $50,000.00 for the historical designation of 342 properties on Corey Avenue and authorize the City Manager to execute the agreement.
e. Motion to approve a services agreement with Ferris Pools, Inc. for resurfacing the City of St. Pete Beach Community Center Pool in the amount of $261,000 and authorize the City Manager to execute the agreement.
f. Motion to approve the special event street closure request from Pass-A-Grille Community Church to host the annual concert series.
g. Motion to approve the special event street closure and alcohol for Corey Avenue Business Association sponsored St. Patrick's Day event on March 15, 2025.
h. Motion to approve the special event street closure for Corey Avenue Business Association Arts and Crafts Festival on the weekends of April 12th, May 31st, and December 6, 2025.
i. Motion to approve the Amendment to the Disaster Debris Collection and Removal contract with Aftermath Disaster Recovery, Inc. to add a pay item for final sand debris disposal and authorize the City Manager to execute the Amendment.
j. ~~Motion to approve the task order with Halff Associates, Inc. for engineering design services for the Pass-A-Grille check valves project in the amount of $58,598.99 and authorize the City Manager to execute the task order~~. *moved as Action Item a.*
k. Motion to authorize staff to apply for the Florida Commerce Municipal Emergency Bridge Loan program and direct staff to return with a detailed funding request, including loan terms and conditions, once finalized.

Motion: **Vice Mayor Moholland moved, Commissioner Robinson seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the [amended] February 11, 2025, City Commission Consent Agenda.**

5. Action Items

a. Motion to approve the task order with Halff Associates, Inc. for engineering design service for the Pass-A-Grille check valves project in the amount of $58,598.99 *moved from Consent*

There was a discussion about the inspection and maintenance status of existing check valves on a project related to stormwater management. It was clarified that the check valves have not been recently inspected or maintained, though upstream baffle boxes have undergone cleaning. Plans are in place to contract diving services for routine maintenance, but this has yet to be completed.

Given the current conditions, the check valves' functionality remains unchanged, and tidal and freshwater flooding is expected to persist until new installations are completed. The proposed improvements involve relocating the check valves closer to the road for easier maintenance.

Regarding the project timeline, the target is six months from the notice to proceed. The design phase will take a few months, followed by an approximately two-month bidding process. Construction will be relatively quick, with the primary delay coming from material procurement. The estimated completion falls around August, with installation occurring shortly thereafter.

Concerns about potential impacts on residents and commuters were raised, particularly with the upcoming hurricane season. The project is fully funded for the current fiscal year, ending September 30, and there are no anticipated budget cuts that would affect its completion. The goal remains to expedite the process as much as possible.

Motion: **Vice Mayor Moholland moved, Commissioner Robinson seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the task order with Halff Associates, Inc. for engineering design service for the Pass-A-Grille check valves project in the amount of $58,598.99.**

6. Ordinances

a. Final Reading of Ordinance 2025-01: Amending the City's floodplain management regulations to repeal the one-year cumulative substantial improvement calculation requirement permanently

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, AMENDING THE ST. PETE BEACH CODE OF ORDINANCES SECTIONS 98-35, 98-36, 98-122.4, AND 98-128.4, TO AMEND A PROVISION RELATED TO IMPROVEMENT AND REPAIR OF BUILDINGS IN FLOOD HAZARD AREAS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, CODIFICATION AND SCRIVENER'S ERROR, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Motion: **Vice Mayor Moholland moved, Commissioner Marriott seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to adopt Ordinance 2025-01.**

7. Items for Discussion

a. Enterprise Programs

The Mayor highlighted the conversation about the December 10th report detailing concerns regarding the City's Enterprise programs and the previous consent order with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). As a follow-up, the City Attorney reviewed the report and provided recommendations.

A two-page cover letter has been prepared for submission to the DEP and the Department of Commerce, along with the consent order, compliance agreement, and the Enterprise system overview presented by Public Services Director Camden Mills on December 10th. This submission is intended to fully disclose the City's status and ongoing efforts to address identified deficiencies.

Concerns were raised about potential fines or negative budgetary impacts from this disclosure. However, the City Attorney clarified that the consent order has been closed, and the compliance agreement requirements have been met, making fines unlikely. The submission is purely informational, ensuring transparency and proactive communication with state agencies.

The provided documents give a comprehensive overview of the City's progress, including adopted remedial measures, funding sources, budget allocations, and project status updates. Additionally, the disclosure is expected to serve as a legislative tool in preparation for upcoming appropriations discussions.

A copy of the submission to DEP and the Department of Commerce is part of the record and will be mailed by the City Clerk's Office once it is signed.

b. <u>Freebee Cost Reduction</u>

Commissioner Robinson reintroduced the discussion on the Freebee transportation program. The previous meeting had mixed feedback, with some residents favoring its continuation while others opposed funding it with taxpayer money. Concerns were raised about fiscal responsibility, given recent budget allocations.

City staff confirmed that Freebee emailed updated service schedules. Commissioner Robinson proposed a compromise where residents continue to ride for free while non-residents pay a $3 fee. She also suggested incorporating advertising revenue to offset costs.

Vice Mayor Moholland acknowledged that many businesses support Freebee, though the cost remains a significant concern. He was willing to compromise and asked if Freebee could integrate with the City's parking registration system for resident verification. The City Manager confirmed this was possible but would require a phased implementation.

Commissioner Marriott raised concerns about the timing and additional burden on City staff. She suggested that if costs need to be offset, a flat fare should be applied to all riders instead of differentiating between residents and non-residents. She also cautioned against underestimating the administrative impact of tracking and managing registrations.

Motion: **Vice Mayor Moholland moved, Commissioner Robinson seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to extend the Commission meeting to 10:30 p.m.**

The City Manager explained that implementing a resident verification system would require additional resources but could be done gradually. She agreed that the current parking registration data could be transmitted to Freebee and would take some administrative staff time, but she was hopeful it would be minimal.

Mayor Petrila summarized the discussion, emphasizing the need for a fiscally responsible approach while maintaining services that residents and businesses value. It was agreed that the City Manager would return to the Commission with a proposal/plan on tonight's discussion for an implementation plan using the City's current data and to reach out to Freebee with an advertising proposal with possible content restrictions.

c. Ordinance Process - *added*

Commissioner Marriott voiced her opinion on the current approach to ordinances, especially those with significant impacts, and how the process lacks structure for informed decision-making before the first reading. She proposed implementing workshops or community meetings to gather public input and refine ordinances before formal readings.

Each elected official discussed the pros and cons of additional meetings.

Motion: **Vice Mayor Moholland moved, Commissioner Robinson seconded, and the motion carried 4-1 to extend the Commission meeting to 10:45. Commissioner Marriott voted no.**

It was decided that the City Manager would propose a workshop before the formal reading of a substantial ordinance or, based on her experience, ordinances that may solicit many discussions, require staff direction, or will have/need public input before the first formal public hearing.

8. CITY CLERK, CITY MANAGER, CITY ATTORNEY, AND CITY COMMISSION REPORTS

Amber LaRowe, City Clerk, reminded everyone of the Candidate Forum Night held by the Florida League of Women Voters in Chambers tomorrow, February 12th, at 6:00 p.m.

She reviewed the April calendar for the priority workshop scheduling; all Commissioners responded, but only three individuals were available for each date. She requested direction on scheduling this meeting. The Mayor asked that the Commissioners review their calendars with the April dates as provided and provide any updates to the Clerk. The Clerk will also provide the Commission with some options in May.

Frances Robustelli, City Manager, spoke with the Attorney for the Corey Landings project and expressed the desire to provide a virtual attendance option. The Attorney agreed to hold a webinar or an interactive virtual experience after the February 17th community meeting, where the same information will be shared, and attendees can participate in the conversation.

She and the Commission all thanked the Interim Community Development Director Denise Sanderson for her service to the City; her last day is February 20th.

Mayor Petrila spoke about the Barrier Islands Governmental Council (BIG-C) meeting last month, where it was agreed to send a letter to the White House, much like the one the City sent a couple of weeks ago. They will also prepare an additional letter to the White House regarding the need for assistance from the Army Corp. of Engineers on beach renourishment.

City Clerk LaRowe, on behalf of Commissioner Rzewnicki, announced the annual meeting for the Don CeSar Property Owners Corporation is on February 26th at 6:00 p.m. at the Warren Webster.

Mayor Petrila adjourned the meeting at 10:51 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED:

alarowe

AMBER LAROWE
CITY CLERK

ADRIAN PETRILA
MAYOR