

**MINUTES  
CITY OF FORT MEADE  
REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2021**

A Regular Meeting of the Fort Meade City Commission was held on Tuesday, January 12, 2021, at 6:00 P.M. at City Commission Chambers, 8 West Broadway Street, Fort Meade, Florida, and via Zoom Virtual Meeting.

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

The Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Mayor Watts following the CRA Meeting.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

Mayor	James Watts	Present
Vice Mayor	Richard Cochrane	Present
Commissioner	Samuel Berrien	Present
Commissioner	Petrina McCutchen	Present
Commissioner	Robert Elliott	Present

**Staff Present**

City Manager	Danielle Judd	Present
City Attorney	Tom Cloud	Present
Deputy City Clerk	Melissa Cannon	Present
Finance Director	Breanna Smith	Present
Public Works Director	Jackie Cannon	Present
CMHP Manager	Janette Diaz	Present
Library Director	Jacqueline Rose	Present
HR Director	Beisy Hernandez	Present
Water/Sewer Supervisor	Tommy King	Present
Community Center	Tory Dewdney	Present
Fire Chief	Roc Eiland	Present

Also, present PCSO Sgt. Warren Burgess.

**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**

**5. PRESENTATIONS/AWARDS/REPORTS**

- A. Adopted Budget FY 2020-2021 and Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award – *Breanna Smith*

Ms. Breanna Smith presented the bound budget books for FY20-21 and thanked everyone who helped put it together.

Ms. Judd recognized Ms. Smith for receiving the GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Award this year.

Ms. Judd announced that Ms. Smith received her CPA degree.

The commission thanked Ms. Smith for a job well done and congratulated her on obtaining her CPA degree.

**B. Appreciation of Service Year 2020– Mayor Watts and Vice Mayor Cochrane –  
*Melissa Cannon***

Ms. Cannon presented Mayor Watts with a framed certificate of appreciation for his year of service as Mayor.

Ms. Cannon presented Vice Mayor Cochrane with a framed certificate of appreciation for his year of service as Vice Mayor.

**6. ELECTION OF MAYOR AND VICE MAYOR FOR 2021**

**A. City Commission Approval of Resolution R21-01 appointment of Mayor and Vice Mayor for 2021. – *Melissa Cannon***

After much discussion, Commissioner Berrien requested a brief recess at 6:23 pm.

The meeting reconvened at 6:30 pm.

Commissioner Cochrane nominated Commissioner Elliott for Mayor  
Cochrane – Aye  
Elliott - Aye

Commissioner McCutchen nominated Commissioner Berrien for Mayor  
Berrien – Aye  
McCutchen – Aye  
Watts – Aye

Commissioner Berrien is named Mayor for the year 2021 with at 3-2 vote.

Commissioner McCutchen nominated Commissioner Elliott for Vice Mayor  
McCutchen - Aye  
Cochrane -Aye  
Elliott – Aye

Commissioner Berrien nominated Commissioner McCutchen for Vice Mayor  
Berrien – Aye  
Watts - Aye

Commissioner Elliott is named Vice Mayor for the year 2021 with a 3-2 vote.

**Motion Commissioner Cochrane, second Commissioner McCutchen to approve Resolution R21-01 designating Commissioner Berrien as Mayor and Commissioner Elliott as Vice Mayor for the year 2021.**

**Motion to approve Resolution R21-01 designating Commissioner Berrien as Mayor and Commissioner Elliott as Vice Mayor for the year 2021 passed by a unanimous vote of 5-0.**

7. **PUBLIC FORUM:**

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

None.

8. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

None.

9. **CONSENT AGENDA:**

- A. Minutes of December 8, 2020 Regular City Commission Meeting – *Melissa Cannon*
- B. Approval of Required Communication Letter from Purvis, Gray and Company, LLP.  
– *Breanna Smith*
- C. Re-appointment of Commissioner Berrien to the Fort Meade Library Board for 2021  
– *Jacqueline Rose*
- D. Acceptance of grant from the American Library Association/Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on Small and Rural Libraries in the amount of \$3,000.00 –  
*Jacqueline Rose*
- E. Grit Removal at the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant – *Tommy King*
- F. Approve the proposed draw note from Citizens Bank and Trust to finance capital purchases – *Breanna Smith*
- G. Systemwide Assessment of Fort Meade Electric Infrastructure – *Jan Bagnall*

H. Requirements of Florida's new "Verification of Employment Eligibility" statute. –  
*Beisy Hernandez*

I. Approval of Revised Job Description for Electric Line Worker – *Beisy Hernandez*

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

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

10. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. First Reading Ordinance 21-01 Face Masks – *Thomas Cloud*

City Attorney Cloud read the title to Ordinance 21-01.

**Motion Commissioner Watts, second Commissioner McCutchen to approve Ordinance 21-01 on 1<sup>st</sup> reading and set 2<sup>nd</sup> reading on January 26, 2021.**

**Motion to approve Ordinance 21-01 on 1<sup>st</sup> reading and set 2<sup>nd</sup> reading on January 26, 2021 passed by a unanimous vote of 5-0.**

11. **CITY ATTORNEY COMMENTS:**

Attorney Cloud stated he was asked about having virtual meetings due to the rising numbers of COVID cases in the State. Attorney Cloud stated he has done some research and there is no statute for preempting virtual meetings and recommends the City Commission adopt Emergency Ordinance 21-02 authorizing electronic attendance by elected and appointed officials at city meetings until further notice.

Attorney Cloud stated that he noticed the Commission of an hourly rate increase last January and due to the pandemic, the request for an increase will be delayed until next year.

Attorney Cloud stated that in the Water case, the goal is to protect the current permit and to keep the rates down. The solution is that we need help with SWFMD and FDEP and asked the Commission who might help achieve that goal.

Commissioner Cochrane asked that Attorney Cloud provide the Commission with specific needs to be presented to SWFWMD and FDEP.

**Motion Commissioner Watts, second Vice Mayor Elliott to adopt Emergency Ordinance 21-02 authorizing virtual meetings on a month to month basis.**

**Motion to adopt Emergency Ordinance 21-01 authorizing virtual meetings on a month to month basis passed by a unanimous vote of 5-0.**

**12. CITY MANAGER COMMENTS:**

Ms. Judd reminded the commission that city facilities will be closed Monday in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Day.

Ms. Judd stated she has been in contact with Dr. Jackson and has forwarded the information for vaccinations to the commission. There will be a web portal set up to schedule vaccinations beginning next week and the priority as explained is 65+, health care workers with direct contact and then long-term care facilities.

**13. CITY COMMISSION COMMENTS:**

**A. Commissioner McCutchen**

Commissioner McCutchen thanked Mr. Bagnall for completing her request quickly.

**B. Vice Mayor Elliott**

None.

**C. Commissioner Cochrane –**

Commissioner Cochrane apologized for hurting feelings, stating that was not his intent.

Commissioner Cochrane asked if there was an estimated expense for the road repair on N. Charleston.

Ms. Judd stated that was an emergency repair to a water line and she has not received the final cost.

Ms. Judd stated that since she has been here, she has expressed to the Commission the significant deficit in regard to utilities and it will take a long-term solution to fix it. Ms. Judd stated that she will be working with staff to get them certified to handle repairs like this and not hire outside contractors, stating that the MOT was excessive and could have been handled better.

**D. Commissioner Watts -**

None.

**E. Mayor Berrien –**

None.

**14. STAFF REPORTS**

Code Enforcement – *Marvin Haynes*

Building Dept – *Lisa Bolin*  
Sheriff's Office – *Sgt. Burgess*  
CMHP – *Pat Wickersheim*  
Library – *Jacqueline Rose*  
Water/Sewer – *Tommy King*  
Streets/Stormwater- *Mike Cagle*  
Electric – *Jan Bagnall*  
Community Center – *Tory Dewdney*

Mayor Berrien received the staff reports.

15. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, Motion Commissioner Watts, second Vice Mayor Elliott to adjourn the Regular Commission meeting of January 12, 2021 at 7:07 PM.

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

ATTEST:

  
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Melissa Cannon, Deputy City Clerk

  
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Samuel Berrien, Mayor