

**CITY OF LABELLE
REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING
AUGUST 4, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Wilkins called the August Commission meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. A roll call was taken. Members present were Commissioner Hugo Vargas, Commissioner Bobbie Spratt, Mayor Julie Wilkins, Commissioner Jackie Ratica, and Commissioner Daniel Akin.

OPEN DISCUSSION (NON-PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS)

DOCKWA PRESENTATION

City of LaBelle Code Enforcement Officer Zane Mungillo gave a presentation informing the Commission on how he believed that Dockwa software would benefit the City dock. There was discussion on how many boats frequented the boat dock and how the software would work, and the cost of the platform. There was also discussion on the fees to be charged, and how the revenue would help pay for maintenance.

Gracie Morton Finance Director noted that there was research being done to install cameras at the dock.

Commissioner Ratica made a motion to proceed with Dockwa, and return in September with a recommendation on fees.

Commissioner Spratt seconded the motion.

The motion carried 5-0.

CITY OF LABELLE FACILITY RENTALS FOLLOW UP DISCUSSION

There was brief discussion on what the amount the deposit fee should be.

April Aguilar addressed the Commission to ask for clarification on the proposed fees.

City of LaBelle Attorney Derek Rooney was contacted via phone for his input on the subject. Mr. Rooney explained his reasoning for the suggested fees and stipulations for the facilities. He also discussed possibly having different rates for use of facilities on weekdays. Conversation continued on utilization of the building during the weekdays. There was discussion on non-profit fees being waived for weekday usage and what time the facilities would be available during the week.

The Commission then continued discussion on the proposed fees for weekends and weekdays. It was decided that during the week the fee would be \$500 from 9:00-5:00 Monday- Thursday during the week and that non-profits would only be responsible for paying the deposit.

April Aguilar asked for further clarification on the timeline for payment of fees and the cancelation policy. It was decided that full payment and paperwork be required 60 days prior the event.

WOODARD AND CURRAN

Woodard and Curran Area Manager Glenn Burden introduced Steve Guba, Assistant Area Manager to the Commission. He then provided a brief description of Mr. Guba's work experience in the field.

Mayor Wilkins gave a brief overview of the scope of work that Woodard and Curran does for the City of LaBelle.

FREIGHTLINER PUMPER PROPOSAL

City of LaBelle Fire Chief Brent Stevens presented the Commission with a proposed obligation to purchase contract for a freightliner pumper fire truck. He emphasized that the cost of the truck continues to rise and the importance of acting sooner rather than later.

*Commissioner Spratt motioned to accept the equipment proposal.
Commissioner Vargas seconded the motion.*

Commissioner Akin asked for additional details on the payments for the truck, as well as the truck itself.

Chief Stevens provided an overview of the truck and explained that the truck was needed in order to replace current trucks that will be going out of service due to aging. There was then discussion on declaring the out of service trucks as surplus.

Commissioner Vargas commended Chief Stevens on his efforts to improve the fire department fleet.

Chief Stevens noted that according to Firehouse Magazine, the City of LaBelle was the number one volunteer fire department in the state of Florida.

The motion then Carried 5-0.

Mayor Wilkins moved on to the public comment portion of the meeting. The resident that had filled out a comment card to speak on roads had left the meeting prior to being called, so the next agenda item was taken up.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

BEGONIA APARTMENTS VARIANCE & OAK TREE REMOVAL

Deputy City Clerk Jessi Zubaty read the resolution into the record.

Alexis Crespo, City of LaBelle Planner, gave an overview of the property and proposed project, as well as the requests for the variance and tree removal. She explained the mitigation plan for the trees removed and noted that there was to be a public art component. She stated that the Downtown Review Committee made a recommendation of approval.

Matt Valentine, the applicant, addressed the Commission to answer their questions.

Alexis Crespo noted that the code called for two stories at 42 feet, and the applicant was asking for three stories at 45 feet, clarifying only three more feet were being requested.

There was discussion on what the target demographic would be for the proposed apartments, as well as the architectural features and color. There was also conversation on what the density of the project would be, and how it was lower than the allowed density.

Mayor Wilkins called on Pasty Wegsheid a close neighbor, to address the Commission. She asked about the rental cost, if there would be an onsite manager, and if there was infrastructure in place to support the proposed project.

Mayor Wilkins provided a brief update on the upcoming water and wastewater updates in the area.

Ms. Crespo stated that the available water and sewer would be verified when Mr. Valentine pays the connection fees, and noted that the engineer did factor in the project to her calculations when running her models. She also explained that project was in the Downtown Business District and that requested use would have less intensity than a commercial use. There was also discussion about how the planned amount of parking exceed the required amount of parking by 30 percent.

Mrs. Wegscheid asked Mr. Valentine what the square footage would be for the apartments. He stated that the apartments would be an average of 1100 square ft. There was also discussion on the timeline of the proposed project.

Commissioner Vargas asked Mr. Valentine how the three extra feet would affect the interior ceiling heights. Mr. Valentine clarified that the desired ceiling height would be nine to nine and a half feet ceilings rather than a standard eight-foot ceiling.

There was discussion on the significant oaks and how to preserve as many as possible. Conversation continued on the height of the building and the and the allowed uses of the property.

There was brief discussion on accessory vehicles being prohibited, and that a proposed six-foot aluminum fence was planned to go around the property.

***Commissioner Vargas made a motion to deny the Begonia Variance request.
The motion died for lack of a second.
Commissioner Spratt made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-36.
Commissioner Akin seconded the motion.
After brief discussion on the other allowed uses for the property,
the motion carried 3-2.
Commissioner Ratica and Commissioner Vargas were not in favor of the motion.***

COWBOY WAY 7-ELEVEN SIGN VARIANCE

Ms. Crespo began stating that the gas station use was approved the previous meeting, and that the request for the additional lumens was withdrawn, and that the applicant was only seeking additional square footage.

Lauren Evans with Creighton Construction gave a presentation requesting that an additional overall square footage of 350 square feet be allowed due to the dual restaurants incorporated within the store. There was conversation on the size of the proposed monument sign.

***Commissioner Ratica made a motion to accept the sign variance.
Commissioner Vargas seconded the motion.***

Leonard Enriquez addressed the Commission with questions on the overall appearance of the proposed building.

Mrs. Evans noted that the canopies were no longer flat but angled, and that they had added a decorative element to the parapet. She also offered to make additional revisions, if necessary, to the building plans.

Ms. Crespo noted that the Commission could deem the renderings inconsistent with the conditions of the previous hearing and request revised architectural renderings.

Leonard Enriquez suggested postponing.

Ms. Crespo recommended that the applicant return in September with different renderings that reflected an “Old Florida” vernacular. She suggested that the Bridge Street and Cowboy Way be an example of what the Commission was looking for. Discussion continued on the desired look of the store.

Commissioner Ratica and Commissioner Spratt withdrew her motion.

Brent Stevens asked if the store would be 24 hours, and if it would have rec fuel. Mrs. Evans stated it would be open 24 hours and that it would not have rec fuel. Commissioner Spratt requested that Mrs. Evans look into the possibility of having rec fuel at the location.

Commissioner Spratt motioned to continue variance hearing until September 8, 2022 to provide updated architectural renderings.

Commissioner Ratica seconded the motion.

The motion carried 5-0.

PROPOSED ORDINANCE 2022-12-TO REPEAL ORDINANCE 98-6

Deputy City Clerk Jessi Zubaty read the proposed ordinance into record.

Mayor Wilkins explained that the proposed ordinance was to allow for the electronic transfer of funds.

Commissioner Ratica motioned to approve Ordinance 2022-12,

Commissioner Vargas seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5-0.

PROPOSED ORDINANCE 2022-07 NOISE ABATEMENT

Deputy City Clerk Jessi Zubaty read the proposed ordinance into record.

Mayor Wilkins explained that there had been multiple complaints about the volume of noise coming from the Civic Center, however, when checked by decibel readers, the volume of the music was within the allowed decibel range. She expressed her desire to coordinate with law enforcement to find a solution to keep the noise within the building. There was discussion on how to keep the noise within buildings or properties as not to disturb neighboring properties.

Commissioner Ratica motioned to continue proposed ordinance 2022-07 to September 8, 2022.

Commissioner Spratt seconded the motion.

The motion carried 5-0.

PROPOSED ORDINANCE 2022-08 OUTLYING MIXED USE CPA TRASMITTAL

Deputy City Clerk Jessi Zubaty read the proposed ordinance into the record.

Alexis Crespo gave an overview of the how the proposed ordinance would amend the current outlying mixed use areas. There was discussion on further possible changes to the proposed ordinance.

Commissioner Spratt motioned to transmit proposed ordinance 2022-08 to the Department of Economic Opportunity for review.

Commissioner Ratica seconded the motion.

The motion carried 5-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Wilkins noted that the minutes had been amended, and would need to be accepted as such.

*Commissioner Akin made a motion to accept the consent agenda as amended.
Commissioner Spratt seconded the motion.
The motion passed 5-0.*

NEW BUSINESS

JAMES SINGLETON BUILDING

Mayor Wilkins explained that the Recreation Board had recently voted to relinquish control of the James Singleton Building to the City. She asked Commissioner Spratt and Commissioner Akin, as the Commissions representatives on the Recreation Board, for clarification on the details and purpose of the decision.

Commissioner Spratt stated that the Recreation Board would still maintain the building and that the City would handle the renting of the facility. There was discussion on whom would receive the revenue from the renting of the facility, and the possibility of an administrative fee being added to the fee.

City of LaBelle Utility Billing Supervisor April Aguilar noted that an increase in the fee for the rental of the facility was suggested. Discussion continued on the fees, and the fees for non-profits.

Mayor Wilkins called upon Norberto Ioan of the LaBelle Martial Arts Academy to address the Commission. He stated that he had been using the facility for the previous year Monday thru Friday to teach his martial arts class. He then went over his rate charges, as well as what he paid to the Recreation Board to use the facility. He proposed that he pay the electric and water bill in addition to the fees that he had been paying to the Recreation Board. There was discussion on the usage and storage of the tables in the facility, and complaints made against Mr. Ioan from other residents using the facility.

The ages and hours of the martial arts classes were discussed.

Finance Director for the City of LaBelle Gracie Morton noted that with all City owned facilities should be assessed to identify any needed maintenance in order to allow for additional revenue from renting.

Attorney Derek Rooney (via phone) recommended amending the interlocal agreement with the County in order to clarify logistics, and that a short-term month to month lease agreement should be drafted in order to allow for the martial arts classes to continue to operate until the details were worked out.

Commissioner Akin noted that scheduling of the rentals of the facility would still be the responsibility of the Recreation Board until the interlocal agreement could be amended.

*Commissioner Vargas motioned to extend the agreement with Mr. Ioan on a month-to-month basis until otherwise decided.
Commissioner Spratt seconded the motion.
The motion carried 5-0.*

There was further discussion on why the Recreation Board was requesting the change in the handling and scheduling of the facility, and suggested changes to be included in the revised interlocal agreement.

Mr. Ioan noted that there were bullet holes in the building from a previous event.

Commissioner Vargas asked Mr. Ioan what his rates were. Mr. Ioan stated what his rates were and that students with disabilities received scholarships.

OLD BUSINESS

CABT-THE COALITION AGAINST BIGGER TRUCKS LETTER REQUESTS

Mayor Wilkins provided an overview of the request from the CABT to send letters to the congressional, and state representatives in opposition of allowing larger trucks on the roads.

*Commissioner Vargas made a motion to send the support letters.
Commissioner Spratt seconded the motion.
The motion carried 5-0.*

*Commissioner Ratica motioned to accept Resolution 2022-44 amending the facility rental fees in
Resolution 2022-43.
Commissioner Spratt seconded the motion.
The motion carried 5-0.*

BUSINESS BY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Ratica asked Code Enforcement Officer Zane Mungillo on the status of the Trading Post property. Mr. Mungillo stated that a bond had not been secured for the demolition.

There was then discussion on the new arcade and the possible violations.

Commissioner Akin had no business.

Commissioner Vargas noted that the family fun day had been postponed due to funding and time. He also noted his concern with the influx of arcades in the City. Discussion continued on the permittance of the arcades and the legal operations of the facilities.

Chief Stevens informed the Commission that the firefighters were going to present at all elementary schools

Commissioner Vargas then provided an update on his current mission trip to Kosovo.

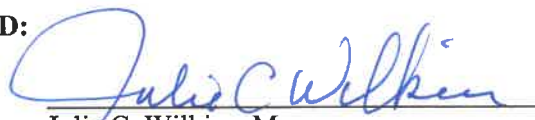
Commissioner Spratt had no business.

Mayor Wilkins noted that the LaBelle Downtown Revitalization Corporation (LDRC) needed to renew the special exception allowing food trucks in Barron Park.

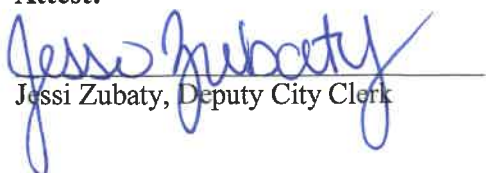
Kelly Boone with LDRC confirmed that there was interested parties.

*Commissioner Spratt motioned to adjourn.
Commissioner Ratica seconded the motion.
The meeting adjourned at 8:23*

APPROVED:


Julie C. Wilkins, Mayor

Attest:


Jessi Zubaty, Deputy City Clerk