

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE COMMITTEE (EDZC) MINUTES  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2019 10:00 A.M.  
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Jessica Hawkins, Vice Chairman Garry Rooney, Joseph Cataldo, Mike Williams, Terry Torres and Alternate Member #1 Bob DelVecchio and Alternate Member #2 Linda Moore **Also Present:** Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director and Heather McCarty, Records Retention Specialist

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mrs. Hawkins called today's meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A) January 28, 2019**

**Mr. Torres made a motion to approve the January 28, 2019 minutes. Mr. Williams seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Chris Bealls, with ABC Printing, said he has been on both the east and the west side of the railroad tracks. He said while he was on the east side, there were no accidents and no speeding cars. Where he is at now at the corner of the Courthouse, there is approximately one (1) accident per month, usually from someone turning left from the center or right lane. He said with the wide open spaces, you don't realize how fast you're going and there is nothing to slow you down. There is a parking garage across street, but there are no crosswalks crossing SR 60. He said three (3) to four (4) times a day, there are cars and motorcycles going at least 85 mph. He felt the turning situation could be helped with a simple solution of painting arrows on the lanes. He talked to a State official who was looking at the intersection who commented that if nobody was killed at the corner, they were not going to even look at it. He said there needs to be some kind of calming on the traffic flow.

Mr. Torres commented that it is a proven fact when the lanes are that wide, they invite higher speed limits. He suggested that putting out the speed limit sign to make people aware of their speeds.

Chief David Currey said the speed trailer has been out on SR60 a few times and will continue to be. He said they have two (2) of them and utilize them throughout the City. He said traffic has been the number one (1) complaint.

Mr. Williams said it seems like they could do something about it and he didn't understand why they couldn't narrow it down.

Chief Currey said they have looked at SR60 in a number of locations. There have been speed studies done and they have data on the crashes and can provide that information to them.

Mrs. Hawkins asked if the recent accident on 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 20<sup>th</sup> Street was speed related. Chief Currey answered no and that they are waiting for toxicology results. He added they are working with Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) on the extension of the guard rail on the south side of SR 60 to hopefully help keep cars out of the canal.

#### 4. OLD BUSINESS

##### A) Police Officers on bikes downtown – Update to be given by the Police Chief

Chief Currey said they have a Friday and a Saturday evening bike detail every week from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. They have three (3) bicycles and 10 to 12 trained Police Officers and they try to get them out on bicycles as much as possible. He added it is an overtime detail split between the Downtown district and the Oceanside district.

Mr. Williams asked if they have enough bicycles. Chief Currey said they just purchased their third bicycle, which with the proper lights and seats, cost around \$1,400 to \$1,500. Mr. Williams asked if they get another one, could they get more full time downtown patrols. Chief Currey said that it is a goal to do that more full time, but no one is specifically assigned to the bikes. Mr. Williams said he is going to work on getting them another bicycle. Chief Currey said they would gladly accept that.

Mr. Torres asked if they could extend the detail past 8:00 p.m. because he feels the later it gets, the more danger there is. Chief Currey said nothing has been brought to his attention, but he could look at that.

Mr. Cataldo said he had previously brought up a company donating cameras. Chief Currey said they are still waiting on the company, Ring, and will keep them posted. Mr. Cataldo said a main focus they are working on as a capital improvement is the lighting to enhance the security, but they also are looking at cameras.

Mrs. Moore asked if they were to put in lighting throughout Pocahontas Park, which would require running electricity, would that be beneficial to having cameras put in. She thought a camera system throughout the Park to provide safety could be done in conjunction with lighting throughout. Chief Currey thought so. He agreed lighting is important for safety and security. He added they would need to be cognizant of the nighttime and the type of camera. They could work in concert to help and assist as to the locations, lighting, and types of cameras if that was where they wanted to go.

Mr. Cataldo said they are looking at the fountain area. He had mentioned ways to discourage lounge seating by removing some benches or relocating them. Chief Currey said the partitions have been installed. He said there are a number of benches in the Park that really aren't getting used, especially around the perimeter. He added the ones around the perimeter are getting used by the homeless or not at all. He said there are donor plates on the benches, but he thinks they could probably do with fewer benches. He talked about the corner of 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 14<sup>th</sup> Street, where there is the u-shape and two (2) sets of benches. He added that many of the homeless are not a problem, but they do still get calls on them.

Mr. Cataldo pointed out that it can be intimidating when there is a gathering of the homeless. Chief Currey referred to a couple recent arrests.

Mrs. Brooke Malone said she is a business owner and also a member on the Recreation Commission. She asked Chief Currey how many times has he been here and requested for some cameras to be installed in that area. Chief Currey thought once and they just talked about it.

Mrs. Malone asked where the money for bicycle funding comes from. Chief Currey answered out of their budget in the General Fund.

Mrs. Hawkins said that Chief Currey came to them with the Ring program and that is something he is working on that is not solely for their district.

Mrs. Malone asked when the last time their Master Plan was approved. Mr. Torres said it was late 2015 to early 2016.

Mrs. Malone said the Finance Director came in and explained that their money was going to accrue and go into a Trust. She said the original Economic Development Plan included some lighting and some public safety, but at this point nothing has gone to City Council. Mrs. Hawkins said they didn't have funds. Mrs. Malone questioned now that they have the funds, what are they buying. She said she went back and read some minutes. She said the Recreation Commission held a Special Call meeting to listen to citizens address their needs to have a master plan, which is in the same place as theirs. She said it is extremely aggravating to revisit the same conversations over and over again. They spent 4.5 hours listening to citizens begging them to save the land or not save the land, which had nothing to do with their Commission. There were three (3) people during that meeting who made a request of the Recreation Department. She pointed out that their Commission is lacking direction on what they are supposed to be spending their time on. She said it seems they have a long road to hoe with FDOT and they have bigger issues going on. She referred to the unsolved shooting in a dark area. From behind the Executive Center where the additional parking and churches and office buildings are is a very dark walk. She said homeless people are a part of having a city. She said not counting them as citizens is unfortunate because they are citizens. She said the lighting suggestions are amazing. She explained how with a few inexpensive cameras, not only can Chief Currey use them to catch something bad that's happening, but they can use them also to advocate for and boost their businesses. She encouraged them if this feels the same way her Commission feels, it is time to get in front of City Council and spend some of their money and do one (1) thing quick and fast that's good for everyone to inspire people. Their job is to make a recommendation. She expressed aggravation that starting with the minutes in May, there still isn't a recommendation. She said with traffic calming, they are wasting their time and taxpayers' time. They need to be talking about things that they can do now.

Mr. Rooney commented this is the best public turnout they have ever had.

Mrs. Hawkins said they have been asking people to come to their meetings and talk about what they need for over a year and this is the first time that has happened. Mrs. Malone said they need to start pulling the trigger on cool stuff. She said if they light up an area and make something better, other things will fall into place.

Mrs. Hawkins said that they have done stuff, but it's stuff that people don't pay attention to. They have worked with Main Street to get a kiosk. They have worked with Chief Currey to get the bike patrol started. They've worked with the GoLine to get bus stops throughout the district. They worked to get the trolley service for Gallery Strolls and Downtown Friday. They have done things, but they are things that people take for granted. Mrs. Malone said or that they don't see. She said they need to find something everyone will see and like. She loves parks, but they are in horrible shape. Pocahontas Park is in their district in an area that they are concerned about and where the Police have requested additional support. That area could change with some beautiful lighting, some aesthetics and some additional security cameras.

Mr. Rooney said they all agree. He added that they love this output at their meetings.

Mrs. Malone urged as a citizen for them to do one (1) awesome thing before May of this year.

Mrs. Hawkins said she met with Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director, on Friday and he knows about an FP&L lighting program that they can work on as a fair share program. Mr. Jeffries is going to put together some cost analyses and get with FP&L and provide them some information on street lighting. She added that the aesthetic lighting on buildings is something business owners are going to have to invest in.

Mrs. Hawkins said they talked about lighting the alleyway between 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> and also by the Grove and by the Freshman Learning Center (FLIC).

Mrs. Moore said they got one (1) light there (FLIC) and it is better, but could be even better. They do have some money they could spend on the Park. Mrs. Malone said they could put a plan in place and get one (1) light and then two (2) next year and so on.

Mr. Torres said in 2017, they didn't get any significant funds, but they did in 2018 and about \$70,000 is available now. He said the Committee has a Plan and it has specific recommendations, which are prioritized by what can be done quickly and also economically. He is glad that she is here as well as other members of the public in attendance. They have very specific recommendations that they plan to implement now that they have the funds to do so. They still need to go to City Council in the form of a motion and each recommendation has to go through that process. They are going to begin to see these things implemented little by little. He brought up how much downtown has changed in the past 10 years with the efforts of Main Street, this Committee and downtown merchants into a vibrant and economic district. He would love to see the bike patrol extended until midnight, which are the more critical hours when they would prove more beneficial. He urged Chief Currey to consider a 7:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. bike patrol. He thinks the presence of police in this area is a deterrent to crime and walking though that dark area toward 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, it would make you feel comfortable to see the police presence.

Chief Currey commented that just because you don't see the bike doesn't mean they are not there. He pointed out this is all overtime coming from their budget and when they looked at the details, they looked at Fridays and Saturdays and around dinner times and tried to pick the time frame when they would be seen the most. He noted when they increase the hours, it is a matter of finding the personnel and the resources.

Mr. Torres brought up citizen patrols and about having a citizen patrol that is walking or on bikes within that area. Chief Currey pointed out that citizen patrol is the citizens in their community. They say "see something, do something" and solve a lot of crimes because people call them. He wanted to share with them that violent crime in the City of Vero Beach last year was down 26% to 27% and the previous year was down 34% and they are proud of that. He added that is not just because of them, but also the community.

Mr. Torres referred to incidents such as what happened at the Grove and said the fact that it is unsolved is very troubling. He asked if it would have been solved if they had cameras and better lighting. Chief Currey said cameras and lighting can certainly be a tool and assist them.

Mrs. Malone asked them to approve that and get it on their on their plan and put the plan in front of City Council.

Ms. Jerusha Stewart said this is her first time being at their meetings. She is excited about what they are doing to improve downtown. She said they have a PR problem because people don't know all the incredible things they are doing. Like Mrs. Malone, she would encourage them to take those funds and light up the City. She said tree lightings are huge and lighting up the Parks would be much appreciated since they have so many young people moving into the area and taking their kids to the Park. She added money would be well spent on bikes and it gives Chief Currey the opportunity to put more officers on the street. She encouraged them to make those motions and get them before City council.

Mr. Rooney urged the public to attend City Council meetings as well.

Mrs. Moore asked if their Committee could purchase bikes. Mr. Williams said he would personally buy a bicycle. He pledged one (1) bicycle.

## **B) Update Master Plan**

Mrs. Hawkins suggested removing the Twin Pairs from their monthly agenda because it has been talked about and there's really not much they can do. Mrs. Moore agreed.

Mr. Cataldo disagreed and said that it must remain on agenda. Mrs. Hawkins said they don't need to talk about it every month.

Mrs. Moore agreed. She said there is nothing that they can do about it that is within their power and they get nothing accomplished. She noted that she has been on the Committee since May and they have done nothing. She said they have money and they are about to have more. She said that nobody knows how much it is going to cost to light up the Park. She suggested they should be getting quotes and taking action.

Mrs. Hawkins said that Mr. Jeffries is working with FP&L to get information on their lighting programs and fair-share programs.

Mr. Rooney brought up their discussions about lighting up the Park and that they couldn't cut through roots or go up trees. Mrs. Hawkins said this would be more road way lighting and not in the Park. She suggested they could put lights in the parking lot, but not in the Park. She said they couldn't put lights in the Park unless they put a light pole in the Park.

Mrs. Suzy Feeney said that she and Mr. Rob Slezak, Recreation Director, brought in electricians and people to figure out how much it was going to cost to light up the trees and do the uplighting. She said to be able to get the infrastructure laid underneath to be able to light up the trees was going to cost about \$100,000 so they started to look at other ideas. If they are going to do something with special lighting, she hoped they would work with Mr. Jeffries to put lights around the fountain.

Mr. Rooney said they have already made motions and come to agreements as to what to go to City Council with and that was for the parking lot across from Scott's Sporting Goods.

Mr. Cataldo said it has to fit into their Master Plan, so they need to have that outline what they want to do. Once it's in their Master Plan and approved by City Council, then they ask for specific expenditures and requests. Also, they need Public Works input. He believes they will have terrific support because everyone agrees the number one (1) issue downtown is lighting. He said they are here to promote economic development downtown through improvements and walkability is key. If streets are well lit and

there's patrols, that's encouraging. Being able to walk across a street safely is very important. That's why he feels Twin Pairs calming needs to be on every agenda.

Mr. Rooney said they were keeping it on the agenda so they stayed in tune of what the status was. He said they have been talking about it for four (4) years and they want to keep it on their minds. It's one (1) of the things they always talk about because it runs through everything, including lights.

Mrs. Moore said they talk about lighting, but they need to do something. Mr. Rooney said they had a vote and made a motion that included the number of lights and amount to spend.

Mrs. Moore added that in the minutes from November, they talked about suggesting a certain amount to be spent on parking space patios. She asked if they are they going to ask City Council for that.

The Committee agreed that lighting should be the priority. Mrs. Hawkins pointed out that doing street lights and parking lot lights and things like that are within their purview and within their budget.

Mr. Jason Jeffries, Planning and Development Director, said he met with Mrs. Hawkins on Friday. He said he has worked with TIFF financing previously and is familiar with it. He said they (EDZC) have money now to do a significant first project, which is driving some of the Master Plan changes. He would like to look at their Master Plan and work with Finance using the updated projections and get with Public Works to see what the cost estimates are. He would put it into a plan that is reasonable and achievable and bring that back to their next meeting. He talked about how TIFF financing works. He said it seems their first initiative is the low hanging fruit with the pedestrian safety lighting. FP&L does have a program doing more decorative lighting in main street type locations. He wants to meet with their local reps and see if they can put that program here to stretch their money more. He said with their \$70,000 to \$80,000, it would probably only do a block if they had to pay for the capital improvements themselves.

Mrs. Moore asked about the possibility of solar lighting. Mrs. Hawkins pointed out the lights on Indian River Boulevard are all solar powered. She said their infrastructure is less and there is less conduit to run and it costs less for the City to run. She said there are a lot of options and Mr. Jeffries can meet with them and see what the possibilities are.

Mrs. Moore mentioned she is looking into solar lights to light up the murals.

Mrs. Hawkins proposed they have Mr. Jeffries come back to them at their next meeting with all the numbers and the outlay prepared for them so they can see it with a timeline that goes from obtaining the dollars to the design to the implementation.

Mrs. Malone mentioned one (1) thing they might want to look into are solar trees, which provide shade and are sculptural and self generate power. Mr. Jeffries said FP&L is currently working with the Dog Park on that. He said there are shelter options and others that look like a piece of art.

Mrs. Hawkins suggested maybe they could work with the Art District to get one (1) in their district as well.

Mr. Torres pointed out it is an excellent time to joint venture with FP&L. He thinks it would be a great community benefit for FP&L to elevate their presence here in the community.

At this time, the Committee went through their Economic Development Plan (on file in the City Clerk's office).

**A) One (1) Year Projects**

**A-1) Downtown Lighting** - Mrs. Hawkins said she would like to keep that first since they know they can make things happen with that.

**A-2) Public Safety** - Mrs. Hawkins said they have the very generous donation of a bicycle from Mr. Williams and hopefully Chief Currey will look at his budget and see what the options are for adding the hours that Mr. Torres proposed.

**A-3) Outdoor Dining for Restaurants Downtown** - Mrs. Hawkins thinks this would be working with Mr. Jeffries on finding the space to do it and the permitting process that goes along with it as well as the design process. She suggested they might want to move it to B) Two (2) to Three (3) year projects.

Mrs. Moore said her only issue with the outdoor dining is that she feels like the dollars to make those patios need to come from the businesses. Mrs. Hawkins agreed.

Mr. Rooney thought their proposal was that the businesses would pay them back and that it would not be a gift. The Committee agreed.

Mrs. Hawkins said permitting and design would all have to work through Planning and Public Works. She said it is not going to happen in a year.

The Committee agreed to keep it in the plan and move it to the two (2) to three (3) year projects as B-2).

**A-4) SR 60 Parking and Traffic Program** – Mrs. Hawkins said they could keep it on with one (1) year projects to keep the discussion moving and making sure it is a priority for City Council. Mrs. Moore said if the first step in that process is the reinsertion in to the Comprehensive Plan, perhaps they should see if there is any interest in City Council to do that.

Mr. Cataldo felt it didn't need to be in the Comprehensive Plan to get done.

Mr. Jeffries pointed out that Council is going to look at whether it is a priority of the community or not.

Mr. Cataldo said they are a prime candidate for "Complete Streets." He said it is a project that could get done if people get behind it. He pointed out a lot of this could be done with striping. They have to start with political support and unless the community wants it, they (FDOT) are not going to waste their time with it. He felt it should be a number one (1) priority.

Mr. Torres felt there was a benefit to adding it to the Comprehensive Plan. He pointed out he had an office on SR 60 east of the railroad tracks and there is danger on both sides. He thinks they need to add it to the Comprehensive Plan to raise awareness and show that the City supports it.

Mr. Williams commented that he is east of the tracks and there are accidents every week.

Mr. Cataldo said that creating crosswalks would encourage business. Mr. Rooney added if the City wants it to be a mixed use district, then it needs to be walkable.

**B) Two (2) to (3) year projects**

**B-1) Special Themed Lighting** – Mrs. Hawkins thought they should keep this item, which goes with their one (1) year project and keeps that program going.

**B-2) Outdoor Dining for Restaurants Downtown** – This item was previously item A-3).

**B-3) Art Displays in Green space** – Mrs. Hawkins said they could work with FP&L on the solar trees and with the Art District. Mrs. Moore liked the addition of solar trees.

**C) Five (5) year plus projects**

**C-1) Stamped crosswalks** – Mrs. Hawkins said there would be no cost to them if they do it at the same time as the paving of SR60, but there is a cost if they do it separately. She said that is something to look at and to keep on the list.

**C-2) Sidewalk Widening Project** – Mrs. Hawkins said that is no cost to them, but it could possibly be done with the SR60 project which helps with the parking situation. However, it does not help anyone in the Main Street area. She added they have to work with Mr. Falls to do it anywhere else in the City.

**C-3) SR 60 Restructuring and Additional Landscaping** - Mrs. Hawkins asked if they wanted to add this to A-4) and keep SR60 all together. The Committee agreed.

Mr. Jeffries asked for a copy of the Economic Development Plan that they just went through. Ms. Honse said they do need to include it as part of the agenda packet so people can go through it while it is being discussed.

Mr. Jeffries said he will use it in conjunction with the work he is doing and have it be a part of the packet he submits.

Mr. Rooney hoped that for the next meeting, they encourage people to attend again.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 18, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

**A) Twin Pairs Calming**

This item was discussed previously.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

None

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

Today's meeting adjourned at 11:23 a.m.

/hm