

Meeting called to Order at 6:16 pm by Mark Frandsen, President

Invocation By: Mary Jepson

Pledge of Allegiance Led By: Bill

Secretary and Treasurer Reports were available for review.

Officials, Candidates and Dignitaries introduced by Mark. Visitors were welcomed.

Mark began by discussing the election results. School Board loss of Karen Rose was tough. Rick Scott and James Buchanan had great victories. Barbara Langdon will need help for her election in November. Jack Brill of the Sarasota County REC was introduced.

Jack thanked all the grass roots volunteers at early voting and on Election Day. Although voter turnout was low, we had the highest turnout of any Florida county. Tallahassee believes that the Republican brand in our county has been negatively affected by the personal problems of certain party officials in our county. This impacted Karen Rose at the school board.

Jack discussed the Fall Candidate voter guides that will be prepared and guides for all the amendments. Democrats have opponents for us at the hospital board, charter review and state wide offices. There are many running which was not the case a few years ago. Jack was able to observe the ballot processing for the county and has great faith in the integrity of our county voting system. Mark then introduced the featured speaker Jerome Fletcher the City Manager of North Port Florida.

Mr. Fletcher began his North Port United Tour presentation by enumerating the number of accreditations obtained by the many departments in the City of North Port. This speaks to the professionalism and dedications of the city's management.

Yes, de-annexation is still in the courts. We will adapt to whatever the final outcome will be. We have new stores, new hotels, new high school, roundabouts, improvements to Route 41 and the River Road project. Much happening in this growing city of over 90,000.

He then began to discuss the City Charter Referendum that will be on the ballot in November. It is titled Get the Work Done. Currently, the city has a pay as you go approach for major expenses. This is very rare throughout Florida municipalities. We cannot borrow money without voter approval. Projects get delayed, they cost more, this puts the burden on current tax payers, and leads to deferred infrastructure maintenance. There are many large capital projects that need to be addressed over the next 15 years. With a change in our municipal borrowing method, as is on the ballot, borrowing for disasters and projects up to \$15 million can occur without voter approval. There would still be oversight and requirements on this type of borrowing. Mr. Fletcher asked everyone to go to this website to learn more. NorthPortFL.gov/Referendum. This is the same financing method used by Sarasota County.

There will be a Mid-September Info Meeting about the water drainage situation in the city. Open meetings are important. The new Police Station is on hold until after the referendum. A Natural Resources Division team is now dedicated to the city environment. We have 3 hospitals coming to our town. The 2 SMH facilities will occur simultaneously. HCA Florida is already underway. Warm Mineral Springs will be addressed at a September 9th meeting. The springs are important to our City.

Questions were then presented to Mr. Fletcher. A member questioned if flooding was due to new development. No. We have larger storms now. Old engineering covered smaller storms. New development rules cover larger storms. A question about Price Blvd. That will start this Fall as the re-engineering studies have finally been received by the city after 2 years. Another question concerned whether funding for Warm Mineral Springs could come from the State or Federal government. Mr. Fletcher noted that we have staff that attempts to capture funding for city projects and another that works on the legislature. Details of the funding referendum were discussed. Others offered support for Mr. Fletcher's dedication to the city. He was then thanked for his presentation.

Mark introduced Andrew Sias a candidate for North Port Commission and he spoke briefly about his annual event to help kids in the city schools. This will be September 14 from 6-8pm at the Hampton Inn.

Elaine Emerich was introduced. She presented details of her ongoing battle with the county to expand Mosquito control in North Port and the difficulties she is having securing this needed service. She spoke about 1 year ago on this matter as well. Karen Arlington noted that she has also received a non-response from the county on this issue.

Mark noted that a sign up link will be sent to all members so that we can volunteer to staff the Venice Campaign office which we share with many other clubs. The Fall Election will have 14 days of early voting and 3 locations to staff on Election Day. Volunteers are needed.

A birthday cake was provided for Elaine Emerich and Patty Garren. Patty was home sick, but cake was sent to her.

Meeting concluded at 7:22 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Marian L. Patricoski, Secretary