

MINUTES

CITY OF COCOA MAYOR'S TOWN HALL MEETING

February 20, 2018

The Mayor's Town Hall Meeting was held on Tuesday, February 20, 2018 at the Cocoa Civic Center, 430 Delannoy Ave., Cocoa, Florida, as publicly noticed.

I. OPENING MATTERS:

Mayor Parrish called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

Present:	Henry U. Parrish III	Mayor
	Don Boisvert	Deputy Mayor
	Jeri Blanco	Councilwoman
	Brenda Warner	Councilwoman
	Matt Fuhrer	Assistant City Manager
	John Titkanich, Jr.	City Manager
	Monica Arsenault	Assistant City Clerk

Absent: Clarence Whipple, Jr. Councilman

Other staff members present:

Ed Wegerif, Public Works Director; Gene Prince, Fire Chief; Katie Ennis, Deputy Utilities Director; Karen Hamilton, Community Services Director; Lora Howell, Deputy Finance Director; Tammy Gemmati, Administrative Services Director; Larry Lallo, Economic Development Manager; Samia Singleton, CRA Program Specialist; Jason McCuen, Helpdesk Support Tech; Mike Dellatorre, Police Lieutenant; Mike Cantaloupe, Police Chief; and Samantha Senger, PR Specialist.

II. Discussion Topics

1. Citizen Input

Mayor Parrish introduced all Council members present. City Manager Titkanich introduced all staff members present.

Mayor Parrish explained that the purpose of the meeting is to provide citizens an opportunity to ask questions or to share their thoughts or comments regarding city issues or to provide feedback.

Mr. Larry Sinclair, 1052 Mitchell St., Cocoa, asked how the Boards are supervised. He asked why it is acceptable for a Board to disregard an opinion given by the City Attorney's office to do as they wish when the City is expending money in order to retain the Attorney. In response, City Manager Titkanich explained that these Boards are citizen boards meaning the seats are occupied by the citizens of Cocoa. He explained that in most cases the City Council makes final decisions.

Mr. Sinclair asked what the process is to dispute a decision made by a Board. In response, City Manager Titkanich explained that if a person is legally effected by a decision made by a Board then a lawyer should be obtained by that person in order to dispute the issue.

A citizen from 235 Ash Dr., Rockledge, asked who to contact in regards to a water dispute. In response, City Manager Titkanich explained the process of contacting Customer Service and moving through the chain of command.

City Manager Titkanich took a moment to introduce Senator Hukill's assistant, Angelique Rinaldi. He shared that Senator Hukill opened an office at the Porcher House in Cocoa Village recently.

Mayor Parrish shared that the City's water system is quickly expanding. He mentioned the upcoming Waterfront Development Planning meeting taking place on February 26th at 6pm at the Cocoa Civic Center for anyone who wished to attend.

Mayor Parrish thanked the Police Department for lowering the crime rate. In response, Chief Cantaloupe stated that the overall crime rate is down by twenty five (25) percent. He thanked staff and citizens for doing their part in helping to lower the crime rate.

Councilwoman Warner noted that while we have increased our population we have not increased the number of Cocoa police officers in twenty (20) years.

A citizen stated that this may be true, but aesthetically there appears to be a lot of crime due to the number of bail bond businesses along S.R. 520. In response, City Manager Titkanich stated that the reality of this is due to the close proximity to the jail. Additionally, it is hard to turn businesses away due to their nature.

A citizen mentioned an issue regarding homeless people soliciting money and pan handling in the City. In response, Councilwoman Warner noted this may be due to the Sharing Center, the bus hub, and the food given to them in the village as homeless people will continue to return to places where they are able to receive

handouts. If their supply is cut off then they will go somewhere else. The City is consulting with someone who will help to address this issue.

Mr. Aleck Greenwood, 640 Brevard Ave., Cocoa, suggested that food vendors should be required to get a permit or pay a fee to set up a vending station and in turn this may deter them from setting up and giving handouts to the homeless. Another citizen suggested giving the homeless jobs in exchange for food or residency.

Ms. Lorraine Koss, 2115 Indian River Dr., Cocoa, inquired about the process of annexing property into the City limits. In response, City Manager Titkanich explained that the City may annex an area when the owners of more than fifty (50) percent of the acreage and more than fifty (50) percent of property owner's consent in the area are consenting to the annexation.

Mr. Wesley Scott, 1113 Westview Dr., Cocoa, stated that he had bought a home that was in foreclosure five years ago and has seen a lot of positive changes in the neighborhoods since he moved in. He asked what citizens can do to lock in their progress if the stock market crashes and if the housing market bubble bursts. In response, Mayor Parrish stated that with neighboring cities such as Titusville and Melbourne growing and supporting the Space Center, Brevard County is reaping the benefits of market stabilization. He noted that we also have the best location, water system, and the City has Historic Downtown Cocoa Village.

Councilwoman Warner pointed out that before, in 2008, there were many "haves and have-nots" meaning fifty (50) percent of the population had high paying jobs at the Space Center and the other half had low income jobs and both groups were severely affected. Now the population holds jobs that are more diverse and we are not so reliant on the higher income population.

A citizen expressed that he has lived in Cocoa since the 1950s and he is proud of what Cocoa has, has had, and has not developed. He stated that he is proud of the waterfront and feels that Cocoa's downtown is like no other, however, he feels the City is lacking a nice hotel for travelers.

Ms. Koss inquired how the money obtained by water customers is returned to the City. In response, City Manager Titkanich explained the security of the water system and how the money is returned to the general fund every year.

Mayor Parrish asked Ms. Koss to provide an update on the Indian River Lagoon. In response to his request, Ms. Koss provided a brief update.

The Mayor asked City Manager Titkanich if he had any legislative updates to provide. In response, City Manager Titkanich spoke briefly regarding the Vacation Rental Bill. He stated that this is not something that can be regulated by the City.

Lastly, Mayor Parrish suggested a welcome sign be placed at the entrance of Lee Wenner Park.

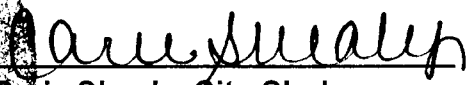
As there were no further questions or discussion to be held the meeting was adjourned.

III. ADJOURNMENT:

- * The Town Hall Meeting adjourned at 7:24 pm.


Henry U. Parrish III, Mayor

ATTEST:


Carrie Shealy, City Clerk

(Transcribed by Monica Arsenault, Assistant City Clerk)