MINUTES

CITY OF COCOA
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

September 27, 2016

A Special meeting of the Cocoa City Council was held on Tuesday, September 27, 2016, in City Council Chambers, located in Cocoa City Hall, 65 Stone Street, Cocoa, Florida as publicly noticed.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Parrish called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m.

Chief Prince provided the invocation and Deputy Mayor Boisvert led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

PRESENT:	Henry U. Parrish III	Mayor
	Don Boisvert	Deputy Mayor
	Brenda Warner	Councilwoman
	Anthony Garganese	City Attorney
	Matt Fuhrer	Assistant City Manager
	Carie Shealy	City Clerk
ABSENT:	Michael C. Blake	Councilman (arrived at 5:16 p.m.)
	John Titkanich, Jr.	City Manager

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Jack Walsh, Utilities Director; Steve Belden, Community Services Director; Gene Prince, Fire Chief; Teri Butler, Finance Director; Michael Cantaloupe, Chief of Police; Ed Wegerif, Public Works Director; Jonathan Lamm, Deputy Fire Chief; Tammy Gemmati, Administrative Services Director; and Jason McCuen, Helpdesk Support Specialist.

II. DISTRICT 4 CANDIDATE DISCUSSIONS

Mayor Parrish thanked the applicants for being in attendance and advised that each of them would be allotted five (5) minutes to speak. Additionally, anyone there to speak on their behalf would be allotted three (3) minutes to speak.

1. Jeri Blanco

Ms. Blanco, 2106 Ivy Drive, Cocoa, asked to be considered for the vacancy for the District 4 seat. She pointed out that she ran in 2009 with

four other candidates and at that time, Councilman Furbish was one of them.

She has one agenda and that was to serve the citizens of Cocoa. She mentioned that in all honesty, she was disappointed when she lost in the election, but respected the voters decision. Mr. Furbish served the citizens and did much more. He took his position very seriously and dedicated a lot of time to the citizens. They became friends and saw eye to eye on a lot of issues. She further noted that when he decided to run again they had met one morning for coffee. At that time, she told him that she would not run and was happy with all that he had done; however, that she was seriously considering running again when he termed out.

Ms. Blanco had great appreciation and admiration for Mr. Furbish and she hoped she could do the same. She reiterated her agenda which was to serve the citizens to the best of her ability. Cocoa has done great things and she would like to be a part of that.

Michael Klug, 2106 Ivy Drive, Cocoa, announced that he was Ms. Blanco's husband. He mentioned how much she loves the City, noting that she puts a lot into the community. He was proud of her and proud to speak about her and thanked Council for allowing him to be a part of this.

2. Lorraine Koss

Lorraine Koss, 2115 N. Indian River Drive, advised she did not prepare a statement but acknowledged the other candidates and had provided her resume. She mentioned that she did not get into specific qualifications on the resume but that she had a background and experience in water and could bring that to the City.

She noted that when they first moved here they looked in the City for a home and found one in another City. It did not feel right and they wanted to live in Cocoa. At that time, she was forced to think about why she loved Cocoa. Her response was the new City Hall, Cocoa Village, the water system, and its close proximity to the airport, amongst other things. She believes that Cocoa has great assets that are undervalued and not appreciated.

Furthermore, she was not going to pretend to be Jack Walsh, but she was a policy and community relations person, and she believes that her skillset and various academic studies would complement those of Mr. Walshs'. Additionally, she knows that Council was aware of her passion for the Indian River Lagoon. There is hope for the lagoon.

She concluded by pointing out that she had worked at a national level, and for the last five years has volunteered and been a part of the community, applying her skills to that. She hoped to do the same here.

Walter Roslin, 1628 Outer Drive, Cocoa, felt that Ms. Koss has the education and experience needed for Council. She has a deep passion for the City. He knew that when they were looking for a home she wanted to live in Cocoa and she immediately got involved when they moved here. He and his wife fully support her.

Barbara Williams, 2606 Indian River Drive, Cocoa, noted that one thing Ms. Koss did not point out was that she was part of the Solar United Neighborhood which was part of the League of Woman Voters.

3. Zack Lewis

Zack Lewis, 1420 Dixon Boulevard, #213, Cocoa, advised that he was here when this building was dedicated. He was sorry that Mr. Furbish was no longer here and he had served this City well. He mentioned that his first service was in 1989 when he was appointed to the Cocoa RDA. He was currently an active member of the V-Cop program. He served on the Code Enforcement Board for seven years and was an alternate for two of those years. He has a love for the city and thinks they know that.

He advised that he stood in front of Council and spoke about the press portraying the City as a bad City. The Mayor stopped him and said that was part of his campaign. Soon after a crime summit was held.

Mr. Lewis reiterated that he would love to serve and his love for the City was strong. He promised he would work with Council as well as represent the residents. He humbly requested their consideration as the District 4 Councilman.

Mayor Parrish thanked the applicants. He noted that the last agenda item at the regular meeting will be the selection.

City Attorney Garganese advised that the next thirty minutes could be used for Council to ask questions to the applicants if they desired.

Councilman Blake apologized for being late. He asked what separated each of them from the other candidates and would qualify them for Seat #4 and how could they enhance the thoughts and philosophies of our former Councilman.

After a question was posed on how to proceed with the meeting, City Attorney Garganese advised that they could ask each applicant back up in the same order and ask any questions they might have of the applicants.

Councilman Blake thanked staff and Council.

Councilman Blake stated his question to the candidates: What separated each of them from the other candidates and would qualify

them for Seat #4 and how could they enhance the thoughts and philosophies of our former Councilman.

Ms. Blanco advised she would bring her own personal touch and her own qualifications to Council. Mr. Furbish had a very different background, and she had a business background and has been a licensed realtor since 1997. When she moved to Florida she went through the education process to get relicensed, which you have to do as a real estate agent. She has been practicing real estate in Florida since December 2006 and has been a volunteer with the City of Cocoa since 2007. She is the vice chair of the US 1 RDA and believed that the completion of US 1 was a huge accomplishment and a very significant improvement in the community.

She knew that many business owners had to suffer during this process but those that travel US 1 agree that the improvement was well beyond what was expected

Additionally, she volunteers on the Brevard County CDBG board and has served with them since 2014. She advised that this was very different then what the City does as well. She represented the Clearlake Strategy Area. They look at how they can improve areas throughout the county based on what citizens say they want, such as lighting, bus stops, etc.

Lastly, she mentioned she volunteers at the Brevard Sharing Center and she believes community involvement was very important.

Ms. Koss believed that all three candidates were volunteers of the year, and that was very valuable. Her background is an expertise in water and graduate work in environmental management which has provided her tools in decision making. She noted there were always unintended consequences and decisions that have to be weighed carefully.

Additionally, she was an advocate and has a passion for the restoration of the Indian River Lagoon. They would be doing a lot that will require community support and will do what serves the citizens best. She is also active with the Florida Sun and is a proponent for bringing solar energy to the Space Coast. She further gave credit to her neighbors for registering new voters at Cocoa High School.

After applying for this position, she began to ride through the neighborhoods in Cocoa and intends on continuing to do that. She hoped to be a part of change in the City and hoped they would consider her favorably.

Mr. Lewis believes that his dedication and volunteering services should be a reflection to his devotion to the City. He would work with Council to make the City better. He is a strong proponent of the rail system and felt

that this would bring growth to the City and put it on the map. Cocoa would be the only city in Brevard County with a depot. He reiterated that he has lived in District 4 since 1989 and has seen the City go through both good and bad times. He currently lives in a senior citizen community and many there were in favor of him for this position. Additionally, he serves as a volunteer for the Guardian Ad Litem program, noting it was one of the most rewarding experiences he has ever had. He feels that all he has done qualifies him for the position and he would continue his service to the City.

Councilwoman Warner was familiar with all three candidates and has worked and served with them on boards and committees. She felt that they all have good information and did a great job supplying the information to Council.

Deputy Mayor Boisvert agreed and was satisfied with everything he heard.

Mayor Parrish believed all of the applicants were all well qualified and agreed with other members of Council that they were lucky to have such good candidates.

Councilman Blake advised that in the private moments he had with Councilman Furbish, he shared his heartfelt request of what he would like to see happen after his passing and that carried a lot of weight and he would like to see that move forward with the City.

Deputy Mayor Boisvert agreed and pointed out that he had spent the last sixteen weeks with Tyler day after day. They had many chats and he knows his sentiments and what he wished as well.

Mayor Parrish asked that whomever was selected to know that it was no secret that there are a lot of projects planned such as Fiske Boulevard and enhancements to Dixon Boulevard. Whomever it is needs to be prepared to redevelop what needed to be redeveloped and he hoped the candidate was strong.

III. ADJOURNMENT.

* **MOTION by Deputy Mayor Boisvert; Seconded by Councilman Blake, to adjourn the Special meeting September 27, 2016.**

AYES: Parrish, Boisvert, Blake, Warner

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (4-0)

The Special meeting adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

Henry U. Parrish III, Mayor

ATTEST:

CITY OF CORAL GABLES SEAL FLORIDA

Carie Shealy, City Clerk