



City of Venice

401 West Venice Avenue
Venice, FL 34285
www.venicegov.com

Meeting Minutes City Council

Monday, February 5, 2024

8:30 AM

Village on the Isle
920 Tamiami Trail South, Venice, FL
Renaissance Room #6

Strategic Planning

[24-0042](#)

Driving Directions from City Hall to Village on the Isle and Campus Map Directory

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pachota called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Mayor Nick Pachota, Ms. Joan Farrell, Vice Mayor Jim Boldt, Ms. Helen Moore, Mrs. Rachel Frank, Mr. Ron Smith and Mr. Rick Howard

ALSO PRESENT

City Attorney Kelly Fernandez, City Clerk Kelly Michaels, City Manager Ed Lavallee, Assistant City Manager James Clinch, Executive Assistant Cordy Crane, Facilitator Betsy Steiner, Deputy City Clerk Toni Cone, Recording Secretary Amanda Hawkins-Brown, Fire Chief Frank Giddens, Assistant Fire Chief Kyle Hartley, Division Chief Matt Tomer, Police Chief Charlie Thorpe, Police Captain Andy Leisenring, Utilities Director Javier Vargas, Finance Director Linda Senne, Planning and Zoning Director Roger Clark, Director of Public Works and Asset Management Rick Simpson, Assistant Director of Public Works and Asset Management Ashlee Castle, Fleet and Facilities Manager Travis Hout, Solid Waste and Recycling Supervisor Bob Moroni, Airport Director Mark Cervasio, City Engineer Kathleen Weeden, Information Technology Director Roger Navarro, Director of Human Resources Alan Bullock, Public Information Officer Lorraine Anderson, and Building Official Derek Applegate.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Pachota.

I. INTRODUCTION

[24-0034](#)

Strategic Planning Information

City Manager Lavallee introduced the strategic planning session, and

spoke on the process, history, importance, and future action.

Ms. Steiner reviewed the agenda, meeting format, and process.

Assistant City Manager James Clinch commented on the upcoming presentations.

II. PRESENTATIONS

[24-0035](#)

Public Safety Services: Police-Fire-EMS

Police Chief Thorpe presented on Venice Police Department (VPD) staffing, service, prevention, population growth, standards, proposed positions, harm philosophy, quality of life, the VPD strategic plan, and answered Council questions regarding staffing levels, concerns about compensation, morale, surrounding municipalities staffing per capita, budget history, property tax, and overtime.

Fire Chief Giddens presented on the Venice Fire Department (VFD) including history, background, timeline of the department providing Advanced Life Support Service (ALS) level, the needs of city residents, Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (COPCN), new location of Fire Station 2 next to VPD, data comparison, staffing concerns and needs, population growth in the city, call response heat map comparison 2022 and 2023, compliancy, and service needs, response times, mutual and automatic aid agreements, pay, financial strategy, and new personnel costs, total transports, total calls, collection rate, and answered Council questions regarding collection rates and billing, transport fees, transport locations, telehealth arrangement, vehicle needs, and recent call activity.

Finance Director Senne presented estimated cost for proposed positions, use of impact fees, and answered Council questions on the budget, general fund, operational, and levels of increased staffing.

Discussion continued regarding the collection rate and offset, reinvesting, decrease in millage impact, and the hiring freeze.

Recess was taken from 10:06 a.m. to 10:17 a.m.

Ms. Steiner made an announcement regarding audience participation times.

Discussion took place regarding the budget, data, service level needs, staffing, recruitment, citizen expectations, taxes, millage rate, budget

impacts, and operational options.

Staff requested additional fire and police positions.

There was consensus for Venice Police Department and Venice Fire Department to proceed with requests and move forward for vetting during the budget process.

[24-0036](#)

Interlocal Parks Agreement

Public Works Director Simpson and Assistant City Manager Clinch provided a presentation on the Parks Interlocal Agreement, history, current situation, the County having a regional focus, new interlocal proposal, Wellfield Park, City management of additional local parks, timeline of the new proposal, City staff meeting with County staff, Public Works staffing needs, financial strategy, drafting of agreements, Wellfield Park future operations and capital expenditures, options for revenue producing versus community center model, lack of a recreation department, future of traffic and parking on Pinebrook Road, timelines, a new agreement will be finalized by City of Venice Council and Sarasota County Commission, how the community center operations have been run, researching a Parks Department, a parks master plan, need for the interlocal agreement to be finalized before completing a parks master plan, and the need to move forward with the interlocal agreement.

Staff requested approval for City staff to continue drafting agreements with County staff, including new parks interlocal agreement to be effective October 1, 2026, funding agreement for Wellfield Park project, conveyance agreement for the Wellfield Park property transfer, and additionally, the approval to proceed with Public Works staffing proposal, and to proceed with Parks Master Plan after new County Interlocal agreement finalized.

There was consensus for staff to proceed working on the agreements with Sarasota County, and to prepare staffing requests for the budget process.

[24-0037](#)

Venice Airport

Airport Manager Cervasio provided a presentation to include the airport organizational structure, airfield, lease management, liaison, outreach, current projects, Rehabilitate RWY 13-31 Construct Phase, Airport Master Plan, New Administration/Terminal Building Design and Construction, community outreach, request for new position of Airport Community Outreach Manager position, project opportunity, staff requests for new position and proceeding with discussions with Faradair for electrical hybrid aircraft project. He answered Council questions regarding Faradair, terminal building condition, Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) requirements and regulations, Fly Friendly consultation, runways, workorder to adjust

runway length publications, noise at the airport, timeframe for Faradair, increasing fees, type of fuel our airport sells versus other airports, displaced threshold of runway length, administration building condition, proposed City policy statement regarding noise, Naples airport, finding source for new position, getting the new position approved sooner, and the focus of the Airport Community Outreach Manager focusing on noise abatement.

Staff requested approval for the Airport Community Outreach Manager position, and approval to proceed in relocation with Faradair, for electric-hybrid aircraft project.

There was consensus for supporting the new position of Airport Community Outreach Manager right away and discussions with Faradair.

Recess was taken from 11:45 a.m. to 11:50 a.m. and the Strategic Planning Session was paused from 11:51 a.m. to 12:07 p.m. for a Special Meeting.

Recess for lunch was taken from 12:08 p.m. to 1:10 p.m.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Richard Cushing, 876 Golden Beach Blvd, complimented today's presentation and management, and spoke regarding noise from jets at the airport, and in favor of proposed new employee at the airport.

Mark Warren, 405 Shore Road, spoke on the adopted strategic plan goals, quality of life, making it a guiding principle, keeping Venice eco-friendly, small jet traffic, runway length, and the airport master plan.

Tracy Kehoe, 428 Shore Road, thanked staff for meeting on airport noise, referenced Naples airport operations, flight school activity, against tower, and expressed concerns for planes over homes, size of the runway, wind from jets, and seaboard redevelopment.

Chris Kehoe, 428 Shore Road, spoke regarding jets, recommended fees to limit touch-n-go traffic, and researching the ability to control commercial use.

[24-0038](#) Roadway and Transportation Planning

The transportation presentation was deferred to the Transportation Workshop on February 14, 2024.

[24-0039](#) Seaboard Area Development

Planning and Zoning Director Clark and Assistant City Manager Clinch and Public Works Director Simpson, presented an aerial map of the Seaboard District, ownership of property, history of district, related Comprehensive Plan updates, future public improvements, current solid waste facilities, fleet management, cement plant property, next steps of relocation of fleet and solid waste, proposed new location, conceptual plan, Seaboard Master Plan scope, parking lot concepts and need, comparison to Mariemont, Ohio, park concept, potential styles, contemporary design option, street cross sections, next steps, staff requests. He answered Council questions regarding plans or storage property, timelines for installation of infrastructure needed, impact fees, financing options research, review of neighboring properties for sale, and whether properties could be utilized for affordable housing.

Discussion took place regarding working with current property owners, creating a gateway to the City, consistency with City plan, concern for plan with unknown uses, and affordable housing.

Staff requested support of strategic relocation plan for fleet and solid waste operations, endorsement of public parking as a top-priority for the Seaboard area, adoption of the Seaboard Master Plan upon completion, and approval to move forward with Seaboard-related action.

There was consensus to proceed with staff requests.

Recess was taken from 2:24 p.m. to 2:35 p.m.

[24-0040](#)

Emergency Operations

Fire Chief Giddens and Division Chief Tomer presented current Emergency Operations Center (EOC) preparedness activities, hurricane preparedness, lessons from after action reports, opportunities for improving, training opportunities, sheltering for public and staff, operating policies, facility conditions assessments, relocation of Station 52 to create a public safety campus, rendering of building, training tower, proposed site plan, timeline, and multiple intended uses. He answered Council questions on uses for tower, and Police Chief Thorpe responded regarding the proposed playground at the police station.

III. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

IV. OPEN SESSION (If Time Allows, Discussion on Additional Topics Ranked by Council Members: The Next Two Highest Ranked Topics are Affordable Housing and Public Communication-Outreach-Input)

[24-0041](#)

Topics Ranked by Council Members

Discussion took place regarding affordable housing use possibility after relocation of Fire Station 52, taking care of church access issues, land available by Sarasota County, Habitat for Humanity sale of property, funds available for other projects, flood zone issues, the opportunities for infill, and developer interest.

Recess was taken from 3:11 p.m. to 3:23 p.m.

Assistant City Manager Clinch and Public Information Officer (PIO) Anderson spoke on the communication team, current outreach efforts, growth in social media following, promotion of workshops, public service announcements (PSA) and educational videos, partnership with community organizations, multiple distribution channels, the Stay in the Know program, the Sarasota County 32nd Annual Citizens Satisfaction Survey, partnership, and opportunities for Venice citizen participation.

Discussion took place on sharing business information, open data hub, redesign of website, Venice participation in survey, and effectiveness of newsletter.

V. REVIEW AND UPDATE OF STRATEGIC PLAN

City Manager Lavallee made closing remarks, requested evaluation forms, Directors' planning efforts, partners support, conceptual plans, and decision process at future meetings.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

ATTEST:

Mayor - City of Venice

City Clerk