



CITY OF COCONUT CREEK CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MINUTES

Government Center
4800 W. Copans Road
Coconut Creek, Florida

Date: April 28, 2022
Time: 4:00 p.m.
Meeting No. 2022-0428WS

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Joshua Rydell called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

PRESENT UPON ROLL CALL:

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

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

DISCUSSION – COMMISSIONER DISTRICT D CANDIDATE REVIEW

Mayor Rydell explained the purpose of the Workshop was to review the candidates to fill the vacant Commission seat for District D. He reviewed a proposed agenda for the meeting, to include opening statements followed by an interview process conducted by the Commissioners. He noted applications were attached to the record for candidates as follows:

- John Brodie
- Wellington De Faria
- Alfred Delgado
- Aimee Hooper
- John "Jack" Vesey

Each of the five (5) candidates provided a brief opening statement. Mayor Rydell thanked each for being willing to step up and open themselves to the scrutiny of applying for the position. The Commissioners asked questions of each of the candidates individually.

Aimee Hooper

Commissioner Tooley asked Ms. Hooper why she had not attended a Commission meeting and whether she had visited the City website. Ms. Hooper asserted her interest in City business was recent and stated she had been on the website.

Commissioner Railey asked what Ms. Hooper felt she could contribute to make the City a better place. Ms. Hooper explained her background in marketing, advertising, and mass communications and stated she would be a cheerleader and an innovator.

Vice Mayor Welch referenced the answers given on the candidate application and asked Ms. Hooper her

ideas for policies to make the City better. Ms. Hooper addressed traffic and staggering school times to alleviate congestion at pickup and drop off. She discussed bringing in additional entertainment and restaurants to keep residents local. Vice Mayor Welch asked Ms. Hooper to expand on her written comment regarding overdevelopment in the community. Ms. Hooper explained, asserting there were a limited number of resources available to care for a growing population of residents.

Mayor Rydell reviewed individual projects commissioners had championed, and asked Ms. Hooper what she would pursue. Ms. Hooper identified an amphitheater structure. Mayor Rydell discussed engagement with City government and asked Ms. Hooper's opinions on recent issues. Ms. Hooper stated she had not listened to meetings and reiterated that her interest was recent. She noted she believed residents have a lot of the same issues as herself, including sustainability, traffic, schools, and safety.

John Brodie

Commissioner Tooley acknowledged that Mr. Brodie had attended Commission meetings. She asked what one (1) improvement he would add to the City. Mr. Brodie stated he comes from a law enforcement background and believes additional money should go into the Police and Fire Departments, specifically for the control unit vehicle to upgrade the repurposed ambulance currently being used. Commissioner Tooley asked whether he had the available time to attend events. Mr. Brodie discussed his availability and time management. Discussion ensued regarding buy-in and support of spouses.

Commissioner Railey asked what brought Mr. Brodie to apply for the Commission. He shared his experience with activism and business. Commissioner Railey asked what he believed the Commission could do to make Coconut Creek a better place to live. Mr. Brodie responded regarding opportunities to share social media etiquette and understanding.

Vice Mayor Welch referenced the candidate application and noted Mr. Brodie had discussed creating positive programs. She asked him to expand on that point. Mr. Brodie reiterated his concerns with social media etiquette, and added ideas related to bullying and education. Vice Mayor Welch asked about specific passions related to the City's Vision 2030 strategic plan and adding value to the Commission. Mr. Brodie stated he loved the vision but sees an opportunity for growth in the action plan. He highlighted sustainability programs and increasing revenue without impacting residents.

Mayor Rydell asked Mr. Brodie to expand on the line from his application which stated he created Coconut Creek Girls' Softball. Mr. Brodie provided a brief review of the history of the program and his vision to support its independence from Little League. Mayor Rydell asked his availability. Mr. Brodie discussed prioritizing his passions. Mayor Rydell asked what Mr. Brodie would build in Coconut Creek if he had a blank check to do so. Mr. Brodie stated he would put funds into law enforcement to protect the value of the community.

Jack Vesey

Commissioner Tooley shared her passion for the "Do the Right Thing" program. She asked Mr. Vesey his thoughts on the program. Mr. Vesey shared his experience recognizing students at the local schools and agreed it helps to turn students around. Commissioner Tooley noted the long-term planning for downtown and asked what was important to include. Mr. Vesey responded regarding the rising cost of property and the lack of affordable housing opportunities for young adults. Commissioner Tooley asked what Mr. Vesey felt he could bring to the Commission. Mr. Vesey stated he had spent 35 years developing people as a band director, assistant principal, and principal. He noted the value of giving people opportunities to shine, to grow, and to make mistakes and move forward from those mistakes.

Commissioner Railey referenced Mr. Vesey's service on several boards, including the Education Advisory Board and Environmental Advisory Board. She asked what the Commission can do to better communicate

with younger people and get them involved. Mr. Vesey stated it is the digital age and noted the importance of meeting young people where they are and engaging them there. Commissioner Railey asked the same question regarding communication with senior citizens. Mr. Vesey discussed the importance of educating seniors in their environment, such as working with organizations and associations they participate in.

Vice Mayor Welch referenced the applications and stated Mr. Vesey was the only one who discussed the City's form of government and asked him to share his thoughts. Mr. Vesey noted ways in which the City was successful and stated it was doing well in this form of government, which keeps strong personalities at bay. He stated the strong mayor form of government in Dade County results in issues with the flow there. Vice Mayor Welch asked Mr. Vesey to address engaging residents in issues the City is facing. Mr. Vesey discussed his advocacy for environmental issues such as solar power and engaging students in recycling.

Mayor Rydell asked about social media use. Mr. Vesey stated he is recently on Facebook. Mayor Rydell referenced Mr. Vesey's engagement on the advisory boards and asked his thoughts on the recent decision to dissolve four (4) of those boards. Mr. Vesey shared his experience working under Sunshine Law and stated he appreciates the limitations of working under that system. He asserted the Ambassador Program could be significant and noted he was excited. Mayor Rydell asked what he would build with a blank check. Mr. Vesey stated he would invest in renewable energy, such as solar panels on City buildings.

Mayor Rydell called for a recess at 5:02 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

Alfred Delgado

Commissioner Tooley asked Mr. Delgado how he would improve City communication. Mr. Delgado responded that it was important to meet people where they are at. He discussed the Ambassador program, referenced his background in community activism, and suggested partnering with schools to have students knock on doors. Commissioner Tooley asked what one (1) thing he would improve in the City. Mr. Delgado stated he would build on the City's efforts to reach out and work with special needs communities. He noted the Ambassador program could be a beneficial jumping off point to increase direct communication with residents, along with Homeowners Associations and other places to establish conversations.

Commissioner Railey asked Mr. Delgado what made him decide to apply for the Commission seat at this time. Mr. Delgado talked about his young family and being judicious in how he uses his time. Commissioner Railey asked Mr. Delgado his ideas to better support small businesses. Mr. Delgado suggested a study to ask the business owners their thoughts, along with direct communication and speaking with other municipalities about what works. Commissioner Railey asked what could be done to make Coconut Creek a better place. Mr. Delgado responded that he would work to build on the City's success, including innovation and inclusivity. He discussed the value of young people seeing someone who looks like them on the dais.

Vice Mayor Welch asked Mr. Delgado to share an example of something he would be interested in improving. Mr. Delgado stated he would like to see a system to tag City Commission agendas with subjects and send that information to interested residents who had previously subscribed. He noted he would also be interested in an interactive budget interface on the City's website where taxpayers can see where their money goes. Vice Mayor Welch asked Mr. Delgado to outline what reasonable growth looks like to him. Mr. Delgado stated it would be a balance of businesses and residential development. He discussed having businesses close by so residents can decrease their environmental footprint.

Mayor Rydell discussed the recent contribution of \$1 million to local small businesses. Mr. Delgado stated he had read about it in the newsletter. Mayor Rydell asked what else the City can do to support small businesses. Mr. Delgado responded that businesses need to be asked what incentives they need, such as

additional parking. Mayor Rydell asked him to discuss the time constraints of having his own law firm. Mr. Delgado discussed time management and his track record of being present to serve the City. Mayor Rydell asked what he would build in Coconut Creek with a blank check. Mr. Delgado stated he would love to see a library in Coconut Creek. He discussed the value of a library to him growing up.

Wellington De Faria

Commissioner Tooley asked Mr. De Faria how the City should get information out to residents. Mr. De Faria discussed the potential for an app that would match people with information that fits their interests. Commissioner Tooley asked how to get information to seniors who don't use apps. Mr. De Faria discussed the importance of social gatherings to reach more people. He talked about opportunities for young people to teach seniors to use apps and seniors to teach a skill to young people. Commissioner Tooley shared the historical idea for a Senior Center and Teen Center together. She asked Mr. De Faria to share one (1) improvement he would make to Coconut Creek. He stated he would like to see simple things like an outdoor movie night. Commissioner Tooley shared details of the monthly movie night in the park.

Commissioner Railey asked how the City can accomplish an active and engaged outdoor space. Mr. De Faria stated sponsors could be used, and commercial opportunities would be available for vendors. Commissioner Railey asked what the City can do to help small business owners. Mr. De Faria discussed ideas to connect small businesses with local residents.

Vice Mayor Welch asked for additional details on the Brazilian business organization Mr. De Faria was a part of developing. Mr. De Faria discussed the program and representation of the Brazilian population in the community. Vice Mayor Welch noted a reference in Mr. De Faria's application to improving the living standard and asked specifics. Mr. De Faria shared the path that had led him to be interested in serving on the Commission and stated he was interested in being a part of a team that comes up with solutions.

Mayor Rydell discussed the Brazilian representation in the community and thanked Mr. De Faria for his work. He asked if he was aware of the time commitment required by the Commission. Mr. De Faria discussed his availability and interest in putting his time into helping the City grow. Mayor Rydell asked what he would build in Coconut Creek with a blank check. Mr. De Faria responded that he would solve the housing crisis and fund safety measures for residents such as signs and cameras.

Discussion

Mayor Rydell explained that the City Charter requires that the Commission seat be filled by appointment within 30 days of the vacancy. He stated the Commissioners agree that the procedure is flawed and needs to be addressed in the future. He noted the position would be up for election in March 2023.

Discussion ensued, and consensus was to move forward to the regular Commission meeting a narrowed list of two (2) candidates, Mr. Brodie and Mr. Delgado.

Mayor Rydell encouraged those not selected to consider the election in March and to remain engaged in the process. Discussion ensued thanking each of the applicants and acknowledging their contribution as engaged members of the community, and bringing a wide breadth of experience.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 p.m.