



**Town of Surfside
Town Commission Workshop
MINUTES
March 26, 2024
5:00 PM
Commission Chambers**

1. Opening

1.A Call to Order

Mayor Burkett called the meeting to order at 5:19 p.m.

1.B Roll Call of Members

Town Clerk McCready called the roll with the following members present.

Present: Mayor Charles W. Burkett, Vice Mayor Tina Paul, Commissioner Ruben Coto, Commissioner Nelly Velasquez, and Commissioner Gerardo Vildostegui.

Also Present: Interim Town Attorney Mark Blumstein and Town Manager Hector Gomez.

1.C Pledge of Allegiance

Chief Marciante led the pledge of allegiance.

2. Mayor, Commission and Staff Communication

2.A Discussion Items for the April 9, 2024 Town Commission Meeting - Mayor Charles W. Burkett

For the Town Commission to discuss and provide to the Town Manager discussion item topics to be included in the April 9, 2024 agenda.

Mayor Burkett introduced the item.

Mayor Burkett asked the Town Commission if they would like to open public comment.

Commissioner Vildostegui agreed and suggested multiple rounds of public comment.

Mayor Burkett agreed.

Vice Mayor Paul stated how she believed the meeting was at 6:00 p.m. and how to her understanding special meetings and budget workshops are at 5:00pm, regular workshops and quasi-judicial meetings are at 6:00 p.m., and Commission meetings at 7:00 p.m. She advised for future meetings to keep this time.

Commissioner Velasquez suggested commission meetings to start at 6:00 p.m. to have more time to address items.

Mayor Burkett stated how 5:00 p.m. meetings are preferable.

Vice Mayor Paul shared how the meeting schedules she mentioned had worked during her prior terms and how she would like to see the Commission to go back to its traditional meeting time.

Commissioner Velasquez mentioned how the Commission can change meeting times whenever they see fit. She asked if the time for next first couple of Commission meetings could be changed to 6:00 p.m. until their priorities list is addressed.

Mayor Burkett suggested for this item to be addressed in the agenda for the next Commission meeting.

Commissioner Velasquez asked if the meeting in April could be done at 6:00 p.m. instead of 7:00 p.m.

Town Clerk McCready stated the notice of the meeting can be changed if the Commission desires.

Commissioner Velasquez expressed how the next Commission meeting in April can be done at 7:00 p.m., but for the Commission to vote in April if the meetings should be done at 6:00 p.m. moving forward.

A conversation between Mayor Burkett and resident Eliana Salzhauer was conducted.

Commissioner Coto stated how he is flexible with meeting times.

Mayor Burkett opened the floor for public comment.

Jeffrey Platt stated how he agreed with Vice Mayor Paul regarding the time the meetings should start.

Mayor Burkett asked the Commission if there was a specific ending time for the meetings.

Vice Mayor Paul stated how traditionally meetings ended at 11:00pm.

Mayor Burkett agreed with the meeting ending time.

Commissioner Velasquez asked if the Commission was not able to speak on all the agenda items during one meeting, will the items that were not addressed be moved

to the following meeting.

Mayor Burkett agreed on moving non addressed items to the following meeting. He stated how working late meetings was not productive.

Eliana Salzhauer stated how the previous Commission moved certain discussion items to the beginning of meetings when not enough residents had arrived to give public comments.

Mayor Burkett shared how the previous Commission would allow individuals to speak on agenda items that had not been previously discussed.

A conversation between Mayor and Resident Eliana Salzhauer took place regarding the previous Commission's actions on agenda items.

Eliana Salzhauer spoke regarding the beginning and ending time of meetings.

Olha Sperkacz stated how in Carlyle Avenue there is a lot of traffic, lack of police presence, and accidents. She asked the Commission for a solution to these issues.

Marsha Maya stated how on 96th street there is a lot of traffic congestion.

Phyllis Shamis shared how the Commission should enforce minors to wear helmets while riding scooters and bicycles. She stated how many drivers are utilizing their phones while driving. She asked the Commission to enforce people to wear their seatbelt and prohibit the use of telephones while driving.

There was consensus by the Commission to give Ms. Shamis an extra minute to speak.

Magdalena De Perez stated how the pool heater at the community center has not worked in over a month. She also shared how Carlyle Avenue floods tremendously.

Commissioner Velasquez addressed resident De Perez' comments regarding the comments made by the project engineers for the flooding project stated that by fixing the flooding in Abbott Avenue, it would help with the flooding throughout the rest of the Town.

Eliana Salzhauer shared how the prior Commission had done many zoning changes.

Mayor Burkett and Vice Mayor Paul asked Ms. Salzhauer to summarize the issues and email the list to them.

Eliana Salzhauer continued to summarize the zoning issues she had found.

A conversation between the Commission and Ms. Salzhauer regarding the zoning issues was conducted.

Mayor Burkett asked Town Manager Gomez if the Town Planner and Building Official were going to attend today's meeting.

Town Manager Gomez stated how the Town Planner was out of office and the

Building Official was not asked to attend today's meeting.

Mayor Burkett shared how he was disappointed with the planning department due to the many zoning issues and the misinterpretation of the Town Code done by them.

Ms. Salzhauer continued to share more of the zoning issues. She expressed her concern regarding lots being raised which causes problems to neighboring houses.

Commissioner Velasquez said how FEMA states how houses have to be raised, not lots.

Ms. Salzhauer shared more of the issues she had found. She stated how the Town should adopt a friendlier police model.

Mayor Burkett asked Police Chief Marciante to speak and address the Commission regarding the issue with Joshua Epstein.

Ms. Salzhauer shared how there was a police report that was not done properly.

Mayor Burkett stated the investigation was not done properly.

Police Chief Marciante communicated how the case is an ongoing investigation by the State Attorney's Office. He stated he believed this case might turn into a civil case for the Town and how he believes it would not be appropriate to speak on this matter. He stated how most public records have been released.

Mayor Burkett asked Interim Town Attorney Blumstein if this case was an ongoing investigation.

Interim Town Attorney Blumstein shared how the State Attorney's Office is pending a decision which will be given this week. He stated there is not a pending civil matter in front of the Town.

Mayor Burkett asked Interim Town Attorney Blumstein if he is referring to what this would mean in the Police Department.

Interim Town Attorney Blumstein expressed how the police has completed all work required and it is now pending a decision from the State Attorney's Office.

Mayor Burkett addressed Police Chief Marciante regarding this case. He asked Police Chief Marciante to address the Town residents regarding the arrest.

Police Chief Marciante responded he did not want to talk about the case. He shared how the men and women working in the Police Department are exceptional and do extensive training.

Mayor Burkett asked Police Chief Marciante to address the Town's residents and elaborate if the Police Department can make their residents feel safe.

Police Chief Marciante shared how the police department has extensive training,

good judgement, low instances of use of force, and low complaints.

Mayor Burkett asked Police Chief Marciante if the incident with Joshua Epstein was an anomaly and if the Town has to be worried about their children getting arrested too.

Police Chief Marciante clarified how the police department will follow the state law.

Commissioner Velasquez told Police Chief Marciante that the decision to arrest Joshua Epstein was sent by him. She asked how can the arrest happen if not all witnesses were spoken to. She stated how the arrest was not humane.

Diana Gonzalez shared how the traffic in Harding Avenue is very heavy and no police cars are helping with this issue. She added how kids riding scooters in fast velocities in the Town is dangerous.

Mayor Burkett closed public comment.

Commissioner Vildostegui stated how will the Commission proceed with the meeting and to keep in mind the April 9th meeting is a priority. He suggested to the Commission to keep mentioning their priorities. He proceeded to share a list of topic areas to make suggestions for items. Among those topic areas were: Infrastructure, good governance, recreational facilities, the Champlain Towers Memorial, and zoning.

Mayor Burkett asked Commissioner Vildostegui to elaborate on those topics.

Commissioner Vildostegui shared how his priorities for the next few minutes were the drainage project and the Champlain Tower South Memorial.

The Commission reached consensus to add the Champlain Towers South Memorial, drainage project, and undergrounding project as a priority list items.

Commissioner Coto shared he would like to add an item regarding police presence.

Mayor Burkett stated he would like to listen to Commissioner Coto's priority items for the Commission to come into agreement if his items would enter the priority list. He stated the priority items will be given to Town Manager Gomez to add onto the April 9th agenda.

Vice Mayor Paul suggested for all Commissioners to share their lists since she believes that a lot of the items overlap with each other.

Commissioner Vildostegui clarified his list was broad topics, not specific agenda items. He suggested for the Commission to speak on broad topic areas to then make suggestions regarding specific issues.

Mayor Burkett stated he would like to speak on specific agenda items.

Commissioner Vildostegui clarified his ideas to the Commission regarding his

proposal for the dynamic of tonight's conversation. He shared he would like to speak about infrastructure. Besides the topics of the drainage and undergrounding project, he suggested for 88th street to be redesigned to be more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. He stated how his focus is on the drainage project.

Commissioner Velasquez shared how tonight they were going to focus on the items for the April 9th meeting, however, if the Commission desires to speak more on infrastructure issues they could have other meetings like roundtable sessions.

Commissioner Coto stated how Commissioner Vildostegui addressed most of the items on his list. Commissioner Coto proceeded to ask Town Manager Gomez regarding the traffic study conducted.

Town Manager Gomez answered how the traffic study will be ready by the end of next week as it is being finalized.

Commissioner Coto shared how the Champlain South Tower Memorial needs to be moved forward and what can be done to do so. He stated he would like to add onto his list the flooding issues and zoning changes brought up by Ms. Salzhauer. He asked if the zoning changes can be reserved.

Interim Town Attorney Blumstein expressed he would like the list from Ms. Salzhauer. He suggested to prepare the amended ordinance the Commission is seeking to revert back to, and each issue can be adopted one by one.

Mayor Burkett asked Ms. Salzhauer to send the zoning issues list to Interim Town Attorney Blumstein.

Commissioner Coto stated he had another list sent by a resident that he will send to Interim Town Attorney Blumstein as well.

Commissioner Velasquez suggested an ordinance for the misuse of religious exemption. She added how the lot that had been split is not 100ft. She stated how an ordinance should be made specifying how lots need to be 50ft all around. She added how some houses seem too large. She added how she is not in favor of rooftop decks and how this should be added to the charter for the sake of privacy. She stated how the charter says that all houses should be up to two stories. She mentioned how if the town will be doing the Abbot Avenue drainage project with funds that the Town has, the referendum passed by the previous Commission to borrow money for this project should not be continued. She stated how the Town should reverse the funds that were restricted into different funds. She shared how the only restricted fund should be the hurricane fund and all other funds should be put all together to keep track of how much the Town has. She shared how an ordinance should be made for the Town Manager to not have the authority to give employees raises more than 3-5%, any more than that should be approved by the Town Commission. Commissioner Velasquez added how residents should be able to put out more than 3 signs on their lawns during elections, if residents wanted to support all five candidates, they should be allowed to put five signs. She spoke regarding the FEMA requirement of the raising of houses, not lots. She added regarding the new bill passed in Tallahassee that states when buildings are not up to

code, it gives local government the power of jurisdiction if a building should be demolished.

Vice Mayor Paul shared how other municipalities are working on appealing this new bill. She stated how she would like for the Town of Surfside to join the appeal. Vice Mayor Paul expressed how this bill is not favorable for historical buildings.

Commissioner Velasquez expressed if a building does not agree with FEMA standards, a Commission can vote to allow that building to be demolished. She stated how the prior Commission had a friendly relationship with developers which can lead to lots of residents lost and houses devalued, opening a path for developers to buy lots and not allowing residents to afford to live in the Town. She stated how these actions are wrong.

Vice Mayor Paul proceeded to share her list of items. She addressed some of those items were from public comments: traffic issues, minors wearing helmets while riding bikes and scooters, and conducting a traffic workshop. She continued speaking on the reverse of Resolution No. 23-Z-3209 for the site plan approval for 8777 Collins Avenue due to misinterpretation of the zoning code. She believes this development should have not been set to be built before the Champlain Tower South Memorial.

Commissioner Coto spoke regarding the naming of the memorial to be changed and get feedback from the family members of the victims.

Vice Mayor Paul shared her request for the Memorial Committee to be reactivated and to work on the Champlain Tower South anniversary coming up in June.

Town Manager Gomez shared how committee meetings were pushed back until April until the Commission appoints new members. He stated how the only request from the family members in order to be part of the Memorial Committee is to be an immediate family member or a survivor.

Vice Mayor Paul asked Town Manager Gomez if the Memorial Committee was reactivated.

Town Manager Gomez advised Vice Mayor Paul that the last day the Committee Members met was the day before elections. He stated how the members met with the design team for the memorial, but only ideas were shared. He spoke regarding the Commission's decision to dismantle all Boards and Committees but that he was still speaking with the Memorial Committee members as if they were still part of the Board.

Commissioner Velasquez shared how the members of the committee should be family members of the victims.

Vice Mayor Paul shared how she would like the Memorial Committee to be reinstated and to add a survivor as a Committee Member.

Mayor Burkett asked if the Commission would like to add as an agenda item for the April meeting the reinstatement of the Memorial Committee.

Town Manager Gomez stated an agenda item regarding this matter was already added to the April meeting. He asked for the Commission to treat the Memorial Committee with more sensitivity, but if the Commission desires, they can appoint more individuals.

Mayor Burkett asked Vice Mayor Paul if what she wanted to do was to reinstate the Committee and add one extra member.

Vice Mayor Paul agreed. She shared how the name of the survivor is Yady Santos who escaped the building with her young son and helped rescue others from the building. She expressed how she would like to reinstate the Budget Committee during the April meeting. She also spoke regarding the creation of a Community Relations Board they had previously discussed before the elections. She added how she would like this item to be on the April agenda.

Commissioner Vildostegui shared how he would like to create the Community Relations Board in April and appoint members during the May Commission meeting. He explained how he would like to discuss what the Board's duties and expectations are during the April meeting for residents to have a clear idea of what this Board entails.

Vice Mayor Paul agreed with Commissioner Vildostegui thanked all the residents who have applied to Boards and Committees. She asked for the Budget Committee applications to be on the website for residents to apply. Vice Mayor Paul asked Town Manager Gomez if DVAC was still active.

Commissioner Vildostegui stated that during the April meeting they can create the board if an item is created to discuss the board, and maybe appoint members in May after soliciting applications.

Vice Mayor Paul spoke about the need to bring back the Budget Committee and the DVAC Committee.

Town Manager Gomez clarified that DVAC Committee is a Town Manager's Committee and it is active as well as the CTS Memorial and the Youth Council.

Vice Mayor spoke about resolution 2024-3254 which is related to the Religious Land Use Relief related to the 9300 Collins Avenue project. She spoke specific to the historic facade in the historic structure. She believes that the Town can be more restrictive than the County. She will like to bring this back and revisit the facade. She requested for the Town Manager not to release a demolition permit to demolish that facade.

Town Manager Gomez stated he will check the status of the permit and present it to the Commission.

Vice Mayor Paul asked the Town Manager for an item to be placed on the April 9th agenda regarding the permit.

Commissioner Velasquez expressed her expectations that if a permit is requested for the demolition of the structure, such permit is suspended until the April 9, 2024 meeting. The Town Manager stated that if that's the will of the Town Commission, he will check the status of the permit and if it has not been used, the permit will be hold.

Vice Mayor Paul requested for this Commission to be updated on the FAA and where we left of during the April or the May meeting. She also requested an update on the CTS investigation. Vice Mayor Paul asked if resolution 2023-3021 regarding to the LPR readers has been implemented.

Town Manager Gomez responded affirmatively with the different location where the LPRs have been implemented.

Vice Mayor Paul asked the status of resolution 2023-3244 Freebie program.

Town manager Gomez stated that all agreements have been executed, they are in the process of installing the chargers and they are scheduled to begin in April.

Commissioner Velasquez stated that she added an item to the April agenda for the Town Commission to visit and discuss the possibility of bringing an IT in house.

Vice Mayor Paul asked about resolution 2024-3276 Bond referendum for Abbott Drainage and her wishes to repeal it. She doesn't believe they will need it as they have full intention of making this project a priority. She stated how the Town had 4 million Dollars for this project.

Town Manager Gomez continued to share to the Commission the specific amounts allocated for the drainage project.

Vice Mayor Paul expressed how she would like for this Commission to review all the design projects for more resident input. Specifically, the Surfside Boulevard, sidewalk beautification, downtown walkability, Champlain Memorial, and the new design guidelines. She requested the Town manager to update the Town Commission if possible.

Town Manager Gomez provided an update for the comp plan and the design review guidelines. Some discussion took place related to the 70-foot increase to the Tennis Center.

Vice Mayor Paul asked the Town Manager for any capital projects to be shown to the Commission.

Town Manager Gomez stated to the Commission they had already received orientation to all capital projects and asked if the Commission wished to put a hold on the projects.

Mayor Burkett expressed he would like to see the projects before they proceed.

Vice Mayor Paul spoke regarding an ordinance to be placed on the April agenda that never received a number because it was not adopted during second reading. The

ordinance in question demanded the scope of 24-inch setbacks and be retroactive to development approvals from the last two years.

Town Manager Gomez advised the Town Commission if they wished to bring back that ordinance, a meeting should be scheduled to discuss the adoption.

Interim Town Attorney Blumstein advised the Commission he would review the referenced ordinance.

Vice Mayor Paul told the Commission she had a list of ordinances she would like revised. The following ordinances suggestions were mentioned: Ordinance no. 2022-1722 non-habitable understory should be referred to the Planning and Zoning Board and possibly amend the charter, ordinance no. 2022-1723 prohibited noises for landscaping should be repealed, ordinance no. 2022-1724 setbacks should be repealed, ordinance no. 2022-1725 marine structures should be under review by the Interim Town Attorney and the Planning and Zoning Board, ordinance no. 2022-1726 prohibited noises should be repealed, ordinance no. 2022-1728 lot coverage should be repealed or referred to the Planning and Zoning Board, ordinance no. 2022-1730 mechanical equipment should be repealed, ordinance no. 2022-1731 generators should be evaluated regarding the placement of them, ordinance no. 2022-1732 Planning and Zoning Board membership qualifications as she would like to remove number 10 and revise number 1 and number 9 to specify for real estate developers and contractors to not conduct business in the Town to evade any conflict of interest.

Commissioner Velasquez added how a convicted felon was part of the Planning and Zoning Board and how she would not like for individuals with this type of background should be part of the Board.

Mayor Burkett discussed regarding a possible member he would like to be part of the Board.

The Commission conducted a discussion regarding the changes of the qualifications and possible changes to the Town Charter regarding this matter.

Vice Mayor Paul continued her list of ordinances. Ordinance 2023-1733 curb cuts should be deferred to the planning and Zoning Board for review.

Commissioner Velasquez expressed how she is in agreement with this ordinance and does not wish to repeal it due to this ordinance allowing spaces to be freed on the street for traffic to flow.

Mayor Burkett asked if there could be an agreement regarding this ordinance. He shared how he is not in favor of pavement over the front yard of houses and would like to repeal that.

Vice Mayor Paul continued her list of ordinances. Ordinance no. 2023-1733 modification of side and rear yard regulations should be repealed, ordinance no. 2023-1737 setback and yards definitions should be under the Interim Town Attorney and Planning and Zoning Board for review. Vice Mayor Paul asked Interim Town Attorney Blumstein to advice which ordinances from the list should be deferred to the

Planning and Zoning Board and which ones should not. Ordinance no. 2023-1742 roof decks should be under the review of the Interim Town Attorney, ordinance no. 2023-1746 balcony overhang limitations should be repealed, ordinance no 2023-1748 public right-of-way should be repealed.

Ms. Salzhauser explained this ordinance allows individuals negotiate with the Town to place construction materials in the right-of-way, but all materials have to be moved later and how this ordinance was an attempt to privatize the right-of-way.

Vice Mayor Paul continued her list of ordinances. Ordinance no. 2023-1749 synthetic turf should be under review. She shared how synthetic turf is not good for the environment. She would like for the Commission not to give penalties to residents that have synthetic turf but, once the life of the product is over, residents have to install real grass. Vice Mayor Paul addressed a public comment regarding construction site security of open fences addressed in ordinance no. 2022-1720 has not been enforced fully and she has asked Code Compliance to make sure all construction sites in the Town are complying with this ordinance. Ordinance no. 2023-1752 setbacks should be under the Interim Town Attorney's review, ordinance no. 2023-1759 public participation amendment should be repealed, ordinance no. 2024-1768 30% reduction in building permit fees related to condominium recertifications and structural life safety repairs, she believed building permits fees need to be reviewed as it has not been structured properly and how fees on new constructions should be higher.

Mayor Burkett added he believes the permit fees should be zero for properties that are mandated to fix their homes by the government.

Commissioner Velasquez added how permit fees are put into general budget instead of the building department.

Mayor Burkett clarified he would not want the fees for new construction to be raised, but to wave the fees of houses who are required to do repairs.

Vice Mayor Paul asked if this item can be added to the April meeting agenda.

Town Manager Gomez advised the Commission some of the items mentioned are ordinances and resolutions that need to be reviewed under the Interim Town Attorney.

Mayor Burkett advised for all items being repealed, they can all be under consent agenda.

Interim Town Attorney Blumstein stated all items that have to be repealed will be addressed in a sequence order that might include the input of the Planning and Zoning Board.

Vice Mayor Paul continued her list of ordinances. Ordinance 2024-1769 amending division 2 article 2 of chapter 34 raising of the lots should be revised.

Commissioner Vildostegui proceeded to share his priority list. He believes the

Commission needs to choose 10 or 11 items.

Mayor Burkett suggested to vote on the list of items to decide which ones are a priority.

Commissioner Velasquez stated that the drainage project and the memorial should be a priority.

Commissioner Vildostegui mentioned the following items from his list: 10 % vs. 10-foot site setback, drainage project, ban on non-disclosure agreements, and modifications to rule 704 and 705. He shared how he would like to set good governance changes early on the term. He informed the Commission he later on would like to speak on banning Commissioners from having offices in Town Hall and an anti-electioneering ordinance. He suggested to the Commission to hold off on the discussion of recreation facilities and wait until the late summer to talk regarding the next recreation facility. Commissioner Vildostegui shared information regarding a meeting on April 17th Miami Beach will be hosting regarding recreational uses of west lots and how the Town can be involved.

Vice Mayor Paul shared her wishes for the community center snack bar to be reopened. She asked for this item to be added to the April agenda.

Commissioner Vildostegui spoke how he would like to authorize the Town Manager to negotiate with 8801 Collins regarding their driveway access on the street for the Champlain Tower Memorial, he stated he would like this item to be on the April agenda. Commissioner Vildostegui shared his thoughts regarding the zoning items, he asked to prioritize the 10% over 10-foot issue, raising houses, and docks. Regarding traffic, he stated how some of those issues have been resolved, but there are proposals that can help with remaining issues. He added he would like to speak on environmental matters and have a plastic free Town Hall as a first step. Commissioner Vildostegui expressed his concerns on the Commission's process of choosing agenda items.

Commissioner Coto asked if another workshop can be conducted to address the agenda items being presented.

Vice Mayor Paul asked the Town Clerk to send a list of all the items being mentioned for the Commission to vote on them.

Town Manager Gomez suggested a Survey Monkey to be conducted amongst the commission to choose agenda items.

Commissioner Vildostegui suggested for the Commission to list their top 5 issues and make a first cut for the April agenda.

Mayor Burkett expressed how he does not mind a long agenda due to the meeting ending at 11:00pm.

A conversation regarding the length of the agenda and the discussion items was conducted amongst the Commission.

Ms. Salzhauer shared how there were many problems within the Parks and Recreation Committee due to the decorum rules. She asked for the Commission to give the Town Manager direction for the April meeting. She also mentioned the reinstatement of resident's rights to speak during meetings.

Mayor Burkett shared the following list of issues: FAA issues, charter questions and possible new Charter Committee, plat issues, copies of videos being released, and edited video being released to Commissioner Velasquez.

Town Manager Gomez expressed how legal opinion from the Interim Town Attorney is needed.

Interim Town Attorney Blumstein asked the Commission to clarify on the video request regarding Commissioner Velasquez.

Commissioner Velasquez also mentioned the release of a video requested by Ms. Salzhauer.

Mayor Burkett stated the Town needs to be transparent unless there is a legal issue. He shared he asked Police Chief Marciante to take down all the tints off the police cars.

Police Chief Marciante responded he received two quotes from the vendor but is waiting on a meeting to be conducted with the Town Manager.

Town Manager Gomez proposed to the commission a full visibility tint with UV protection for the police officers.

Mayor Burkett stated how he would like the Town to raise parking fees, give residents a discount for parking fees, and get rid of 15-minute parking spaces. He shared how he would like these items to be put on the agenda.

Vice Mayor Paul shared to direct the Town Manager to look into the parking system from Miami Beach.

Mayor Burkett stated the parking prices need to be raised for non-residents. He spoke regarding the Community Center second story and how the Commission will not be executing that idea. Mayor Burkett added how double parking, speeding, and pulling over loud cars will be addressed with 24-hour police watch. He also spoke regarding revising the second 70-foot and the wishes to unwind it.

Town Manager Gomez stated that issue will not be brought up in the comp plan.

Mayor Burkett shared he would like to raise a charter question regarding building heights to be capped.

Soledad Krasner shared her issues with the parking around the community center. She also shared a negative experienced she had with a Town employee.

Vice Mayor Paul stated how every year the Town buys new Town vehicles. She expressed how the Commission should have a list of all vehicles that have been purchased.

Mayor Burkett asked Finance Director Javier Collazo to speak regarding this matter.

Commissioner Coto shared how there was a talk regarding removing 15-16 parking spots in the commercial zone, which he is not in agreement with.

Town Manager Gomez stated how the permit for the project is frozen until further notice.

Commissioner Velasquez shared how she would like to speak on this issue.

Mayor Burkett stated the Commission can speak on this issue later on. The Mayor proceeded to ask Finance Director Collazo to circulate to the Commission a spreadsheet with the Town Vehicles list.

Commissioner Velasquez asked Finance Director Collazo if the general fund issue she had mentioned can be reversed.

Finance Director Collazo stated how the fund balance policy is up to the Commission's discretion.

Mayor Burkett shared his concerns regarding the veteran's park.

Commissioner Coto shared how he had been speaking with Parks and Recreation Director Tim Milian and there will be volunteers working on the park.

Mayor Burkett shared how he would like to see change in the planning department and how he would like to give the Town Manager direction regarding that issue.

Vice Mayor Paul expressed how the Champlain approval was a misinterpretation of the Town's zoning code.

Commissioner Velasquez added how Town employees stated that FDOT had approved projects or needed to approve projects which she stated it was false.

Mayor Burkett stated the planning department needs to be revamped, he shared the planning department has been a disappointment. Mayor Burkett expressed he would like a planning department he can trust.

Commissioner Velasquez shared she felt the same way as the Mayor.

Commissioner Vildostegui shared his thoughts on the Champlain approval.

Mayor Burkett reminded Commissioner Vildostegui the direction they are giving the Town Manager regarding the planning department.

Vice Mayor Paul expressed how she would like the 10% vs. 10-foot issue fixed by

the planning department.

Town Manager Gomez shared how by not trusting the planning department, therefore, the Commission does not trust the Town Manager.

Mayor Burkett and Vice Mayor Paul clarified that is not what they meant.

Vice Mayor Paul stated the planning department made a mistake regarding the 10% vs. 10-foot issue.

Commissioner Velasquez expressed how the Town employee's statement regarding the FDOT approval of the project was a lie. She shared how the Planning and Zoning Board based their decision on what the Town employees were stating. She voiced how the Town cannot continue to have a department that lies.

Town Manager Gomez asked the Commission if this is direction to terminate a certain employee.

Mayor Burkett stated that is not the Commission's job to give that direction.

Vice Mayor Paul asked Town Manager Gomez to fix the error made by the former Town Attorney and the Planning and Zoning Board she had stated earlier.

Ms. Salzhauer stated that the FDOT approval of the garbage dock on 88th street was a lie, not an error by the planning department and the Planning and Zoning Board.

Mayor Burkett stated how the garbage dock next to the Champlain Memorial was a disrespect.

Commissioner Coto stated how FDOT said they have never spoken with Town employees regarding this matter.

Commissioner Vildostegui expressed how the Commission needs to look forward on how to undo the damage of the 10-foot misinterpretation and the FDOT lie. He shared how he is not inclined on blaming the Town employees of what had happened, rather, he spoke on the former Commissioner's actions. He voiced how he would like to focus on moving forward.

Mayor Burkett communicated how the Town watched Town employees spread misinformation. He expressed how it was all "perfectly choreographed" by the former Commissioners, Town employees, and Planning and former Zoning Board Chair. He shared how the former Commission could have done something regarding the garbage dock next to the Champlain Memorial but they did not do so.

Vice Mayor Paul spoke about moving forward and fix the misinterpretation of the zoning code.

Mayor Burkett asked the Vice Mayor if the planning department tells her something she is not sure of will she believe it.

Vice Mayor Paul stated she would direct her questions to the Town Attorney.

Mayor Burkett asked Interim Town Attorney Blumstein regarding a former Commissioner who is using various houses in the residential district as warehouses. He expressed how would like to put this item on the agenda as well. He spoke regarding sidewalk issues, green in the walking paths, sign pollution in the Town and to revise the Town's sign ordinance.

Vice Mayor Paul stated how in ordinance no.1720 states that all construction sites should have an emergency sign. She stated how code enforcement should look into this issue when visiting construction sites in the Town.

Mayor Burkett asked Finance Director Collazo regarding the amount of money the Town has.

Finance Director Collazo told the Commission a brief overview of the Town's budget.

Mayor Burkett, Town Manager Gomez, and Finance Director Collazo had a conversation regarding the Town's budget. Mayor Burkett requested Finance Director Collazo to create a spreadsheet that explains the Town's budget.

Mayor Burkett asked the Commission regarding the Town's lobbyist.

Vice Mayor Paul expressed she had previously met the lobbyist and shared her positive experience.

Mayor Burkett shared the Town needs to be judicious when picking a lobbyist.

Town Manager Gomez advised the Commission to trust their lobbyist.

Mayor Burkett expressed how the Town Manager needs to conduct a more thorough investigation of the lobbyist's values and vision to make sure it aligns with the Commission's vision. He added he would like this item on the agenda and an update from the Town Manager.

Mayor Burkett and Vice Mayor Paul conducted a discussion regarding the lobbyist.

Mayor Burkett stated how certain things could not be done due to a police investigation. He suggested for Interim Town Attorney Blumstein to request a copy of the police investigation. He added the Planning and Zoning Board appointment rules need to be addressed. He also spoke regarding the 10% vs. 10-foot issue, 9300 Collins Avenue determination on FEMA and their involvement.

Town Manager Gomez stated how FEMA is pending final determination, however, the Town did receive a final determination from the state flood manager and the building official stating it is consistent with what FEMA allows for mix use.

Ms. Salzhauer shared how she had many conversations with the FEMA investigator. She expressed how FEMA does not allow underground parking for residential

buildings in flooding zones. However, they do allow underground parking for mixed use. She stated how FEMA relies on the flood manager's determination to make a decision.

Mayor Burkett asked Town Manager Gomez when did the flood manager made the determination.

Town Manager Gomez stated he does not know the exact date.

Mayor Burkett shared an issue regarding a home on 93rd and Abbott that is too large. He stated he spoke with the Town's building official and asked if he was aware of the issue. He asked the building official to measure the house.

Commissioner Vildostegui suggested for the Commissioners to suggest five items in order to have a short agenda for residents to be more engaged. Commissioner Vildostegui's top five items were: Abbott Avenue drainage project, Champlain Memorial, 8801 driveway direction, banning use of non-disparagement and non-disclosure agreements, creation of the Community Relations Board, and 10% vs. 10-foot issue.

Vice Mayor Paul proceeded to share her top items: Champlain Memorial, community center snack bar, and the repeal of Resolution No. 2023-Z-3209.

Interim Town Attorney Blumstein asked Vice Mayor Paul if the repeal of the resolution was regarding the Champlain Memorial new construction. He asked if this was a subject of a development order.

Town Manager Gomez responded the resolution was the development order.

Interim Town Attorney Blumstein stated he would have to revise the order for legal purposes.

Town Manager Gomez advised Interim Town Attorney Blumstein that the direction of the Commission regarding this discussion item will give them a clear idea of how to approach the subject.

Commissioner Coto proceeded to share his top items: Champlain Memorial, police enforcement in speeding, lot coverage, and docks.

Commissioner Velasquez proceeded to share her top items: Abbott Avenue drainage project, Champlain Memorial, addressing the 50-foot lot issue, religious exemption, and revision of the IT contract.

Vice Mayor Paul added two more items: Historic structure and bringing back the 30% ordinance for the waiving of permit fees.

Mayor Burkett proceeded to share his top items: Revision of parking fees, revision of the planning department, code enforcement for industrial buildings in residential areas, and sign pollution. The Mayor asked Town Manager Gomez to give the Commission a list of the items that did not make it to the April agenda to be rated by

the Commission on Survey Monkey.

Vice Mayor Paul asked Mayor Burkett if the zoning issues list she created should be presented to the Planning and Zoning Board.

Ms. Salzhauer suggested to the Commission to hold a zoning meeting.

Town Manager Gomez advised the Commission of having a joint meeting with the Planning and Zoning Board.

Ms. Salzhauer expressed how the meeting does not need to necessarily be done with the Planning and Zoning Board, but rather a meeting where the Commission can discuss zoning concerns. She suggested to the Commission for every meeting to have items regarding the resident's rights and not all zoning items.

Commissioner Velasquez shared how she is willing to give up one of the items to discuss the resident's rights for public comments.

Ms. Salzhauer voiced her concerns regarding public records and how Town employees are using their personal phones to communicate regarding Town business. She spoke regarding the public videos in Town hall can be released under the Town Manager's discretion.

Mayor Burkett asked if there was other business that needed to be addressed.

A brief discussion amongst the Commissioners was held regarding the agenda items.

3. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss before the Commission, a motion was made by Commissioner Velasquez to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Coto. The motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

Accepted this 14th day of May, 2024.



Mayor Charles W. Burkett

Attest:



Sandra N. McCready, MMC, MPA
Town Clerk