

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FORT PIERCE, FLORIDA, AND THE ST. LUCIE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, HELD IN THE ST. LUCIE COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS, 2300 VIRGINIA AVENUE, FORT PIERCE, FLORIDA, AT 3:10 P.M. ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2009.

Mayor Benton called the meeting of the Fort Pierce City Commission to order.

Upon Roll Call, those present were: Mayor Robert J. Benton, Commissioners Rufus Alexander, Edward Becht, Christine Coke, and Reginald Sessions; City Manager David Recor; City Attorney Robert Schwerer; and City Clerk Cassandra Steele. Those absent: None.

Chairperson Lewis called the meeting of the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners to order.

Those present for the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners were: Chairman Paula Lewis; Commissioners Chris Craft, Doug Coward, Christopher Dzadovsky, and Charles Grande; County Administrator Faye Outlaw; County Attorney Dan McIntyre; and Director of Community Services Beth Ryder.

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The first item on the Agenda was Parks & Recreation - Transfer of County Neighborhood Parks to City - Ilous Ellis Park at 13th Street & Avenue M, and other County Neighborhood Parks in City Limits.

**Ms. Debra Brisson**, St. Lucie County Parks & Recreation Director, said it seems like it has been almost a year when they last met. One of the issues that was being discussed between the two Commissions was the County park facilities they were maintaining within the City limits. What they are here to discuss, she believes actually this was added at the request of the City, is just to kind of bring them up to date on the Ilous Ellis Park. These are the estimated operating and maintenance costs for the Parks & Recreation Department of St. Lucie County for Ilous Ellis Park, broken out by the Parks Department and also the Recreation Department. The estimated total for Personnel in Fiscal Year 2008 was \$87,000 and the estimated Operating was \$259,500, for a total of \$346,500. She just wanted to point out they recently finished construction of the basketball cover, they made improvements to the swimming pool, and other improvements at Ilous Ellis Park as well as to Horatio Grisby Park across the street. She is here to answer any questions that either of the Commissions would have.

Commissioner Coke asked when they talk about the improvements that were made there, is that inclusive the figure they were given of the \$1,617,098?

Ms. Brisson asked in the MSTU presentation?

Commissioner Coke said yes.

Ms. Brisson said those are the improvements that were made with the MSTU, that is correct.

Commissioner Coke asked when they are talking about improvements, are any of the improvements that were made to this park included in that figure? Or are these just operating costs?

Ms. Brisson said these are just operating and maintenance costs.

County Commissioner Coward asked could they clarify the improvements at this park, whether those were MSTU funds or a combination of MSTU funds and supplemental dollars?

Ms. Brisson said the MSTU funds totaled \$1,601,454. Those were for the new pool, for the renovations to the pool restrooms, they have done some ADA improvements to the site, and the basketball court cover. They also used additional Parks Maintenance funds, IFF funds as well - she doesn't happen to have that figure with her - to make other improvements at the Ilous Ellis Park.

City Manager Recor said they first began this discussion last year between the two organizations because of the anticipated revenue shortfall due to the anticipated decrease in their valuation. Fortunately the County budgeted for continued funding for these neighborhood parks within the City limits for the Fiscal Year 2009. They all know they are in the same boat for next year as well. In fact, their challenge is going to be more difficult. What he would like, since they are both beginning the phases for budget preparation for next year, is an understanding of what the strategy is going to be. Is the County going to continue to budget to fund neighborhood parks within the City limits? Or are they looking to continue the dialog for the transfer of certain neighborhood parks to the City? Obviously his Commission can speak for themselves; but he can tell them that while the City is obviously definitely interested in assuming some responsibility for neighborhood parks within the City, as they just saw that comes with a cost. Their revenues are decreasing. They are looking at every opportunity to decrease expenditures. In fact, he thinks that is what has prompted the discussion from the County in the first place, is a way to reduce expenditures. So that is what he would like to see. If it is the Ilous Ellis Park that initiates the discussion and they talk about other neighborhood parks within the City limits, he thinks they can include those as well. That is the kind of direction he needs as they enter budget preparation for 2010.

Chairperson Lewis said she was under the impression that this question was prompted by City. She was not aware that the County had requested this transfer of parks.

County Administrator Outlaw said if they recall their 2008 Strategic Planning, one of the policy issues that the Board gave Staff the authority to move forward on was a discussion with the City about taking over the neighborhood parks within the City. So Mr. Recor is correct in that the entire issue of the City taking over neighborhood parks within the City initiated from the County. They have had a series of correspondence and discussion at the staff level. Because of obvious reasons that the City has in terms of funding, it has not moved to the point of where the City has emphatically said yes, they will take the

park. She thinks the City is trying to work through - take the park at what cost? Are the parks going to be brought up to maybe a certain level, or will there be additional maintenance, so forth and so on? It could be maybe both of their issues that brought this to the Agenda.

Commissioner Coke said the first indication they had regarding this issue was at a preliminary Budget Workshop they had last year where then County Administrator Doug Anderson came to the City and spoke about the parks and possibly either the City taking them over or closing them, and Mr. Anderson even mentioned the word, selling. She thinks that is what got the City Commission's attention, when Mr. Anderson talked about possibly selling some of the land that is now neighborhood parks.

County Administrator Outlaw said Commissioner Coke is correct in that Mr. Anderson did go to the City and make that presentation. He did that in response to the County Board's Strategic Planning where they weighed in on it, and in turn he came before the City and made that presentation. So yes, she is correct.

Commissioner Coke said she just wanted to clarify it. She doesn't think it was ever this Commission who all of a sudden woke up one day and asked can they have the County's parks.

County Administrator Outlaw said the County would be glad to give it to them if they were to say that.

Commissioner Coke said the truth is, she thinks the Commission unanimously decided that prior to allowing neighborhood parks to be closed and/or sold, that they would have to find a way to step to the plate. Their children are their most precious resource. Heaven knows they can get into trouble at the parks. But at least if there is a park around and something for them to do, the odds are cut down a little bit that they are going to get into trouble.

City Manager Recor said from an administrator's point of view, he can tell them there is definitely interest by the City in pursuing this. Is this the right time? Don't know. Probably not, because their revenues are going in one direction and their expenditures are going in another. When it comes to balancing these budgets, it is not a rocket science - they either increase their revenues or they decrease their expenditures. This is obviously an increase in expenditures for the City when they know their revenues are going to be decreasing considerably. If they don't come to any type of agreement or consensus in this fiscal year, certainly their economy and real estate market is going to stabilize. Perhaps they have seen the worst of the worst, let's keep our fingers crossed and hope that they have. As the ad valorem tax revenue rebounds and the City has more money to fund different levels of services and different programs, he would hope there is the same willingness from the County to entertain this kind of dialog at a time when they are not focusing on reducing expenditures. Would the County be willing to have this conversation were it not for having to find ways to reduce expenditures from the County's budget as well?

He hopes so. If it is not this year, not next year, but in the future at some point, maybe that may be a more appropriate time to talk about it or phasing it in somehow.

County Commissioner Craft said he can assure Mr. Recor he started trying to have this dialogue before there were the financial difficulties. He thinks these small parks are beyond what the County should be handling. The County should be handling regional facilities, and maybe the Ilous Ellis Park, the swimming pool park may fall into the County because of the lifeguard issues. He thinks for the most part, the smaller parks belong in the City. People pay City taxes for an increased level of service. Unfortunately he thinks the County has gotten into the business a little too much of providing a municipal service. He would like to see them start to get out of that. If now isn't the right time, he is definitely going to be open for it in the future. He would even like to see if they can work something out now to have some sort of a revenue sharing to try to expedite this. He doesn't have an issue with this if they have the funds that are budgeted for this to maintain it next year, if the City is willing to take it over, that they somehow split those costs. He is very flexible on this particular issue.

City Manager Recor said he appreciates that remark. In fact, there has been some dialog with Ms. Brisson about that as a possible alternative early on, and even with former County Administrator Anderson.

Commissioner Alexander said when he looks at the list of locations, he was raised in this area. This area has been neglected for so long. He had made a sly remark about the County sending the City their children, but make sure they are not dirty when they come to them. And he is appalled at what he sees in some of these parks as far as the broken glass. They talk about raising their children in their community. Kids not only from the northwest section use these parks, they come from all over, from Port St. Lucie. They love coming here to the local parks. His thing to the County is, clean up the parks, not let it be a negotiation between the County and City. He would love to partnership with the County in whatever their efforts are in these areas. The thing that bothers him more than anything is this degrading the community with something that should be a given to the community children as having somewhere to go and enjoy outside. Again, he is willing to go along with whatever the County does. But today, not tomorrow, but today clean up the parks. Let it not be an eyesore to this community.

County Commissioner Craft said he would be happy to extend an offer to go along with Commissioner Alexander for a day and look at the parks so they can identify these issues and bring it to their Parks Director. If he wants to do that one day next week, he is more than happy to do that.

Commissioner Alexander said absolutely.

County Commissioner Coward said he actually wants to thank the

Parks Staff who works for the County who do a tremendous job for them. He is very proud of the work they do. He is also proud of the investments the County has made in various parks in Fort Pierce. He wants to go back to Commissioner Craft's comments, because he concurs completely, the County should be in the business of dealing with the regional parks and should not be doing municipal service on a neighborhood level. He lives in the City of Port St. Lucie and pays Port St. Lucie taxes, and those taxes go toward paying for the municipal parks. The system that is in place now means that Port St. Lucie taxpayers are not only paying for Port St. Lucie parks, they are paying to subsidize the parks in the City of Fort Pierce. They need to have the City of Fort Pierce taking on an increased role for those neighborhood parks and getting that subsidy eliminated. He thinks they should continue to focus on the regional parks. That is his strong opinion on this issue. He understands the budget issues they are facing; but there is an issue of fairness there that needs to be addressed and has needed to be addressed for some time.

County Commissioner Dzadovsky said he disagrees with his Commissioners. He believes in this day and time regionalization, and not duplicating services, is what they should be doing. A large number of these parks are in the City limits. He will disagree with Commissioner Alexander since he is on the bandwagon here. These parks are kept very nice. If Commissioner Alexander does find something that is out there, let him know; and if he doesn't do it himself, he will talk to Ms. Outlaw and Ms. Brisson and make sure it is being kept up. Commissioner Alexander is right, it is important that they have safe parks for their kids. But should they move forward with the FPRA expansion, a number of these parks will be located in each of the areas of expansion; so the City would have the opportunity to help the County's Parks & Recreation Department with some FPRA dollars should that occur down the road. So he thinks there is an opportunity there that they maintain their Parks & Recreation Department at the level and maintain the city and regional parks. But also if they should move forward with the FPRA expansion, grant dollars coming back this way to help them expand or maintain.

City Manager Recor said respectfully, because he expects that this dialog will continue, he just wants to make sure that the next time they have it, there is a recognition that while FPRA dollars may indeed be available, those are for the nuts and bolts of capital projects. So they will not be able to use those monies for operation and maintenance, those would have to actually be used for capital improvements. And there may very well be a willingness to do that, but that is the limitation for the use of those funds.

County Commissioner Dzadovsky said right. The \$1.7 million that was paid to put the roof on Ilous Ellis Park would have been a capital improvement. So that is where he was going.

Commissioner Coke said she is hearing perhaps they are all walking down the same path. The little neighborhood parks are City parks; and as such, she personally thinks the City ought to

be responsible for those and the programs that go on there. Recognizing the fact that they all are facing budget constraints, just about four months ago the County ceased to operate at the Community Center on Indian River Drive; and the City has gone in and revamped how they are going to handle it, because that was something that was entirely out of their purview. So they are kind of taking baby steps with it. She is very pleased with the baby steps Staff is taking there. The facility looks good. She was at a function there on Saturday. She thinks it is something they can do. She doesn't think the City is in a position budget-wise or personnel-wise - even though they do have Bob Hood in Public Works and he can do anything - to step up to the plate and say today that they are going to take all of these parks tomorrow. She would like to see them come to an agreement that these are neighborhood parks and that the City should be taking them over. And just as they took over the Community Center this year, that perhaps six months down the road they could take over another facility, and six months after that and six months after that. So it will alleviate the burden on the County, it will put the responsibility and pride of ownership where it belongs.

Commissioner Sessions said just to respond to County Commissioner Coward's statement, he for one personally doesn't have a problem of taking the responsibility of the parks within their municipality. He thinks it should be a very important part of their governmental responsibility; and that is, an obligation to make sure they provide some form of recreation for their young people. He can assure them that each and every one of these parks within the City limits of the City of Fort Pierce, do not go by any means underutilized. When they look at the juvenile delinquency rate within their County, this is a very important integral in terms of combating crime. While he understands also they may not have the financial wherewithal to do it, he commits Staff to finding that out, because this is an issue he has not been quiet about. He would like to step forward to the plate and take the responsibility of operating the parks within the City of Fort Pierce.

Commissioner Becht asked is there a consensus among the County Commissioners as to which of the small parks they would be willing to continue the dialog in regard to transferring those over to the City, so they don't just talk about it? He is trying to get to the next step where actually something productive would come out of this half a day event.

Chairperson Lewis said Mr. Recor asked a question at the beginning of the meeting and she wanted to verify. Is the continued maintenance responsibility in the budget for the upcoming year for these parks?

Ms. Brisson said yes.

Chairperson Lewis said so while they are discussing it, it is not as if they are talking about abandoning these parks midstream and leaving the kids and everyone else on the street. This is something they do have time to discuss. With that said, she thinks maybe it is time to go where Commissioner Becht was

leading them and talk about specifics. She just wanted to make it very plain to everyone that this is not something they are talking about dropping midstream and expecting the City to scramble to pick it up. They will do this in an orderly fashion. They certainly don't want to see these services come to grief. They know these are important, which is why they have continued to carry them these years. And if it is time and the City is willing to assume some more responsibilities here, as Commissioner Becht has just indicated, maybe it is time they talk about what kind of an orderly progression they can arrange.

Commissioner Sessions said start with the smallest and work their way up to the top.

Mayor Benton said he is wondering if maybe they could have their Staffs get together and organize this. They see the numbers here. But he thinks Staff's recommendation after meeting together, they can come back and have a turnover over a period of the next year for the parks, so they can include it in the City's budget and pull it out of the County's.

County Commissioner Grande said he agrees with the Mayor. He would very much like to see the recommendation come from the joint Staffs. He would be interested in seeing how well that process goes and what the recommendation is. He would suggest that is probably the right first step.

Commissioner Sessions said he thinks they are going to find that job security is going to play a major role if they delegate it to Staff. He thinks the Commissioners need to step to the plate and iron these issues out and figure out what they feel their responsibilities should be. He can assure them job security when it comes to delegating this authority to come back with Staff's recommendation will play a very vital part, just to put that on the table, that is his version of it.

County Commissioner Grande said quite honestly, he would be very surprised. He knows the City folks and he knows the County folks; and while he can't predict with 100% accuracy, he would suspect that they probably would get a recommendation that would make sense. He doesn't think job security would weigh into it from either of the two Staffs. But the first thing they would have is the opportunity to look at it and judge it for themselves, so he doesn't see any danger there.

Ms. Brisson said in the discussions with the Board in the regionalization of County Parks, they brought this forward for discussion. So she would have to agree with Commissioner Grande's comments, she doesn't think that the issue of job security would come into this discussion from their perspective.

Chairperson Lewis said quite honestly, Staff is already so reduced that she really doesn't think there are a whole lot of folks to worry about at this point.

Commissioner Coke said maybe they can take it one step further. The County has budgeted to maintain these facilities through the end of this fiscal year. If they say to Staff that they would

like them to come back to both Commissions within three months and have a definitive plan that the City would take over two or three of these parks starting October 1st of the new fiscal year and maybe another one six months in and another one at the first of the following fiscal year. That would handle all these parks or facilities that are on this list. It would also phase it in. So as good as their Public Works Department is, they don't all of a sudden have six new places to go, they could start with one and then add another and then another. If they can charge Staff to move forward in that direction, it would be a good compromise and they won't have to concern themselves about a job security issue because there will be a definitive time frame to move forward on it.

Chairperson Lewis said that is the kind of thing she had in mind when she said an orderly progression. They wouldn't just say, here they are. They could do it in a progressive manner.

County Commissioner Dzadovsky said Commissioner Coke actually brought up a good point, that they would be looking to put this in Public Works. He would like to ask Ms. Brisson, what is the difference between maintaining a park, and a Parks & Recreation Department?

Ms. Brisson said if he is asking for her opinion, she would venture to say that having spent the largest part of her career as a Municipal Parks & Recreation Director, she found that when she first became a Parks & Recreation Director, they had a lot of parks. The programming was limited to what they could do and that the realities of recreation is it requires indoor facilities. So parks don't necessarily make them a Parks & Recreation Department, because a lot of Public Works Departments in cities maintain them. It is generally the recreation side from a municipal standpoint that provides the indoor facilities and the activities that really are the ones that benefit in bringing parks and recreation to the city.

County Commissioner Dzadovsky asked but activities can happen outside as well?

Ms. Brisson said that is correct.

County Commissioner Dzadovsky said look at the economic situation of this nation. Here they are looking at divesting parks to the City and the City taking on an additional burden of having to increase their cost of doing business. He thinks it is not the time to do it. He thinks that the parks should remain part of the County's work. He has heard from two County Commissioners sounding as though they are going in that direction. Do they need a consensus or a motion to move in that direction? Because he just wants to tell them he is not going to support it.

Commissioner Becht said actually what he was trying to do was get some productive movement out of this. Commissioner Dzadovsky's request to see if there is a consensus is important before they get much further. But he thinks they need some analysis. Before he gets into the analysis, he would ask

Commissioner Grande or Chairperson Lewis if this is worth further discussion, or if they are with Commissioner Dzadovsky, who is totally against it?

Chairperson Lewis said as she indicated, she was looking at a more orderly progression to move in that direction. She tends to agree with her colleagues who are looking at their responsibilities as being more regional in nature.

Commissioner Becht said with that consensus then, what he would like to get back from their respective staffs is not a ball of goo, but something tangible that they can focus on. And in order for him to evaluate which parks they are going to accept, and he thinks in order for the County to evaluate which parks they might want to convey, they are going to need someone to identify the parks they are talking about. He sees on the screen before him six parks - Elks Park, Horatio Grisby, MLK/Dreamland, Maravilla, Museum Pointe, and Lincoln Park Community Center. He doesn't know if those are the six, or if that is too big of a list or too small of a list. He needs the Staffs to identify which parks they would consider appropriate for transition and he would like to know when the respective Staffs think it is appropriate for those to be transferred. There has been some discussion about the possibility of St. Lucie County continuing a subsidy of the operations and/or maintenance of those parks for a limited time period. He would like to have a little more discussion on that idea. He would like to know if St. Lucie County is expecting to be compensated for the transfer of land, meaning the parks and the improvements upon the land. Also, he would like a list of current programs by park that the County is paying for or the City is paying for or somebody else is paying for on those lands, so the City will know what they might be expected to continue and, based on comments from Commissioner Alexander and Commissioner Coke, he would expect they are going to be asked to expand in terms of operation. He thinks Staff can come back, not in 90 days, but he thinks they can come back in 30 days or they are going to lose momentum. This is important and it needs to be wrapped up before this summer. If they don't get it wrapped up before this summer, their youth are going to be left to their own devices without programs. And he thinks they need to give them something else to do.

Chairperson Lewis said she doesn't think there is an issue between now and October 1st, because they have provided for them through this year and actually through the next year as well, she believes. But if they are going to transfer the functions, she thinks they do need to start figuring that out now, because they are working on the next budget cycle now and they do need to make some plans if things are going to be changed.

City Manager Recor said he does not object to setting the bar high and has come to expect that from all of them. He knows that their Director of Public Works has done some analysis on at least the maintenance side for these various parks. He feels relatively comfortable in saying they can coordinate with the County Staff and report back and provide some preliminary feedback. What he thinks they need is, if there is a rather

from the County, if the County has a particular order of phasing they would like to see, he would like to hear that from them. Looking at it purely from an administrative point of view, they are going to look at dollars and cents; whereas, there may be something more important to the Commissioners than that.

Mayor Benton said with Staffs discussing this and bringing something back to both Boards, he was expecting them to be looking at a transfer going into the next budget year. He is hearing Commissioner Becht mention starting before the summer and that concerns him because the City of Fort Pierce has not budgeted any money for a Recreation Department. It is one thing to help with these costs... This debate started because Mr. Anderson came to the City Commission saying with budget restraints the County might have to close the parks. They don't want that to happen. But he doesn't think the City has the ability financially to take these parks over before summer and run recreation programs. They have partnered with the County. Phasing it in for the next budget year is one thing; but to try to come up with this money... They found out just recently they are a bit short this year, so he doesn't know where this money is coming from. Before they commit to doing some of this, he thinks they need to find out where the money is coming from.

Commissioner Coke said she understands that they are all operating under budget problems. That is part of the reason she thinks as a good partner with the County that they should look to assume responsibility for some of these parks in a very fast manner. They had a Workshop a couple of months ago, which she doesn't know if everybody at the County is aware of, but they began again taking their little baby steps of beginning to have a Recreation Department. A gentleman (Greg Martzolf) who is very qualified and has been in that business is already on City Staff and is assuming responsibility. He has been charged at their Workshop to come back to them to begin some summer programming for children. She is going to respectfully disagree that they haven't already budgeted for it because in previous years the FPRA has budgeted in excess of \$70,000 a year to various organizations to help fund youth programs during the summer. The discussion at the Workshop was that they could funnel that money a little differently through this gentleman who is now working out of the Community Center and begin sponsoring and having better oversight over those youth programs there. They already have the facility, thanks to the County for giving them the Community Center, and they have staff in place working on that. And she thinks truthfully they already have the funding in place for a vast majority of this. So what she would like to see them do is move forward and take over one or two of these parks in the next couple of months and free up a little bit of the County's budget, then the County could take that money the City is freeing up by maintaining their parks for the remainder of the year, and utilize it towards the youth programs they are going to put on during the summer.

County Commissioner Coward said he is pleased to hear that they have a pretty responsive consensus from both elected Boards. He does want to one more time note that the work that the County Staff does in these parks, he is very proud of them. He knows

with the 22% work force reduction they had, the Recreation Department was hard hit. Those folks are working double time. So he doesn't want any disparaging comments. He is not pointing fingers at anyone. But these are people who have had their pay frozen, have had 22% of their fellow colleagues not there to help them, and they are picking up their slack. The last thing he wants to do is have them leaving here today feeling as if the Commissioners are not pleased and proud of what they are doing. He is. And he wants to make sure that is part of the public record.

Commissioner Coke said she thinks they are doing a fine job. But she thinks it is time for the City of Fort Pierce to step to the plate and assist in what happens with their children and alleviate some of the crunch the County is feeling.

Mayor Benton said he will back up what Commissioner Coward has said. In all his years of dealing with the Little League and everything else, they County has all done a great job with those parks and continues to do a great job with fewer people.

Chairperson Lewis said if the discussion is going to concern summer programs, they better do that very quickly, because she knows they need to be in line very shortly.

Mayor Benton said that is why he thinks Staff needs to get together with this. He would like his City Manager to show him in their budget where they have a line item for a Recreation Department, because he hasn't seen that yet. Please inform him as early as possible about this. It appears there is something there he doesn't know about.

Chairperson Lewis said she thinks they are both going back to Staff. Commissioner Becht had said he would like to see a listing of the City's and the County's. She thinks that would be helpful for all of them at this point.

County Administrator Outlaw said let her make certain she is clear here on the direction from the two bodies. They are going to look at possibly a plan that would include transfer of one to two parks in this fiscal year, and then a phasing with the upcoming fiscal year until they get to the point... Understanding that all of this comes back to the two bodies. But that is the approach they want the two Staffs to take?

Chairperson Lewis asked does that sum it up? Does anyone have a comment on that?

Commissioner Coke said she would sincerely appreciate, if the City is going to step to the plate and take over maintenance, that the County consider utilizing the savings they will have toward youth programs for the summer.

Chairperson Lewis said which was where she was going with her comment, that if they are going to do programming, they need to figure that out, because people start making plans for their children in the spring.

County Commissioner Coward said he knows in the past Commissioner Alexander has been a strong proponent of that. They have actually put supplemental dollars into expanding those summer programs, but he thinks they have been forced through budget cuts to maybe scale them back to where they were before. He would love to see them do as much as they can in the summer programs.

Mayor Benton said he believes the FPRA has made a commitment to the County.

City Manager Recor said it is an Agenda item tomorrow.

County Commissioner Dzadovsky asked how are they funded for community recreation and camps and so on for the remainder of the year?

Ms. Brisson said they have currently plans for four camps, two at the Fenn Center from 5 to 11 years old and a teen camp, and two at Lincoln Park Community Center, a 5 to 11 years old and a teen camp. They have requests in to the Children's Services Council for the additional camp at Westwood. She believes they are almost at the same number of slots they had last year for summer camp. The difference being that last year the Redevelopment Agency came forward and gave them \$26,000 or \$27,000. What they were able to do with that was they were able to offer scholarships so that children could attend camp at a reduced rate or free. They are ready to move forward with camp. It is just whether or not they will be able to offer scholarships will be the question this year.

County Commissioner Dzadovsky said he thinks they have their consensus to move forward with these divestitures of parks. If those monies do become available, he would encourage this Board to support Ms. Brisson in supporting the Lincoln Park Main Street summer camps and/or scholarships to help them along.

County Administrator Outlaw asked with all of the scholarship funds they have in place and what they have in the budget to provide summer camp slots, if they were to move forward with the transfer of one or two of these parks, will that impact that in any way?

Ms. Brisson said yes, it would. There are some expenses that would and others that it would not. But there would be some savings.

County Administrator Outlaw said they will have to work through that.

Ms. Brisson said yes.

Mayor Benton said he thinks everyone up here agrees they have tasked Staff to move forward with that.

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The next item on the Agenda was Discussion on the Parks MSTU.

City Manager Recor said they may recall, he believes it was in December 2008 where the City wrote the County and requested that

the current MSTU Interlocal Agreement from 2002, that the City and County sit down and renegotiate the terms of that Agreement. And if they were unsuccessful in renegotiating that Agreement, the correspondence was intended to serve as notice of the City's intent that they may actually withdraw or terminate the Agreement. There was a series of communications between Mr. Anderson and himself where Mr. Anderson identified the cost of Lawnwood Stadium, how much money it generated, how much was contributed to the cost of construction of Lawnwood by each jurisdiction - the County, Port St. Lucie, and the City of Fort Pierce. Early on he had shared some general concerns he had with the construct of the actual Agreement. Clearly the Agreement provides that the City's initial proceeds would be retained by the County to make improvements to the Lawnwood Stadium Complex as well as to Ilous Ellis Memorial Park. According to Schedule A in the Agreement, there was really no definition as to what those improvements entail. The question he raised to Mr. Anderson at the time was, at what point will the City receive unrestricted dollars from the amount of money that is being collected based on the allocation available to the City? That is where they left things. At this point, he is open to their feedback and discussion.

Commissioner Coke said she looked at all the figures. The letter they got from Mr. Anderson dated December 2, 2008, right after she and Mr. Recor met with him, shows the total cost of Lawnwood Stadium as \$4.1 million and Ilous Ellis Park is \$1.6 million, which gives them a total of \$5.7 million. Out of the funds to date collected so far, Fort Pierce has paid 40.24% of that, which is \$2.3 million. She knows the figures they got with this package were a little revised. But even if they figure in 100% of the Ilous Ellis Park and the \$5.4 million for Lawnwood, Fort Pierce has paid 32.96% of this. She honestly believes Fort Pierce should be contributing toward Lawnwood Stadium and she thinks they should be paying for Ilous Ellis Park. Her concern is, if they look proportionately, Fort Pierce is receiving 13% of the money and St. Lucie County is receiving 37% of the money and a little bit going to St. Lucie Village, but the vast majority then going to Port St. Lucie. If they look at that ratio, Fort Pierce should be paying 34% of Lawnwood Stadium and Ilous Ellis Park. They have already paid by one set of figures from Mr. Anderson 40%, by the other set of figures 32%. Knowing and understanding that the County has already gone out and bonded this money out, she doesn't think Fort Pierce should say okay, they paid their 42% or their 32% and they are going to walk away from it. She would love to see them remain partners in this. But per their previous conversations, they have a lot of capital improvements that need to be done in the City parks. She knows that Lawnwood Stadium is a money-maker, but not necessarily because they all know what operating expenses are. She would love to see if the two bodies could come together and say they should both pay their proportional share. Fort Pierce will just step up and pay more than its proportional share because they have Ellis Park and they certainly utilize the Lawnwood facility. She would like to see them from this point forward have 50% of the MSTU funding that comes in within the City of Fort Pierce be allocated to the City of Fort Pierce to be able to utilize and make the necessary

capital improvements in some of these parks they are taking over.

County Commissioner Coward asked for clarification, is that 50% after debt service is paid on the bonds that they already secured to make the improvements that they said they would in the Interlocal Agreement? That is his biggest concern. He doesn't have a problem with the revenue sharing. If they go back to the Interlocal Agreement, they laid out the parks they would improve.

Honestly, they have obligations; in fact, it is his opinion they have exceeded those obligations. The Fenn Center is a \$14.5 million facility that was built as a special needs shelter. It was originally envisioned to be built out west. They brought it into this regional park because they felt the secondary uses which are recreational - basketball facilities and so forth - would be better suited as a part of the park. So he actually thinks they have exceeded what they told them they would do originally. He is concerned that any action they take would jeopardize bonds that they have already secured. If there is additional revenues that are out there, he would be inclined to give 100% of the remaining so they could fulfill additional projects. But it is the bonds that he is most concerned about.

Commissioner Coke said she understands and appreciates that. She thinks the discrepancy with the original \$4.1 million figure that Mr. Anderson gave her and the \$5.4 million figure that is showing in these papers is the difference with the Fenn Center.

County Administrator Outlaw said no, it is not.

Commissioner Coke said both Lawnwood and the Fenn Center are technically County facilities, regional facilities, that are located in the City. She is sure they are going to disagree on it, but if the City has paid 40% and they are willing to contribute 50% of their income from this point forward toward the debt service, in her mind that is fair, because they do need the money elsewhere.

County Commissioner Coward said from his perspective they signed an Interlocal Agreement to make certain capital improvements, which they have done. They did it based on the anticipation that, because the City is not in the parks business, the County would be taking the Parks MSTU dollars derived from the City and use those in cooperation with the County's. Once they had that Agreement, the County went out and took a loan based on that revenue stream being there to help them pay off the bonds. After they have expended it and then brought in additional investment beyond that, now there is some consideration that the City would pull out and jeopardize those bonds. That is what he is confused about. If they can secure the bonds and look at any additional revenue sharing opportunity, he would do that in a heartbeat.

Commissioner Coke said with all due respect, she didn't vote for this Interlocal Agreement to begin with. She always promoted the fact that the County should get 50% of the monies to go toward Lawnwood Stadium and that the City of Fort Pierce ought

to be allocated 50% of their income to be able to use toward capital improvements that they need in their parks. Her big concern is, when they look at Lawnwood Stadium, not only the capital expenditure itself but all of the interest is prorated out and expected to be paid 100% by funding that comes in from the City of Fort Pierce. She understands the County has gone over and above and extended things on that County facility. But she really doesn't think it is fair to the citizens of the City of Fort Pierce to expect them to bear 100% of the cost of both Lawnwood, Ellis Park, and interest attached to it. All she is asking for is that the County kick in and partner on those facilities. The County has control over it. If there is income generated, the County will retain that income. And yet the taxpayers within the City of Fort Pierce are bearing 100% of the cost of the construction of both of those facilities and/or the interest attached to it.

County Commissioner Dzadovsky asked how did she get the 100%?

Commissioner Coke said it is projected as what they want them to do. That is why they are saying the City can't have money before 2015 or so.

County Commissioner Coward said he believes she is saying 100% of the monies that are attributable to the taxable value in Fort Pierce are being used for this, not 100% of the total cost. Is that what she is saying?

Commissioner Coke said according to what she was told by Mr. Anderson, the cost of Lawnwood Stadium was \$4.1 million, Ilous Ellis Park was \$1.6 million, which is a total of \$5.7 million, of which the City of Fort Pierce has already paid \$2.3 million. The projections they received about future funding from the City shows 100% of the City of Fort Pierce's funding or MSTU dollars going to pay off the difference between that \$2.3 million and the \$5.7 million. It shows that the balance of the City of Fort Pierce MSTU project at \$4.7 million, that being Lawnwood Stadium and the Ellis Park, less what they collected already. She thinks it is fair that they partner in it; but if they look at the way it is laid out, it is showing that the City of Fort Pierce is using all of its MSTU dollars to pay for those two projects and pay the total dollar amount of those two projects.

City Manager Recor said here is where it is concerning to him as well and where he agrees with Commissioner Coke. Commissioner Coward's argument may be valid about being able to pay the debt service; but he doesn't know that it is necessarily a fair argument, because when he goes back and he looks at the 2002 Interlocal Agreement, nowhere does he see where it was contemplated that the County was going to go out and bond the improvements. So if they look at the collection rate, somewhere in all of this paperwork they will see there was in the neighborhood of \$400,000 or \$500,000 coming in. He thinks it was always contemplated by the Agreement that the City's initial allocation would be used to fund improvements. Correct him if he is wrong, but the County elected to go out and fund the entire amount of improvements for the Lawnwood Recreation Complex that were somewhat defined in Exhibit A, but not in a

real definitive way - Lawnwood Recreation Complex Build-out, Lawnwood Football Stadium Renovations. So pardon the expression, but now they are on the hook for the remaining \$4.2 million, until the debt service is paid free and clear, before they see an unrestricted dollar. He thinks that is all they are saying is that the City feels like they have made their contribution to the construction of Lawnwood Regional Complex, and they would like to renegotiate and use some of those dollars for capital improvements for parks in other areas of the City.

County Commissioner Coward asked what is the total expected cost for improvements at Lawnwood? The figure they gave them, was it the \$5.4 million through 2009?

Ms. Brisson said yes.

County Commissioner Coward asked what additional improvements are slated?

**Ms. Marie Gouin**, St. Lucie County Director of Management & Budget, said the baseball restrooms.

County Commissioner Coward asked those are the only additional improvements?

Ms. Brisson said that is all that is funded at this point. There were other items that were in the conceptual plan that included two additional softball fields, turning of baseball field #1. The original plan showed an aquatics facility which was replaced by the skate park. And the Fenn Center. There are still some items that were originally thought would be taken care of if funds were available they would like to use to finish.

County Commissioner Coward said just to go to Mr. Recor's comments about the bonding, that was a part of the discussions from the beginning. He is not sure exactly when Mr. Recor came on board, whether it was before or after this, but the bonding issue was talked about from the beginning. In fact, he thinks it even went to the voters, because there was a difference of approach. Port St. Lucie chose not to bond it; therefore this money would be coming in on an annual basis, but they couldn't do large up-front type projects. That was the tactic the County chose to move forward with, to actually bond the money, have it up front, allow them to move forward with millions of dollars of improvements right away. So that is not a new issue that has come out of nowhere. What he would really like to know is, what does the City want, what improvements are their goal? And see if there are ways for the County to work with the City to achieve those, as opposed to re-negotiate this in a way that might jeopardize their ability to pay back the loan they have taken based on a past agreement. If there are specific projects the City would like them to work on, that is what he would really like to know. Because they certainly have other opportunities they could work with the City on. That is where he would really like to see this discussion go, if possible.

Commissioner Coke said she certainly would have no problem if

they were allowed to submit and work together on getting some of the projects they need done. Her concern was, as years have gone on with this, now they are into how many years of it and it is not projected that the City would have any money over and above what they are paying for this bond repayment for many years to come. And their parks do need some facility upgrades and maintenance and capital improvements. Pioneer Park is desperate for \$600,000 worth of improvements.

Commissioner Becht said he would hate to think they could progress to the next Agenda item, but it seems to him with a Charrette and the Master Plan for Lawnwood Regional Park might fold nicely into the discussion. Commissioner Coward has spoken the sentiment that the rest of the County Commissioners have, and Commissioner Coke is speaking for some of them, at least himself, regarding City issues. If they could have a Charrette done for Lawnwood Regional Park which would identify additional improvements such as a pool and a jogging trail, if they do that then they might be able to have additional improvements for their citizens and improve the County's regional park.

County Commissioner Dzadoovsky said he keeps hearing that it is the County's park. He wants to make sure everybody understands that the parks that are within the County that are in the City of Fort Pierce are City of Fort Pierce parks as well. Recently one of their Departments came forward with a pamphlet showing all of their parks and ecotourism opportunities and recreational areas. There were 79 places identified, of which about 80% of those were in the City of Fort Pierce. So he respectfully disagrees with the presentation that the MSTU does not support and help the City of Fort Pierce. The characterization that St. Lucie County has some kind of monopoly on this money is inappropriate. He thinks the MSTU is a benefit to the County and especially the City of Fort Pierce.

Commissioner Coke said she is going to respectfully disagree with that when he says the County doesn't have a monopoly on this money. To date the City of Fort Pierce has had absolutely zero input on the \$2.3 million that has been collected inside the City limits. What she is looking to do is find a happy medium where they can all agree to fold in some Fort Pierce projects that are important to the citizens of Fort Pierce, for their well-being and recreation facilities. She doesn't think that it is fair that out of \$7.4 million or whatever the total cost of Lawnwood Park is, that the entire cost be borne by the taxpayers of the City. What she is looking to do is perhaps have the County just rename what they are doing with some of it, so that some of that allocation the City of Fort Pierce would have some input into, which was originally the way they had structured the Interlocal Agreement. It was changed because they had to move forward. She would disagree with Commissioner Dzadoovsky when he says the County doesn't have a monopoly on this funding, because the City has had absolutely no input into it, and therefore by definition...

Mayor Benton said as somebody who has been sitting on the Commission since before they had this agreement, they have an agreement and he will stick with the agreement. But he wants to

thank the County. The City asked for a skate park for many years and this County Commission stepped up to the plate this last year. So there has been input, in his opinion. Also, a lot of their schools play several sports at Lawnwood Stadium. It is a City/County Park. The stadium needed improvements and he thinks the City made their commitment. It was something they agreed to many years ago. Once that agreement is fulfilled, in his opinion they can talk about other areas, but right now... Some of these items have been put on here because there has been lengthy City Commission discussions; but that doesn't mean the City Commission was unanimous in the discussions.

County Commissioner Coward asked does Commissioner Coke know approximately how much money she is talking about? Per year on an annual basis is what he is looking for.

Commissioner Coke said it shows here per year \$446,000 collected in the City of Fort Pierce, but it is showing that in 2010 the City would be able to have some say on \$45,000 of it. So they have very little say on where the money is going that is collected within the City.

City Manager Recor said in a spirit of compromising and to follow up on Commissioner Coward's suggestion, he thinks the City does appreciate the willingness to look at alternatives. When they look at how do they move forward in an amicable manner and not withdraw, but rather perhaps what they need to be looking at is that 37.75% that the City is paying of the debt service. If that could free up additional dollars that could be used for other park improvements within the City, he thinks that gets them to where the City wants to go. What that means is that the County picks up an additional percentage of the debt service. But again, in the spirit of compromise, he thinks that is what that would accomplish.

County Commissioner Grande said he wanted to get back to the discussion about City choice and control over the money. Being one of the people who wasn't here when this was originally worked out, he would like to lay out his understanding to see if he has this wrong. If he understands this correctly, in the beginning the County held discussions with both of the cities. The resulting methodologies turned out to be different. The City of Port St. Lucie had the sense that they would like to do it themselves and control it on a year by year basis. But if he understands correctly, for example the Lawnwood Park as a major project was looked at as something that would take the significant amount of the funding. Not the significant amount of the funding in the first or second year, but for a long time. Bonding was simply a matter of getting the work done sooner. If it was bonded, the work could be done up front. But that doesn't change the fact that rather than pay for the work in installments, they pay for it up front and then they pay the bond in installments. So he would suggest that the City did have a choice. The City proactively made the choice to invest their portions of the MSTU money in the selected projects at the time that those decisions were made. It is kind of a tough thing to get halfway through a bond payment schedule and say they realize they made this choice in the beginning voluntarily

and communicated it to the County and joined in this partnership, but now would like to rethink it. He is totally committed to working with the City and he would be happy to hear anything that they could work out regarding the parks, because he thinks as a team they probably can do better. He just wants to get away from that thought that the County foisted these bonds on the City. That was a joint decision, these two major investments, because they were so very important to the County as a whole and the City of Fort Pierce in particular. Putting them at the top of a priority list and getting those things done, even if it meant bonding it and incurring debt, that was a positive decision that the City contributed to.

City Manager Recor said when he looks at the Agreement, the allocation of the MSTU proceeds indicate that the parties agreed that the City's initial allocation is going to be withheld to pay for improvements at Lawnwood. The initial proceeds, that suggests to him that is a temporary thing, that it is understood that is a percentage or portion of the initial proceeds. But if they look at the schedule that is here in front of them, the schedule carries the initial proceeds out to 2022. There is no end to initial proceeds.

Commissioner Becht said it shows what looks like excess proceeds of roughly \$49,000 a year for the next projected four years. He doesn't know how accurate that is. If he understood a couple of County Commissioners correctly, as long as the debt service is paid, the County might be willing to discuss releasing those monies to the City for the City to allocate for its Parks Department. If that is the consensus of the County Commissioners, then Commissioner Coke has done the City a great service by bringing this issue forward. Beating one another up about what was meant when they signed the Agreement, that he wasn't there to sign, seems to be a futile effort. If they can get a commitment that the City is going to get the \$49,000 projected, then that is a major accomplishment.

Commissioner Coke said she understood fully that there was going to be a bond. What she did not understand fully - and she doesn't believe anybody that was sitting at the City Commission level at the time was fully informed - that Lawnwood Stadium was going to be x-number of dollars and that they expected the City of Fort Pierce to pay that full x-number of dollars. She has absolutely no problem with paying 50% of it. She has no problem with paying 50% for Ilous Ellis Park. She has no problem with paying more than that. Her concern is again, these are regional facilities owned and run by the County that 100% of the cost of them is being borne by the taxpayers of the City of Fort Pierce. Although she can appreciate from the figures they have given her - which is all she can work with, the figures they gave her - it shows 100% of Fort Pierce's money going toward that. It was her understanding when they entered into this that yes, the vast majority of Fort Pierce's money was going toward that. But she truly believed it was going to be a partnership. If they were spending \$8 million or \$10 million, that the City was going to spend \$5 million and the County was going to spend \$5 million on this particular facility. Her concern is the County is receiving 37% of the money and the City is receiving 13%, and

all of the City's money so far has gone towards these two projects, which are very worthwhile projects; but now they are looking at going out for another ten years of \$50,000 a year into the City. That is a drop in the bucket to what they need.

County Commissioner Craft said he thinks Commissioner Coke made two different statements. 100% of the City's allocation of those funds may be going to that facility, but that doesn't cover 100% of the debt service.

County Commissioner Coward said it does. There is excess. That is what they are seeing here. They are focusing on the negative and not moving towards solutions. They just got there and then digressed again. If he can put it in a nutshell, Port St. Lucie is spending their portion of the money in Port St. Lucie, St. Lucie County is spending their unincorporated county portion in Lakewood Park and in unincorporated County, and Fort Pierce dollars are being spent exclusively in the City of Fort Pierce. That is the bottom line. And they have actually supplemented those even more. He thinks what they should be focusing on is the additional revenue beyond the bond service coupled with other funding sources and grant opportunities could lead towards solutions for other capital improvements they wish to make in the City. That would be the most productive conversation they could have right now, in his opinion.

County Commissioner Craft said he doesn't disagree with him. He just thinks they need to have a better understanding of where the dollars were going, because he was hearing it two different ways. He thanks him for the clarity.

County Commissioner Dzadovsky said if there is a consensus of the Board, it sounds like they are all talking in the same direction. He thinks there is a small surplus that is available from these MSTU funds. He likes the idea of Commissioner Becht's thought process of a Charrette. He thinks once a year they should sit down and identify where the possible funds might go, a portion of those funds would go in the City of Fort Pierce, and identify them once a year through a charrette process or strategic planning or some other mechanism like that. But he thinks they found an opportunity to move forward.

Mayor Benton said he thinks it is a good idea, that additional money after the debt service will help them out.

Commissioner Becht said he would remind the City Commission and the County Commission that they are going to get roughly \$47,000 this year from the Jai Alai Card Room operation. The City wisely chose to limit the use of that money for capital improvements for a Parks & Recreation Department. And the County will have an equal opportunity to decide what the County wants to do with their \$47,000 this year. But it seems to him that if the County is willing to forego and modify the MSTU Interlocal Agreement such that the City picks up unrestricted funds in the neighborhood of \$49,000... Commissioner Coke has done the City a big service by bringing this to their attention. If they walk away from here with an extra \$49,000 a year, he doesn't want to look that gift horse in the mouth.

County Commissioner Grande said he would be very happy to talk in terms of allocating those funds as they move the parks over, things of that nature. There is a natural progression here. The concept that they all decided suddenly that \$49,000 starts tomorrow, he missed that part of the discussion.

Mayor Benton said he doesn't think that is what they were saying.

Commissioner Becht brought that up. He thinks that is with the parks transfer there is going to be improvements. He thinks the history here is that some parks that were turned over to the City in the past were in need of a lot of help. So they are trying to avoid that now. If they had some revenue to put into that so parks don't have to be closed when they are turned over... Let's keep this positive.

County Commissioner Coward said he actually would support those additional dollars. He is going to switch and actually argue the City's position. Because if they go to the Interlocal Agreement, not only do they identify County improvements they wanted to make, but the City also had improvements they had identified they wanted to make that go beyond those improvements that have been made to date. If they actually take these numbers and project them out, it actually totals \$1.7 million by 2022, not just \$49,000 a year. It is a significant chunk and he thinks it would be fair. He agrees with Commissioner Grande's comments that this is the incentive, if the City takes on more of the park responsibilities, then they give them this money over time as it is coming in. He thinks that is a great idea.

Commissioner Alexander said he thinks he made a comment and everybody took it out of context when he was saying they don't mind taking their children and cleaning them up. He just heard them make comments that there is some improvements that need to be done. So if they didn't see the need of improvements, then he would not have the need to make that comment. He doesn't want to say at no time that this Recreation Department or Public Works is not doing their job. He is just telling them from his vision what he sees and what should have been done 20 years ago can be done now. If this City of Fort Pierce wants to take hold to that white elephant and work it, then so be it. But again, he just needs it to be a collaborative effort with the County. Whatever they come and ask them to do in assistance, it is not that they are asking them for something that should not already be done.

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County Commissioner Craft said he has a flight to catch this evening and he has to leave at 5:00 o'clock. He doesn't know if there is any particular issue that rises to the level more than others of having full Board comment over another item.

City Manager Recor said that is actually a good point. Can have that discussion? Do they intend to work until they complete this agenda? Are they going to stop at 5:00?

Mayor Benton said he is good until 5:30. He does have other things scheduled tonight.

County Commissioner Coward said one of the comments that was made earlier was the last time they met was a year ago. He thinks they should meet on a regular basis. Despite their differences, these meetings are productive, just in terms of sharing information. When he saw this Agenda, his immediate reaction was there is no way, and it is even worse than when he first looked at it. So he would like to have a follow-up meeting, not only on these issues. Of course they have the FS 171 Part II issues that are even bigger than the issues before them. There are also things that are not even on this Agenda, like how does the City and the County work together to create jobs in St. Lucie County? That is what he thinks they should be focusing on. He would like them to meet on a much more regular basis and have that kind of discussion.

Mayor Benton said he believes they both committed a couple of years ago to meet like this twice a year and more if needed.

County Commissioner Grande said he agrees with what the Mayor is saying about meeting frequently. But getting back to the specifics of this meeting, he thinks it is clear they can't get through this whole Agenda by the time this meeting ends. He thinks there are very important items towards the end of this Agenda. He would like to see them not end this meeting, but continue it and pick up at the next convenient time, not a month from now, but within the next few days. He would like to see that process phase into the FS 171 discussion. But to get through this Agenda is going to take more than today. Rather than schedule a next meeting, he would like to continue this on a date certain and would like the date certain to be very soon.

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The next item considered was Planning & Development: FS 171 Items.

Chairperson Lewis said she had some discussions with some of their Staff members and she understands the FS 171 items they have before them will contain the City's response to the County; and it was suggested that rather than attempt to address these items individually... There is no way they are going to get through all of those items in one sitting. Perhaps they could address how they are actually going to deal with them on-going. She understands Mr. McIntyre specifically had some concepts as to what sort of a format other folks have taken when they address this. Could he just perhaps tell them some of what he had said as how other jurisdictions handle these questions?

County Attorney McIntyre said these are just concepts for consideration. Certainly one approach would be to have joint meetings and work through the issues. Another approach that other communities have used is to use a facilitator and work either through the various elected officials or through staff and the elected officials. Other concepts could be to have like the conflict resolution where they have staffs meet to identify the issues and then have a joint meeting like they are doing now to get resolution and perhaps use a facilitator or mediator. But there are a number of different ways to achieve resolution of these types of issues. He thinks what they could do today,

as opposed discussing all the various issues which they probably are not going to even begin, is to come up with a suggested format of how they resolve those issues.

Chairperson Lewis said she personally thinks given the nature of the items and the fact that there was something they sent to them and this involves the City and the response from the City on the various items they have before them, she personally thought a facilitator might be useful. Punting it off to various members of Staff has worked here relatively well. But she thinks it might keep things moving a little more uniformly if they had someone a little more removed from the issue perhaps that could set them on a path and guide them through. Are there any thoughts from any other members from either Board as to how they might proceed with this discussion? Because it is something they do need to do and there is some sort of time frame attached to it.

Mayor Benton said he would agree with a moderator, somebody that would keep things on track and has experience in doing this.

Commissioner Becht said the respective Boards appointed he and Commissioner Craft a Regionalization of Utilities Board and they hired an attorney who was supposed to facilitate that. It was a miserable failure.

Mayor Benton said no attorneys.

Commissioner Becht said there are good ones and there are bad ones. This one just didn't dig in and didn't figure out what the details were, even though they advised him at the very beginning. So if they are going to use a facilitator - and he is all for that, whatever title they want to give this person - let's make sure they get the right person that all of them have some respect for and has some knowledge of what they are trying to accomplish here. He does believe that all of them represent the interests of the community sincerely, they just have different ideas of how to meet those goals. So they need a moderator who can help them get to some common ground.

Chairperson Lewis said she was thinking more along the lines of a facilitator of a face to face meeting. Her experience with the gentleman Commissioner Becht is talking about was someone who came to her office and spoke to her for a period of time and then kind of went away, and she never had heard what else went on. She really thinks they probably do need to come to grips and do need to be in a position where they can respond directly to each other, but with some guidance to help them move through these issues. She noticed today, with the best will and the community's interest at heart, they kind of get bogged down from time to time. She was thinking along the lines of sitting down together, but having someone kind of help to move them along.

Mayor Benton said Lance deHaven-Smith. He is at the Florida State University.

Commissioner Coke said he has done a really good job.

County Commissioner Coward said Mr. deHaven-Smith has also worked with the County on some of their past strategic planning sessions.

Commissioner Sessions said he is going to go along with the majority. But when he thinks about the purpose of this meeting, they all have a common goal; and that is, to serve the interests of the citizens within the County and within the City. To look at a mediator or facilitator, he looks at an individual in a quasi-judicial capacity. He thinks they all come in peace. He thinks they can resolve a lot of these issues amongst themselves without putting themselves in a position where perhaps a third party may determine the fate of where they actually end up. He will go along with the majority. But he just doesn't see a need for something of that nature at this point to set precedence and start facilitating between the two governmental bodies, it just doesn't send out a good message to the public. They are elected individuals who can fulfill their capacity in his opinion and resolve issues that they need to resolve. He just doesn't see a need for a third party, but he will go along with the majority, that is his position.

County Commissioner Craft said he understands the difficulties they have with the ten schedules they have to juggle among the Board members and that doesn't even include Staff they need present at these meetings. However, as painful as these first two Agenda items have been, he thought they have been extremely productive and have gotten them further along than what he thinks they would have otherwise. He thinks when they are sitting together collectively sharing ideas and bouncing ideas off of one another, he thinks it is much more affective.

Chairperson Lewis said she thinks they may be having an issue of semantics here. She is not talking about talking individually and somebody else coming up with the synthesis. She is not looking for a mediator. She is just looking for someone to help them work through the meeting. She thinks they need to be sitting down face to face, but she would like someone who is somewhat less emotionally involved perhaps to guide them along and keep things moving, someone who isn't as mired in the issues as they tend to be. She is not at all looking for a mediator. She is not at all looking for someone who will come and talk to them and take the information away and do something with it. Quite honestly with these particular issues, she would kick and scream if they told her somebody else was going to make the decision. She thinks they need to do it and she will defend to the death her right to do so at this point. Truly she thinks what they are looking for and thinking of when they are speaking of a facilitator, she is just looking at someone to come in and help them move the meeting along. She is not looking for someone to take the information, come to any kind of a synthesis. That is their job.

Mayor Benton said he would agree. He is thinking maybe somebody from the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council. Usually their job is to deal with regional issues. That is what this is. Maybe Michael Busha (Executive Director of TCRPC) could sit in and keep the meeting moving along.

Commissioner Coke said before they move to a facilitator, maybe they should all just sit down and play nice at one meeting; and if they find they are talking over each other or not moving forward in a positive manner, they can adjourn the meeting and come back with a facilitator. They have done pretty well here today with some tough issues. She thinks if they move forward that way...

Chairperson Lewis said she is looking at the fact that they have been here for almost three hours and they have discussed three or four items.

Commissioner Coke said these were large items though.

Chairperson Lewis said yes, but these other items coming before them are just as large, perhaps larger in some of their impacts.

County Commissioner Grande said if they look at the rest of the Agenda, he thinks they need to block out a day where they come together as a group in the morning to work through those items. If they get to one that is a stumbling block where they can't produce some movement or resolution, they can set that aside for a different type of resolution. He is very respectful of the way this group together works. He would suggest to all of them that his own observation about why it is so tough to do this as a group is because they don't meet often enough. He thinks they would have a shorter Agenda and he thinks they would have fewer misunderstandings or misinterpretations of the past if they met together like this more frequently and did the planning cohesively.

Mayor Benton said Commissioner Grande has been coming to the City Commission meetings almost every month.

County Commissioner Grande said he doesn't come to their meetings to participate. He comes to have his fellow Commissioners beat him up.

Chairperson Lewis said a facilitator is simply her preference. If there is another concept...?

County Commissioner Dzadovsky said he thinks they have spoken for 25 minutes on whether they should move forward or not. They have other items that they can probably put some pretty good time into.

Commissioner Coke said she would suggest a motion that they move this item off of today's Agenda, because it should be on an Agenda by itself. And if it takes a half day or a full day workshop, they should schedule it sometime in the most immediate future possible within the next two working weeks.

Mayor Benton said they don't need a motion on this, just a consensus of the Boards. (The Commissioners agreed.)

Chairperson Lewis said seeing that they haven't come to an agreement as to how specifically that should be done, that could

be handled at the individual Board level. They could determine at that point what kind of meeting they need to have.

Mayor Benton said good luck, because he knows how hard it was to schedule this meeting in the last 30 days.

Chairperson Lewis said that is why she is suggesting they take it back to their own individual Boards and plan how they get together again.

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The next item considered was Discussion on exchange of County and City Property - Former Chamber of Commerce Building on Virginia Avenue for use by the Skate Park in exchange for Fire Station on South Beach.

Chairperson Lewis said this item is the former Chamber of Commerce building being used for the Skate Park in exchange for the Fire Station on the beach.

County Commissioner Dzadovsky said he is concerned if they are going to talk about the Fire Station at all. It is in the hands of the Fire District. The Fire District has indicated - as he sits on the Fire District Board - they are not willing to part with that property at this time because they still use it for training purposes. And until such time as the Fire District vacates that building, he doesn't think it is something the Board should be talking about because they have control of the building.

Commissioner Alexander said he brings the same message from the Fire Board because he serves on that Board also.

Mayor Benton said let's just talk about the need for the old Chamber of Commerce building being used by the County's Recreation Department.

Commissioner Coke said let her express her concern there, because she has had so many members from the public call. That is a prime piece of property. The Fire District has a new facility. She thinks at best that property needs to be made available to the public. It is not a full time use that the Fire District has. If they are utilizing it on certain days or times, maybe they can incorporate that into some kind of public use. She has had no fewer than 100 phone calls in the last month asking when is the Fire District going to give the County back that property.

Chairperson Lewis said she has had calls from folks who want to use it as well. Her response has been that it is still in the Fire District's hands.

Mayor Benton said it is up to the Fire Board members. Put the pressure on them, because it starts with them. He knows they have some plans for that facility. He thinks that is the route to go. But today they need to talk about the old Chamber of Commerce facility over here because it has been in discussions for several months and the County needs some insight in this one.

City Manager Recor said although it is the former Chamber of Commerce building on top of the list, there are various other properties they wanted to talk about that could be talked about in combination with what could possibly be done with the former Chamber building. The City does have at least one formal request from a private individual who would like to use the facility, has made certain offers to oversee the skate park in exchange for that. Obviously that kind of proposal would be subject to competition. But if the City were willing to entertain that thought, would the County be willing to think about dedication of South Beach Park, which the City used \$600,000 of FPRA dollars to improve, or perhaps the area here adjacent that the County is currently using for parking.

Commissioner Coke said now they are playing Let's Make a Deal. The City will give the County the Chamber building. What does the County want to give up?

County Commissioner Grande said quite frankly he would rather not do that. He would like to discuss each of these one at a time. He thinks the Mayor is correct as to what the first one to be discussed is. He doesn't think they should start talking about swap this for that. As a group of ten people with the citizens of the City and of the County best interest in mind, they should look at each one of these facilities and see if they can decide as a group what the best use is for that facility. Once they understand what the best use is, decide on how to get that done. He doesn't want to trade one for the other or...

City Manager Recor said there are half a dozen properties on the table.

County Commissioner Grande said as the Mayor said, take that first one because he suspects it is unanimous as far as how that should be used. See how that works out.

Mayor Benton said instead of going out for proposals on this, he thinks what they were looking at was for the City to lease the old Chamber building to St. Lucie County and the County could go out to bring in somebody to help run and oversee the Skate Park. Ms. Brisson has been working on that, he believes. Commissioner Dzadovsky is familiar with all the details. Probably everybody here has seen memos for months. But unfortunately, that Skate Park needs some oversight.

Ms. Brisson said that is correct. Before they opened the Skate Park they had actually had an RFP out on the street looking for someone to assist them with the operation. They were not successful in getting any responses to that. Following that, some individuals came forward and it seemed to be that the big reason was they did not have a building for them to operate out of. That was when the mention of perhaps the Fort Pierce Chamber building being available. At which time Mr. Anderson and herself began speaking with the Chamber and Mr. Recor's office as well. The Chamber of Commerce agreed to vacate the building and they have done so. Now the building sits ready for some other entity. They are interested in perhaps leasing that

from the City and going out for an RFP for someone to operate the Skate Park out of it.

Commissioner Coke said she agrees 100%, except for the fact that she doesn't think the County should be leasing it from the City. It is dead smack in the middle of the County facility. The City ought to deed that property to the County. That way they don't have to worry about lease renewals later on, they don't have to worry about who maintains the building, who is responsible for insurance. Give that piece of property to the County, it is right in the middle of Lawnwood Complex, and the County can do with it as they see fit.

Commissioner Becht said he agrees with Commissioner Coke.

Commissioner Alexander said he agrees.

County Commissioner Coward asked does the County own Lawnwood Regional Park, or are they leasing much of that property from the City? Who owns the property in Lawnwood Regional Park? Is it the County or the City or a combination?

Mayor Benton said he believes the County owns everything with the exception... The City owns the Chamber of Commerce property and the parking lot on the corner of 23rd Street and Virginia Avenue. He would agree, if the County would like that property and the City would like to deed it over to them, there is support for that. All the County has to do is accept it.

County Commissioner Dzadovsky said he thinks as a good faith coming back in their direction, the County-owned property at South Jetty Park, he thinks that should be deeded to the City. He thinks that is a pretty fair swap of properties.

County Commissioner Coward asked are they talking about the narrow piece that is right on the inlet?

Commissioner Coke said yes.

City Manager Recor asked does he hear anything about Causeway Park in there too?

County Commissioner Craft said he just hopes they are not going to try to get into looking at this piece of property is worth more money-wise than another piece of property.

Commissioner Coke said she wasn't even asking for anything. She was just making an offer to give the County...

County Commissioner Grande said he thought Commissioner Coke's suggestion was right on.

Commissioner Coke said but she is not arguing if they want to give the City the piece in Jetty Park.

County Commissioner Coward asked who gets to replace the dune every time that structure falls in the water?

Mayor Benton said not the City.

Commissioner Alexander asked wouldn't it be much easier if they just put in a request on the Agenda to the City and a request to the County, and they address it as such?

County Commissioner Coward said he would prefer to do that and have an opportunity to digest this. He is actually open to an exchange where it makes sense. Where the County owns most of the property and the City has an out-parcel and vice versa. If they had a comprehensive list of exchanges. He would prefer doing that, than on the fly saying this one for that one, he doesn't think that makes a lot of sense. But it does actually make sense if they work together to have common ownership and uses and so forth.

County Commissioner Grande said he couldn't agree more. He thinks they should not link them, this for that. He thinks they should look at each piece of property, what they want to do with it, who should have it, and come up with a recommended list.

Mayor Benton said so they agree, the City Commission would like to offer the old Chamber of Commerce property to the County.

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The next item considered was Discussion on Black Pearl Boat Ramp and Mother Tuckers Parking Lots.

Mayor Benton said the Boat Ramp parking and Mother Tucker's. Does Mr. Recor want to discuss that?

Commissioner Coke asked does this have anything to do with anything they actually are going to do?

City Manager Recor said it appears the consensus was that they simply agenda these and make requests to one another. One of the other properties that they wanted to discuss was indeed South Beach Causeway Park to determine whether or not there was interest in deeding and dedication of that property to the City.

Commissioner Coke said the Mayor was asking about the Boat Ramp Parking Lots. She doesn't have any idea why that would be on the Agenda.

Commissioner Becht said he put that on the Agenda. What he wanted to do was make sure that the County understood that the operation of the Boat Ramp there, which is important to a segment of their countywide population, impacts the City's ability to develop its downtown waterfront property. He thinks stating it boldly as it is stated on the Agenda - County deeds City Park Land, Fire Station, Ramp Parking, and Mother Tucker Parking - it was stated too boldly. What he needed to do and wanted to do is make sure the five County Commissioners understood that this is in what will eventually be part of and the heart of the downtown City of Fort Pierce. It is waterfront property. He doesn't know how to balance the needs of the boating public that need boat ramps with the needs of the City to develop logically and have its waterfront developed in a logical and most beneficial fashion. Yes, it is stated boldly

that they deed the property to the City; but he needed to bring it to their attention that the operation of the boat ramp for some of their citizens affects dramatically and harshly, in his opinion, some of the residents of the City of Fort Pierce toward a goal of long range planning. That is the point.

Commissioner Coke said she is going to respectfully disagree with Commissioner Becht. Because although she believes that property needs to be developed, she would absolutely not support anything that would diminish the amount of public boat ramps they have. She can see an expansion of that facility. But she certainly could not support anything that was going to take away the public access there.

County Commissioner Dzadovsky said he absolutely and positively agrees with Commissioner Coke.

Mayor Benton said he would agree. He thinks they need to site more boat ramps. That one probably has limited parking in the future because of the other properties they are talking about. He thinks it is time that the City and County both sit down and site future areas for boat ramps, specifically over there on the County's property near Taylor Creek, he thinks that would be a perfect place. Harbour Pointe, the western side, there is property there. There is going to be a need for more boat ramps in the future. They have done a great job over there at Stan Blum. But as the population grows, so do the boaters. They are going to have to start looking for more areas, because it takes years to permit unfortunately and the pressure is on this from developers. Things have slowed down, but he thinks in the future...

Chairperson Lewis asked was it the consensus that they wanted to go back individually and discuss these items? She personally feels that Jetty Park, this particular piece comes under pretty much the heading of the old Chamber facility over there at Lawnwood Park. It is in the middle of an area that is controlled and operated by one entity and this seems to her to come under the same heading. Their parking lot at South Jetty Park, she guesses there is a little bit of land attached to it, but it is a small portion of County land in midst of an area operated by Fort Pierce.

County Commissioner Dzadovsky said he thinks they should move forward with those two pieces of property. He thinks he has heard from everybody there is a consensus that both bodies are interested swapping these properties. He thinks it is in the best interest of the citizens of the County.

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The next item discussed was Status of the YMCA Building.

Mayor Benton said the YMCA building is on the Agenda because the folks from the YMCA came to the City several months ago talking about wanting to partner with the City. He believes it is already closed. The City has said how important it was for them to keep that facility open, keeping the kids busy. They have come back to him and said they are interested in doing that, but he hasn't seen any movement over there. They know that the County does have ownership of that facility. He thinks what

they are looking for, if this problem with the YMCA can't be resolved, that the City would like to take that facility over and run it.

Commissioner Coke said the gentleman from the YMCA did come and speak to her also. However, it is not as if they were going to bring their Martin County and Treasure Coast dollars here. They want Fort Pierce to pay for whatever it is they are doing. She told them at that juncture in time that she had spoken to the Police Athletic League. PAL was thrilled at the prospect of possibly having a permanent home. Right now the FPRA has them in a building down across the railroad tracks (1401 North 2nd Street). It is not an ideal situation. The kids have a hard time getting to and from that. If they could somehow get a lease agreement or utilize that old YMCA building, even though they might have to put money into it, it would be just a perfect solution for all the PAL kids and they could expand that program.

Commissioner Alexander said he also goes along with PAL. But he really needs to know where the money is coming from in the City of Fort Pierce. He thinks it is a plus, but they give PAL minimum monies to work with on an annual basis. He thinks it is a great idea and he would be willing to support it, but he doesn't want to occupy something that they don't have control over.

Mayor Benton said he thinks the Interlocal Agreement is that the YMCA has that facility, unless they give it up. He thinks what they are looking at is, if the YMCA decides to give it up, if they find out they can't run the facility, the City is hoping that they may be able to fast track things if it is in the best interest of the County to allow the City to at least get the place opened up and get the youth using it, whether it be PAL or however they get there. They don't want that place sitting idle all summer long. The gentleman from YMCA came to see him a few weeks ago and assured him they would be up and running for the summer. He has seen no action and hasn't heard anything more from the YMCA. So he is looking for direction very soon from them. If not, then he expects to take the next step.

Commissioner Coke said she thinks the YMCA is in violation of the lease. It was part of their lease that they would have it open to the public and provide programming. And they have not done that for an extended period of time already. They closed it down without saying a word to anybody.

County Commissioner Craft said he thinks they need to give direction to Staff to look into that further and find out what is going on. He thinks he would support at this time, pending what Staff finds out, of coming to some sort of agreement with the City. Whether the City takes over the facility or leases it, it really doesn't matter to him. But let's just make sure they have turned over all the stones. That being said, he has to go. He thanks them very much, this has been a very productive meeting and he was glad to be a part of it.

(County Commissioner Craft left the meeting at 5:00 p.m.)

Chairperson Lewis said the status at this point is that they will bring this item back. She thinks everyone has pretty much agreed that they want to keep that building active. They probably need some more discussion at the Staff level.

County Commissioner Grande said he knows this is redundant, but he would like to make sure they leave the City with the understanding that for that building based on its location, he would expect that the City would be choosing how that should be used in the future. He thinks choosing is probably the wrong word. But he would look for the City to make sure this building is being used and the County would be cooperative with that.

Chairperson Lewis said that is why she said Staff would have discussion. It seems to her there were some questions there as to how they might want to proceed. When she said everyone agrees, she means it needs to continue in operation.

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County Commissioner Coward said before they leave this broad discussion about recreation and park lands and so forth, he thinks there is an item that is not on the Agenda that is very relevant; and it is an area where the City should provide additional input and he wants to raise it as Chairman of the **Tourist Development Council**. In the past when they were signing their long term agreement with the New York Mets, they raised the penny Bed Tax in order to generate revenue for improvements at that stadium. As a part of that agreement they identified a third of that revenue to be spent on tourism projects in the north County. As a part of their very broad discussion about the local economic stimulus concept of trying to expedite the use of existing dollars, it has come to their attention that pot of money has about \$400,000 sitting in it and by the end of the year that may get up over \$500,000. He thinks it would be important for them to be making investments right now to promote economic development in their community that is also fulfilling their longer-term economic development goals. A lot of these areas they are talking about need improvements. What he would like is for the City to be aware that those dollars are available and to be thinking about the best way they can get the greatest return on that investment by moving forward fairly quickly. Whether it is skate park, whether it is waterfront improvement areas, whether it is a combination of several improvements, those dollars are out there and he thinks they should make that investment in their community in the near future. They actually started this morning, they made improvements to the Zora Neale Hurston Dust Tracks Heritage Trail. Zora Hurston's grave site, they made an investment in pavers and road improvements, he thinks it was maybe \$26,000. But that is the type of investment they would like to make in partnership with the City using those Bed Tax dollars.

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The next item considered was County Operation of South 2nd Street **Parking Garage**.

City Manager Recor said he is not sure which one of their Commissioners agendaed this item. There has been discussion over the years. At some point the County was expressing some

interest in deeding that parking garage over to the City. He thinks there has also been some discussion about expansion of the Parking Garage.

Commissioner Becht said the operation of the parking garage is something he thinks they can task down to Staff. But he has heard complaints from patrons at the Sunrise Theatre that it is not readily available for functions at the Sunrise Theatre. So it is more a matter of coordinating the operation than anything else. He doesn't think these two Boards need to be involved in micro-managing how it is operated. One of the issues of its operation is that if the Board of County Commissioners could direct their Staff to try to accommodate operations at the Sunrise Theatre, then that would be most helpful. The other issue relating to that garage is, they need to understand if they don't understand that it is almost consumed with County employees who work at the Courthouse. So yes, it is a public parking garage; but it doesn't really alleviate any of the parking of a juror coming to downtown Fort Pierce or anybody else who would come down for a court function. He just wanted to make sure all five of the County Commissioners are aware of that; and if they could direct their Staff to try to work in coordination with Sunrise Theatre, that would be beneficial.

Commissioner Coke said she thinks most evenings the Parking Garage is actually available for the Sunrise Theatre. The problem is signage. Because what happens is people go to pull in and it says the garage closes at 5:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. and it says violators will be towed. Some of their downtown officers who work at the Sunrise Theatre, if people ask if they can park in that garage, they say no, it is closed and they could get towed. The Sunrise Theatre has little signs they put out in the street in their back lot that say, "No parking here today - tow zone". Maybe they could get some little signs that they could sit out in front that say, "County Parking Garage open during Sunrise Theatre presentations". When they have something going on at the Sunrise Theatre, they could just put it out there so the public and the Police Department are aware of it.

County Administrator Outlaw said when they all approved the expansion of the leases in the parking garage, they gave them direction to continue to make the parking garage available to Sunrise Theatre when they have events. So they will certainly make certain that coordination is in place. She thinks the signage to that effect is a good idea. They will handle that.

Commissioner Alexander asked aren't those signs illegal, those A-frame?

County Administrator Outlaw said that is the City.

Commissioner Alexander said he doesn't want the City to do things they don't allow others to do.

Commissioner Coke said they are not going to. Ms. Outlaw said she was going to do it.

County Administrator Outlaw said they will work within the code, but they will address the problem. She thinks the point is that they need to have it rectified.

Commissioner Alexander said absolutely, but he still doesn't want them to do something that they doesn't allow others to do.

County Commissioner Grande said Mr. Recor will help them get a permit if necessary.

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Chairperson Lewis said they seem to have come to the end of the items they agreed to address today. Is there anything else?

Mayor Benton asked does anybody up here have any further comments?

County Commissioner Dzadovsky said he would like to thank County Staff. If they have looked at the amount of work their Staff did to put this thing together, the hours and evenings they have worked, he wanted to just shout out to them thank you so much. They have really worked very hard and he thinks it has actually helped to facilitate this meeting and to achieve some good things.

Chairperson Lewis said along with that, she would like to add her thanks to City Staff as well. She and the Mayor had a little bit of a horror struck moment when they realized there were 30 items on the first Agenda, so she knows everybody pitched in and whittled it down. She wants to thank them.

Mayor Benton said he wants to thank both Staffs. To the press, they do get along, just put them together and close the doors. They might not agree on everything, but he thinks they got through most everything agreeing. He thinks the next set of items when they do get together will be handled very professionally. They can always agree to disagree.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

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Adjournment.

ATTEST:

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CITY CLERK

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MAYOR COMMISSIONER