

**MINUTES
CITY OF FORT MEADE
REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2023**

A Regular Meeting of the Fort Meade City Commission was held on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at 6:00 P.M. at Commission Chambers, 8 W. Broadway Street, Fort Meade, Florida, and via Zoom Virtual Meeting.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The Meeting was called to order at 6:20 PM by Mayor Watts

2. ROLL CALL:

Mayor	James Watts	Present
Vice Mayor	Robert Elliott	Present
Commissioner	Petrina McCutchen	Present
Commissioner	James Possum Schaill	Present

Staff Present

Asst. City Manager	Maria Sutherland	Present
City Attorney	Chris Berg	Present
Deputy City Clerk	Melissa Cannon	Present
Human Resources Director	Cherie Kercher	Present
Comptroller	Mary Dimitroff	Present

Also present was PCSO Sgt. Earnest Fulcher

3. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

Mayor Watts led the invocation. Mayor Watts led the pledge to the flag.

4. ADDITIONS AND/OR DELETIONS

A. Add Special Presentation to the Fort Meade City-Wide 80th Mission Anniversary to Galilee Missionary Baptist Church and Beulah Baptist Church to be presented to Ms. Sharon Barfield, President.

Motion Vice Mayor Elliott, second Commissioner Schaill to add item 5-B to the agenda.

Motion to add item 5-B to the agenda passed by a unanimous vote of 4-0.

5. PRESENTATIONS/AWARDS/REPORTS

A. Swear in Mr. Samuel Berrien for City Commissioner Seat #5

Honorable Judge Jeff McKibbens presented Mr. Samuel Berrien with the Oath of Office as he was sworn in as Fort Meade City Commissioner Seat 5.

The Commission welcomed Mr. Berrien to the City Commission.

- B.** Special Presentation to the Fort Meade City-Wide 80th Mission Anniversary to Galilee Missionary Baptist Church and Beulah Baptist Church.

Mayor Watts presented Ms. Barfield and Mr. Wilcher with a plaque for Galilee Missionary Baptist Church and Beulah Baptist Church and thanked them for their service to the Fort Meade City-Wide Missionary 80th Anniversary.

6. PUBLIC FORUM:

Citizen comments for items not on the agenda (3-minute maximum length).

Ms. Rebecca Schemp, Art Club teacher for Lewis Annawoodbury Elementary, 115 S. Oak Ave., Fort Meade, along with students Paislie, Caroline, and Kaylee requested a donation for the Disney Epcot Art Festival field trip in February 2024.

Motion Vice Mayor Elliott, second Commissioner Schail to donate \$250.00 to Lewis Annawoodbury Art Club.

Motion to donate \$250.00 to Lewis Annawoodbury Art Club passed by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

Mr. Curtis Bankston, 1400 Hwy 17 N, asked that Vice Mayor Elliott explain the cmhp proceeds before the end of the meeting.

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Open Public Hearings on the following items:

- A. PUBLIC HEARING:** Second and Final Reading Ordinance 2023-19 Voluntarily Annexing Property into the City of Fort Meade – *Melissa Cannon*

Interim City Manager Sutherland read the title to Ordinance 2023-19.

Mayor Watts opened the public hearing. With no one wishing to speak, Mayor Watts closed the public hearing.

Motion Vice Mayor Elliott, second Commissioner Schail to adopt Ordinance 2023-19 Voluntarily Annexing Property into the City of Fort Meade.

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2023-19 Voluntarily Annexing Property into the City of Fort Meade passed by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

- B. PUBLIC HEARING:** Second and Final Reading Ordinance 2023-20 Voluntarily Annexing Property into the City of Fort Meade – *Melissa Cannon*

Motion Vice Mayor Elliott, second Commissioner Berrien to adopt Ordinance 2023-20 Voluntarily Annexing Property into the City of Fort Meade.

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2023-20 Voluntarily Annexing Property into the City of Fort Meade passed by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

8. CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Minutes of November 14, 2023, Regular Commission Meeting, Minutes of the November 27, 2023, Canvassing Board Meeting, November 28, 2023, Canvassing Board Meeting, and Minutes of November 29, 2023, Special Commission Meeting – *Melissa Cannon*

Motion Commissioner McCutchen, second Vice Mayor Elliott to approve the consent agenda.

Motion to approve the consent agenda passed by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

9. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Fort Meade Community Health Care Donation Request – *Melissa Cannon*

Motion Commissioner McCutchen, second Vice Mayor Elliott to approve the donation request of the Fort Meade Community Health Care Board in the amount of \$2,925.18.

Motion to approve the donation request of the Fort Meade Community Health Care Board in the amount of \$2,925.18 passed by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

- B. Audit Engagement Letter for Purvis Gray & Company – *Mary Dimitroff*

Motion Vice Mayor Elliott, second Commissioner Schail to approve the audit engagement letter for Purvis Gray & Company for the City-Wide and CRA audits for FY ended 2023.

Motion to approve the audit engagement letter for Purvis Gray & Company for the City-Wide and CRA audits for FY ended 2023 passed by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

- C. RFQ 23-01 Engineering Services – *Maria Sutherland*

Motion Commissioner Berrien, second Commissioner Schail to approve the issuance of RFQ 23-01 for Engineering Services.

Motion to approve the issuance of RFQ 23-01 for Engineering Services passed by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

- D. Budget adjustments to clear up post FY reimbursement requests for Main Street Fort Meade and Fort Meade Chamber of Commerce – *Mary Dimitroff*

After much discussion, Motion Vice Mayor Elliott, second Commissioner Schail to deny the requests for reimbursement from Main Street Fort Meade and Fort Meade Chamber of Commerce.

Motion to deny the requests for reimbursement from Main Street Fort Meade and Fort Meade Chamber of Commerce passed by a vote of 4-1 with Commissioner Berrien opposed.

10. **CITY ATTORNEY COMMENTS:**

City Attorney Berg stated that he is finalizing the negotiations of the city manager employment agreement with Mr. Pat Oman and stated they are very close. Mr. Berg passed the out the contract to the commission for review and went over the requests of Mr. Oman stating he has requested moving expenses and additional time to find living arrangements inside the city, cost of living raises and retirement, and has expressed a possible early start date of January 21st.

The commission asked many questions which Mr. Berg answered. Mr. Berg asked for direction on how to proceed.

Motion Vice Mayor Elliott to approve the contract agreement with the moving expenses not to exceed \$5,000.00, cost of living and retirement.

Motin to approve the contract agreement with the moving expenses not to exceed \$5,000.00, cost of living and retirement passed by a unanimous vote of 5-0.

Motion Mayor Watts, second Vice Mayor Elliott to bring the contract for approval to the Special Meeting on December 21, 2023.

Motion to bring the contract for approval to the Special Meeting on December 21, 2023, passed by a vote of 3-2 with Commissioner McCutchen and Commissioner Berrien opposed.

11. **CITY MANAGER COMMENTS:**

Ms. Sutherland stated that she would like to address comments that have been expressed regarding the finance department and the lack of managerial time management and not producing a "budget book". Ms. Sutherland stated she was not hired for finance therefore cannot be counted in the finance department and that the when the "budget book" was produced there were 949 hours of comp time earned for the finance director over 4 years to create the budget books. The commission recently denied comp time for all current employees. Ms. Sutherland stated that there have been 3 employees resign from the finance department and 3 new employees hired requiring the training of 6 people over 2 years therefore there hasn't been any time to create the pretty budget book as before.

Ms. Sutherland stated that with turnover other employees have to pick up other duties resulting in delay of some duties.

12. CITY COMMISSION COMMENTS:

- A. Commissioner Schail – Welcomed Commissioner Berrien back to the Commission.
- B. Commissioner McCutchen – Welcomed Commissioner Berrien back as well. Commissioner McCutchen asked what the emergency water repairs. Ms. Sutherland stated that they were able to cap off the line and not replace it.
- C. Commissioner Berrien – asked if the city was aware of the DEP grant funding due next week. Ms. Sutherland stated the Tommy King has been working with Mittauer on this grant.
- D. Vice Mayor Elliott – stated in response to Mr. Bankston’s question regarding the proceeds from the sale of the cmhp, the ordinance is to protect the funds, requiring commission approval to be used.
- E. Mayor Watts – welcomed Commissioner Berrien back and thanked the commission and Vice Mayor Elliott for his years of service on the commission.

13. STAFF REPORTS:

14. UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Mayor Watts announced the upcoming meetings.

A. December 21, 2023, Special City Commission Meeting at 6:00 PM

B. January 9, 2024, Regular City Commission Meeting at 6:00 PM


15. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, Motion Vice Mayor Elliott, second Commissioner Schail to adjourn the Regular Commission meeting of December 12, 2023, at 7:43 PM.

Motion to adjourn passed by unanimous vote of 5-0.

ATTEST:


Melissa Cannon, Deputy City Clerk


James Watts, Mayor