MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE STUART CITY COMMISSION
TO BE HELD May 4, 2020
AT 3:30 PM Commission Chambers & Zoom Telecommunications
121 SW FLAGLER AVE.
STUART, FLORIDA 34994

CITY COMMISSION
Mayor Michael J. Meier
Vice Mayor Eula R. Clarke
Commissioner Becky Bruner
Commissioner Kelli Glass Leighton
Commissioner Merritt Matheson

ADMINISTRATIVE
City Manager, David Dyess
City Attorney, Michael J. Mortell
City Clerk, Mary R. Kindel

3:30 PM ROLL CALL – Meeting Called to Order

THIS MEETING WILL BE A HYBRID IN PERSON/REMOTE MEETING.

Information provided by City Manager Dyess:
Special Commission Meeting of May 4, 2020, pursuant to Executive Order 20-69 issued by the Office of Governor Ron DeSantis on March 20, 2020, due to COVID-19, municipalities may conduct meeting of their governing boards without having a quorum of its members physically or at any specific location and utilize communications media such as telephonic or video conferencing as provided by Florida Statute 120.54. Procedures for public comment may be made utilizing a laptop, tablet, computer, or smartphone. All public comments will be taken at the beginning of the meeting for all agenda items. Click participants, then click raise hand at the bottom of the participant window. Your microphone will be unmuted when you are called on to speak. The public may choose to activate their camera if they wish. Both will be deactivated once their public comment time is completed. If attending by phone, press *9 to raise your hand, you will be called by the last three digits of your phone number. All are asked to state their name and address clearly for the record.

During Roll Call, for the record, Dyess requested the board state whether they are present in person or attending the meeting virtually.

3:31 PM Roll Call
Present: Mayor Meier, Vice Mayor Clarke, Commissioner Bruner, Commissioner Glass Leighton, Commissioner Matheson (All attending in person)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENTATIONS

1. A PRESENTATION BY JOAN GOODRICH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BOARD ON THE BUSINESS SURVEY RESULTS.

Ms. Joan Goodrich briefed the commission on their efforts to support businesses and the economy, establishing a Hotline at 772-221-1380 and have created various outreach strategies to communicate with businesses with outbound calls, small talks, weekly economic calls and eblasts, and stories of triumph. Recently conducted a business survey, received approximately 200 responses and provided percentage responses. Businesses noted their preference to open slowly as opposed to possibly having to open and close again. Concerns include paying business rents/mortgages, having customers return, committed to safety for customers and employees. Looking for assistance with penalty free extensions on any fixed expenses and information on financial assistance and how to protect their employees and customers. BizHub can be accesses at BDBmc.org, get ready Martin County has resources for businesses to reopen and info to let the public know which businesses are open. Data collected shows that we could lose up to 7,000 jobs from our community, currently we've lost 3,138, unemployment figure is at 4.2%, could potentially use lose 2,900 firms at this time. As this data is reviewed, a recovery and strategy priority plan must be put in place. Listed services currently provided.

Brief discussion included the City's partnership with the BDB, resources for businesses to find temporary service employees, small business loans, and business sustainability/shopping local.

4:00 PM 2. A PRESENTATION BY STAFF ON BUSINESS RECOVERY RECOMMENDATIONS.

Kevin Freeman, Development Director, presented on various recommendations for Stuart businesses to reopen, demonstrating restaurant seating requirements with 25% inside seating while maintaining social distancing 6 feet apart. Provided options for restaurants to utilize parking spaces for dining. With support of CRA, conversion of outdoor public spaces/streets could be temporarily transformed into additional restaurant seating.

Jim Chrulski, Community Services Director, came forward for his presentation on COVID-19 Economic Relief Programs, commenting on rent and utility reimbursement programs and have invited House of Hope to explain their program.

Rob Ranieri reported via Zoom, on the various support programs offered to the community by the House of Hope, focusing primarily on financial assistance and pantry food service support. Dog and cat food as well as diapers are available for distribution and the Community Garden is still open. www.hohmartin.org

Gertrude Walden, Healthy Start, St. Mary's, and many other organizations are providing resources and services for the community. Community Services will put together a comprehensive listing for the public.

Chrulski announced the introduction of a We're Ready! Campaign; going to the businesses to interview them on what they are doing to be ready to reopen, adding these videos to our social media.

COMMENTS BY CITY COMMISSIONERS

No comments.
COMMENTS BY CITY MANAGER

No comments.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

4:26 PM MOTION: Move approval of the agenda.
Moved By: Vice Mayor Clarke
Seconded By: Commissioner Glass Leighton
Motion approved unanimously.

4:28 PM COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (5 Minutes Max)
(ALL COMMENTS FOR EVERY AGENDA ITEM TAKEN AT THIS TIME)

1) **Helen McBride – Flamingo Avenue; Commented on the downtown business parking and many of the parking spaces are taken up by employees. The sidewalks are too small and if businesses are to succeed, everyone needs to work together to get the economy going.**
2) **Betty Brinkley – Nassau Avenue; Commented on what she hears other Counties are doing to stop the spread of the virus but does not hear what our County is doing about testing. Trying to find masks and feels people in East Stuart are being left out because many do not have doctors and would like testing and masks donated.**
3) **Victoria Ferrer – Jefferson Way; Commented that she signed brick and mortar lease this year but applied for PPP but has not had a chance to get established and wonders if there are any resources to help small business owners like her.**

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

4:36 PM 3. A DISCUSSION ON WHAT REGULATIONS THE COMMISSION WOULD LIKE TO SET AROUND BUSINESSES OR ADDITIONAL SAFETY MEASURES.

City Manager Dyess reviewed the Governors Order and the changes at County level to include golf courses, boat ramps, parks, sports, and beaches.

Review of current City of Stuart Measures in Place:

- **staffing levels – City Managers discretion**
- **dedicated parking places for food establishments for curbside pick-up – re-evaluate with Phase II**
- **3-hour downtown parking restrictions – evaluate weekly, City Manager discretion**
- **athletic fields closed – remain until Phase II**
- **special events cancelled/revoked – evaluate in Phase II (except for pavilion rentals for 10 or less people)**
- **Boat ramps open**
- **Deferred downtown on-street dining areas to Phase III**
- **Anchorage Marina public access – Phase II**
- **Closure of playground equipment continued – Phase II**
- **Basketball and Tennis Courts, 2 players per court – return to normal.**
- **10th Street Recreation Center – Staff recommendation to open on May 18th or June 1st for recreational purposes with four groups of 9 children to 1 counselor, 36 children max – City manager open to Commission suggestions.**

Julie McHenry, Community Services Division Manager, reported via Zoom that they are in direct contact with JD Parker Elementary School and to assist the children that are not logging on to participate in classes. The Center would have a total of 36 children, staggered staff with same children together at all times, shadowing the YMCA's current program and following the procedures of the CDC and the DCF.

Commissioners agreed to open the 10th Street Community Center on May 18th to help provide the structure needed for the students and parents in the community.

In addition to staff's recommendations, Commissioner Glass Leighton suggested that Osceola Street be temporarily closed to allow pedestrian traffic and outside seating to give downtown stores and restaurants an opportunity to showcase their merchandise on the street. If parking spots are taken away for that, would like the Tram service reimplemented again to shuttle customers.

Attorney Mortell reported that the Code stated the Commission has the right to close the street and implement the closure, proper notice is required.

Kevin Freeman, Development Director, encouraged the idea and participated in a continued discussion that included the current Valet Service contract, including the businesses on Flagler Avenue, parking space options, polling the businesses/DBA and Stuart Main Street, increased police officers throughout downtown, and timing of implementation.

5:31 PM Tram discussion – trams on demand or fixed route, driver sanitize seats and handles between stops. On demand will be evaluated after the street closure is decided.

For clarification, parking lots can be used for restaurant tables. Getting the message out to the public challenges, encourage tenants to work with the landlords. Police Chief noted he has a contact list for almost every business in the City.

Brief discussion on the anti-body testing. City Manager Dyess provided information researched by Roz Johnson, Human Resources Director. Commissioner Glass Leighton requested this remain on our radar.

City Manager commented that it may be easier to get supplies once personal health self-swabbing kits are available. Regarding masks, Indiantown passed an Ordinance requiring masks within its municipality. Voluntary use of masks is encouraged by the Stuart Commission.

 **6:14 PM MOTION: Bring back Resolution to the May 11th Meeting encouraging masks.**
Motion By: Vice Mayor Clarke
Seconded By: Commissioner Matheson
Motion passed unanimously.

 **6:22 PM ADJOURNMENT**

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Mary R. Kindel, City Clerk **Michael J. Meier, Mayor**

Minutes to be approved at the Regular Commission Meeting this 26th day of May, 2020.