



CITY OF COCONUT CREEK CITY COMMISSION MINUTES

**Government Center
4800 W. Copans Road
Coconut Creek, Florida**

**Date: November 4, 2021
Time: 5:00 p.m.
Meeting No. 2021-1104WS-C**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rebecca A. Tooley called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT UPON ROLL CALL:

Mayor Rebecca A. Tooley
Vice Mayor Joshua Rydell
Commissioner Lou Sarbone
Commissioner Sandra L. Welch
Commissioner Jacqueline Railey
City Manager Karen M. Brooks
City Attorney Terrill C. Pyburn
Interim City Clerk Marianne Bowers

Mayor Tooley noted that the meeting was being conducted live with a quorum physically present. She explained that the meeting material was available online, and the meeting was being broadcast live on the City's website and YouTube channel.

DISCUSSION – COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

City Manager Karen Brooks opened the discussion, explaining the Commission had directed staff to develop a Communications Policy for the City Commission and staff. She noted that the policy differed from that utilized internally for day-to-day communications and was focused on the City Commission.

Consultant Bob Norton, with Tenzinga, explained that the draft policy was based on the Commission training in August and responses to a survey sent to the Commissioners to reflect the Commission's commitment to function as one voice to the community. He reviewed the following sections of the policy:

- Purpose and Scope;
- Information to be Disseminated;
- Timeliness of Information Disseminated to Public;
- Timeliness of Information Disseminated to Commissioners;
- Frequency of Updated Information Disseminated to Public;
- Communication Methods for Public Information Dissemination;
- City Manager Accountability for Information Communicated;
- Commitment of City Commissioners to be One Voice/One Team; and
- Policy Implementation.

Commissioner Welch recommended adding a line under "Information to be Disseminated" regarding any changes in employment of either of the two City staff positions appointed by the City Commission. She asked that the Agenda Action Summary following Commission meetings be provided in a document or a direct link to the website. City Manager Brooks stated the procedure could be corrected without making any change to the policy.

Vice Mayor Rydell commented on the best way to share information on social media and suggested a PDF that could be shared by the Commissioners rather than a link for the benefit of social media algorithms. Community Relations Director Yvonne Lopez provided additional technical explanation on the challenges of posting PDF formats to social media.

The Commissioners and staff discussed dissemination of information regarding public meetings that are not hosted by the City but have an impact on the City, such as the Turnpike expansion. It was agreed to add a line for “stay tuned” topics under Section 5, “Frequency of Updated Information Disseminated to Public,” for instances where specific details were not yet available.

Vice Mayor Rydell discussed the impact of the letter regarding the Fire Assessment Fee and discussion ensued on the method of communication.

Mayor Tooley asked for clarification on the process for responding to resident complaints. City Manager Brooks explained the City’s Citizen Request Management (CRM) system and recommended the Commission direct residents to submit inquiries through the system so they can be efficiently assigned to appropriate staff and responses can be tracked. Vice Mayor Rydell suggested the process may be something that would benefit from a social media campaign to share with the residents.

Commissioner Welch stated she liked the idea of communicating as one voice and discussed restrictions on social media due to Sunshine Laws. Discussion ensued regarding whether individual conversations undermine the One Voice / One Team concept outlined in Section 8 of the draft policy. Mr. Norton stated the objective of the policy was to provide a consistent message to the public from the Commission as a body. Discussion continued as to how to approach the issue of social media discourse. City Attorney Pyburn commented on the extent to which social media interactions are subject to Public Records law. Mr. Norton commented that referring questions to staff would relieve individual Commissioners of pressure to respond to individual issues while also providing a consistent message from the City. Commissioner Welch shared an example of how the method had worked proactively in addressing misinformation related to the Coconut Creek Fire Rescue Department.

Discussion ensued regarding making staff aware of discussions happening in private social media pages and groups so they can respond appropriately as needed. Commissioner Railey asked for clarification on sharing City posts to personal social media pages. City Manager Brooks explained the methodology for sharing posts from the City’s social media.

Mr. Norton commended the Commission for their effort to communicate with one voice and the way staff works to communicate the desires of the City Commission effectively.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Marianne Bowers, CMC
Interim City Clerk

Dated