



CITY OF COCONUT CREEK CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MINUTES

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

**Date: January 28, 2021
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Meeting No. 2021-0128WS**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Lou Sarbone called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

PRESENT UPON ROLL CALL:

Mayor Lou Sarbone
Vice Mayor Joshua Rydell
Commissioner Rebecca A. Tooley
Commissioner Mikkie Belvedere (virtually)
Commissioner Sandra L. Welch
City Manager Karen M. Brooks
City Attorney Terrill C. Pyburn
City Clerk Leslie Wallace May

Mayor Sarbone explained that Governor Ron DeSantis' Executive Order 20-52, as continuously extended, and Section 252.38, Florida Statutes, authorized all local governments to waive procedures and formalities otherwise required by both state and local law as necessary to allow local governments to continue to perform public work and take whatever prudent action is necessary to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the community. He noted that the meeting was being conducted live with a quorum physically present and participation by one (1) Commissioner using communications media technology consistent with the Governor's Order and State law. City Attorney Pyburn explained the procedures for public participation and comment for the meeting.

DISCUSSION – 2021 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Assistant to the City Manager Bernadette Hughes opened the discussion, highlighting the team's robust efforts at the beginning of 2020 regarding key issues, including Waters of the United States, the Clean Water Act, landfills, emissions, waste, recycling, electronic smoking devices policy, federal marijuana policy, appropriations, the Thin Blue Line legislation, offshore oil exploration, emotional support animals, National Flood Insurance Program, gun legislation, ADA requirements for public agencies, 5G wireless technology, cyber security, and working with the City on FEMA reimbursements back to Hurricane Irma. She noted the consultants were proactive in identifying issues the City should keep an eye on including PFAS chemicals, Disaster Recovery Act, and emergency repairs post-disaster for 5G.

Ms. Hughes explained the shift in priorities that occurred when COVID-19 became an issue, noting the City was still focused on the Legislative Agenda, but became focused on COVID-19 funding, reimbursements, and regulations. She stated it had been a busy year, noting that updates for potential action items came from Van Scoyoc Associates daily, weekly, and monthly. Ms. Hughes introduced Harry Glenn and James Crum, attending virtually, with Van Scoyoc Associates, the City's Federal lobbying consultant.

Mr. Crum explained the ramped-up efforts in response to COVID-19, identifying what each agency was doing and identifying policies and opportunities. He commented that the City's Federal Legislative Agenda had been updated for 2021 to include 29 federal issues to track on behalf of the City. He noted new items included the unfolding of COVID-19 actions in Congress and by the new administration.

Mr. Crum pointed to four (4) issues on the City's past agenda that were resolved in 2020, including:

- Legislation that requires companies making catalog and internet sales to collect and remit the associated taxes;
- Repeal of the excise tax on high-cost health insurance plans (aka Cadillac tax) within the Affordable Care Act;
- Addressing accommodations for service animals and emotional support animals; and
- Addressing medical surprise billing.

Mr. Glenn commented on opportunities afforded by the transition to a new administration, focusing on the plan to get COVID-19 relief through in the next six (6) weeks. He noted the firm would continue to work on additional money for state and local governments in the relief, as well as FEMA reimbursement. He stated there would be a focused discussion through the beginning of the year, after which attention in Congress would be shifted to infrastructure and economic stimulus. Mr. Glenn provided an update on the potential for the return of Congressional earmark spending and noted it was an issue being closely monitored.

Mr. Crum highlighted key issues in the Federal Legislative Agenda, including:

- COVID-19 legislation (especially eligible programs and direct funding);
- Federal landfill emissions standards;
- Waste recycling; and
- Deployment of wireless infrastructure and associated regulation.

Mr. Glenn discussed legislation focused on infrastructure investment opportunities and making small communities more resilient. He addressed the plan to look for federal funding to support the manpower, technology, and training needed for the new Fire Department and touched on additional public safety issues, including police reform, mental health, and firearm restrictions. He noted a focus on mental health for first responders within the current Legislature and discussion surrounding cyber security.

Commissioner Belvedere asked for clarification regarding Congressional earmarked spending and emotional support animals. Discussion ensued regarding the issues.

Commissioner Welch asked how practical it was that the Recover and Recycle Acts would get some traction this year, noting the municipalities were taking a great deal of heat over the issue. Mr. Crum stated the team would develop a specific strategy to advocate for the bills and outlined specific tools that would be of use. Discussion ensued, and Mayor Sarbone stated Coconut Creek needed to take the lead on the issue.

Commissioner Welch asked for information regarding potential movements to defund police, stating she hoped they were not moving forward. Mr. Crum responded that he was not seeing any extreme efforts regarding defunding police moving forward and noted President Biden's position. He stated there were improvements to operating procedures being discussed. Mr. Glenn added that the creation of additional units within police and fire to provide additional social support was being examined.

Commissioner Tooley noted her concern for first responders and for people being deterred from going into the line of work as potential impacts of defunding police departments.

Discussion ensued regarding the importance of Federal funding for bridge repair and replacement.

Commissioner Tooley asked if there had been talk about building a factory in the U.S. to be better prepared with personal protective equipment. Mr. Glenn outlined actions which had been taken and the focus of the current administration regarding manufacturing.

Vice Mayor Rydell stated he would like to add Project Safe Neighborhoods to the Federal Legislative Agenda and explained the federal grant program which assists police departments in providing community-based training. He noted the funds would support Police Chief Albert “Butch” Arenal’s efforts to advance community policing. Vice Mayor Rydell asked for and received a consensus to add the item. Mr. Crum explained that he was familiar with the program and could get City staff in front of the program leaders at the Department of Justice to discuss any eligibility the City might have. He stated he would help to guide the grant application. Discussion ensued regarding the program and its requirements.

Vice Mayor Rydell asked that updates in 2021 include tangible results in addition to highlighting programs and opportunities. Discussion ensued regarding a report card to aid in holding the lobbying consultants accountable as well as the terms of the contract.

Mayor Sarbone closed by pointing out that environmental issues were a hot button issue for the community and added that he would like to see additional funding to hire counselors and additional help for the Police Department. He piggybacked on Vice Mayor Rydell’s comments regarding accountability and asked that goals and targets be added to the email updates.

Mr. Glenn provided closing comments and thanked the Commission and staff.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Leslie Wallace May, MMC
City Clerk

Dated