

CITY OF OPA-LOCKA
“The Great City”

CLERK’S ACTION SUMMARY MINUTES
VIRTUAL WORKSHOP (COVID-19)
Thursday, July 9, 2020
5:30 P.M.

1. WELCOME/OPENING REMARKS:

Mayor Matthew Pigatt called the virtual Workshop Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 9, 2020.

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 20-69, issued by the office of Governor Ron DeSantis on March 20, 2020, municipalities may conduct meetings of their governing boards without having a quorum of its members present physically or at any specific location, and utilizing communications media technology such as telephonic or video conferencing, as provided by Section 120.54(5) (b) 2, Florida Statutes.

An opportunity was given to the public to email the City Clerk prior to the Commission Meeting with any questions/comments/concerns on the workshop agenda. The meeting was streamed live at <https://www.youtube.com/user/CityofOpalocka>.

As a virtual meeting authorized by the Governor of the state of Florida, members of the public wishing to address the commission were offered the opportunity to do so. Public comments will be included as part of the public record for the virtual meeting and will be considered by the City commission prior to any action taken.

2. ROLL CALL

The members of the City Commission appearing remotely were: Mayor Matthew Pigatt, Vice Mayor Chris Davis, Commissioner Sherelean Bass, and Commissioner Joseph L. Kelley. Also appearing remotely were: Assistant City Attorney Candice Cobb, City Manager John E. Pate, and City Clerk Joanna Flores. Commissioner Alvin Burke arrived at 5:35 p.m.

3. INVOCATION:

The invocation was delivered by Commissioner Kelley.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

5. PUBLIC INPUT:

(Agenda items only)

Clerk Flores announced the protocols for public comments. There were no public comments.

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- a) City's Response to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
- b) Strategic Planning

Mayor Pigatt requested City Manager Pate to introduce the item.

City Manager Pate reported Miami-Dade County was having among the highest rates per capita of COVID-19 cases. He requested input from the Commission in regards to City Hall and how to proceed, in consideration of the positivity rate. He reported the testing site was averaging 550-600 tests per day. He reported positivity rates are rising, with 45 new cases the day before and a total of over 1,000 within the City of Opa-locka. He reported the closing of 780 Fisherman St for 2 weeks as part of a "Safer at Home" initiative, to perform deep cleaning and limiting movement. He reported the County had a curfew from 10 pm to 6 am. He suggested a PR Campaign titled "Safer at Home". He reported the County received \$14 million dollars to have individuals to trace and track the virus. He stated he wanted to solicit Miami-Dade County for assistance in tracking the virus within the City. He suggested having an event to pass out mask to residents. He requested feedback regarding issuing any emergency orders the commission might see fit.

Commissioner Kelley stated he was in support of shutting the building down. He stressed the importance of putting the word out.

Commissioner Bass stressed the importance of keeping everyone safe.

Vice Mayor Davis stated he was in support of closing down City Hall. He stressed the importance of the "Safer at Home" guidelines.

Commissioner Burke also stressed the importance of the safety of the employees and agreed with his colleagues.

Mayor Pigatt stated everyone was on the same page regarding the importance of safety. He asked City Manager Pate what he meant by closing down City Hall.

City Manager Pate explained that he meant that only essential employees would be required to go to City Hall. He explained that at the time, the staff was alternating showing up to City Hall. However, he stated that was not working well considering that cases continue increasing.

Mayor Pigatt asked if there were work from home policies and procedures.

City Manager Pate stated "Yes".

Mayor Pigatt asked about the employees who could not work remotely.

City Manager Pate explained he was speaking about City Hall at 780 Fisherman St.

Mayor Pigatt stated he was in favor in making sure employees are being protected. He wanted to make sure everyone was aware the City was still in a financial crisis. He requested an understanding of how the level of performance of the employees will continue. He stressed the importance of continuing to run the City effectively.

Commissioner Kelley asked City Manager Pate if there was a comprehensive plan for employees to work from home. He requested an explanation of how the Manager will know for a fact that employees are available from home and being efficient.

City Manager Pate explained the checks and balances of employees including sending an email at the start of each shift, productivity checks, work assignments being achieved, among other methods to hold employees accountable. He stated it is a reasonable expectation to have issues with some employees working from home. He stressed the importance of having the least number of people at City Hall.

Commissioner Kelley stated he was supportive of the closing. He wanted to make sure that someone was going to be answering the phone calls to the City. He stated he wanted to address the Safer at Home order.

Mayor Pigatt requested that City Manager Pate provide an update on customer service and the process for getting in touch with people who need help.

City Manager Pate requested that Director Rodriguez provide a report on the Mayor's request.

Director Rodriguez reported that earlier that afternoon, the phones shipped and will be delivered within a few days. He stated the call center could be rolled out in 2-3 weeks after that. He also stated that all phone calls could be transferred.

Mayor Pigatt asked if the person answering the phone could also transfer to another department.

Director Rodriguez stated that was correct.

Mayor Pigatt asked about the laptops working well and having internet service.

Director Rodriguez explained that those employees who did not have internet access, were provided with a hot spot and a VPN was provided for protection.

Mayor Pigatt stressed he wanted to know what the new government looked like in this new situation. He asked City Manager Pate if he wanted to add anything else.

City Manager Pate stated he did not have anything else to add. He also stated he needed to get off due a family emergency. He introduced Assistant City Manager Ellis and informed him that the Commission would be speaking about strategic planning, the 2105 Ali Baba Building and the direction of the department.

Commissioner Kelley requested clarification if the City was going to have the call center within 2 weeks. He also asked if the 2877 number is still being used for questions about masks, social distancing, and those kinds of things.

Director Rodriguez stated he could not say specifically that the call center will be active within 2 weeks but that more or less, that is what he is anticipating. He explained it was his responsibility for phone calls to be directed to the correct personnel.

Commissioner Kelley stated he was referring to the bigger picture such as a number to call related to COVID-19 guidelines, social distancing and things of that nature and if the 2877 number was still being used.

Assistant Manager Ellis asked Director Rodriguez to clarify.

Director Rodriguez stated that number was available 24/7, but it is forwarded to the police department. He stated that using another number without the new technology in place will create confusion.

Mayor Pigatt requested Commissioner Kelley to clarify his point about the caravan and social media.

Commissioner Kelley stressed the importance of having a caravan, giving out masks, and giving out flyers among other things. He asked Ms. Modkins about the tentative date for the caravan.

Ms. Modkins explained that due to rain percentages, it has been delayed. She explained the tentative date for next Saturday was canceled as a result of the high percentage of rain, and that the tentative date is for the following Saturday.

Commissioner Kelley suggested having the caravan on a weekday as well. He stated he will be there on Saturday next week.

Mayor Pigatt stated weekdays would be difficult.

Vice Mayor Davis stated he was available for either a weekday or on Saturday.

Commissioner Bass stated she would prefer Saturday afternoon, but that she would be available either way.

Commissioner Burke stated he had open availability.

Mayor Pigatt asked Ms. Modkins if she had any other questions.

Ms. Modkins provided her report on last week's public relations efforts including the Opa-locka Youth Campaign, social media outreach, press releases on food drives, the Commission's virtual training, Census Day, and CBS' interview with Commissioner Kelly on Opa-locka's commitment to feeding residents. She will be confirming the caravan date shortly after the meeting adjourns.

Mayor Pigatt asked if anyone else had any other words or concerns regarding COVID-19.

Commissioner Bass requested a report from the Police Department as it relates to COVID-19 testing.

Assistant Manager Ellis explained that those police officers who had tested positive were able to be off duty and those who had been around those testing positive were tested.

Mayor Pigatt explained the City has done everything possible to feed and protect residents during this difficult time and stressed the importance of continuing to reach out to the residents. He asked Assistant Manager Ellis to introduce the strategic plan to continue the report.

Assistant Manager Ellis asked Public Works Director Austin to address the parks concern brought up by Commissioner Kelley.

Mayor Pigatt asked if he was just going to address Ingram Park as part of strategic planning.

Assistant Manager Ellis stated he would be speaking about Ingram Park and the Cultural Arts Center.

Commissioner Kelley stated he wanted to talk mainly about the Cultural Arts Center, as it is a time sensitive issue. He requested to know what the City Manager was planning to do with that building.

Vice Mayor Davis stated he was concerned with the Parks & Recreation Department and what Commissioner Kelley stated.

Mayor Pigatt stated he wanted to be sure the conversation about Ingram Park and the strategic plan was part of a comprehensive plan of the City's resources and its parks. He introduced Assistant Manager Ellis.

Assistant Manager Ellis requested Director Austin to speak about Ingram Park.

Director Austin explained Ingram Park obtained a piggyback bid which was coming forward at the next meeting, to finish the replacement of the roofing. He explained that he has submitted all requested forms to Miami-Dade County to start the lighting project and he hoped it would be done by November of this year. He also reported the building at 2105 Ali Baba was 37% complete.

Commissioner Kelley asked Director Austin if he was at the point where he needed to know what the Commission wants to do with the space at the 2105 Building.

Director Austin stated "Yes."

Commissioner Kelley requested to know if the information provided by citizens a couple of years ago regarding that building was still available, as they were requesting computers, and assistance to residents, among other things.

Assistant Manager Ellis stated he was not familiar with that information but that he will be asking Mr. Gay to provide more information.

Mr. Gay explained that a memo was provided to the Manager regarding that meeting held 2 years ago. He stated that he provided bullet points on some of the things the community talked about.

Commissioner Kelley asked if the Manager had received any of that information.

Assistant Manager Ellis stated he has not and he asked Mr. Gay if he had sent that information.

Mr. Gay stated that information was sent prior to the City Manager being appointed to the position.

Commissioner Kelley stated it was important to provide direction while they are building. He was hoping a general idea could be set in place during the meeting and he wanted to have his colleagues input on it.

Mayor Pigatt recalled it was two years ago, stating that there were only a few participants. He shared what he recalled was discussed during that meeting and related to social security services for the residents. He wanted to have the input of staff, as well as know the space available for the City to be able to create a martial arts room, a game room, and a classroom, among other things.

Commissioner Bass asked what about the Police Department.

Mayor Pigatt stated that was a good point but it might be too small for them.

Commissioner Burke shared that the Police Department was in that building before. He stated the Police Department should be in a stand-alone building.

Assistant Manager Ellis shared that was indeed a building for the youth academy of the police department and it was used as an outpost or substation.

Vice Mayor Davis agreed the need for a Police Department building had to be addressed. He stated one of the points of concerns for Kabul Park was the bathrooms. He also stressed the importance of garbage pickup at the park.

Commissioner Burke asked Vice Mayor Davis if he was saying he was requesting bathrooms at the Set Center to be used by the Park.

Vice Mayor Davis stated he believed every Park should have a bathroom.

Commissioner Bass asked Vice Mayor Davis if he was suggesting that some of the services that were provided at the Set Center should be a part of Ingram Park.

Vice Mayor Davis stated he was referring to the Kaboom Tot Lot having bathrooms.

Commissioner Bass asked Director Austin if the work being done at Ingram Park will be completed by November.

Director Austin stated that he hoped to get the work started by November. He stated the bathroom roof will be completed before November, but the light project would be started by November.

Commissioner Bass asked if he had a tentative date that the Park would be re-open.

Director Austin stated that not at the time.

Mayor Pigatt asked if anyone else would like to see a comprehensive plan for the City's parks.

Commissioner Bass stated of course.

Vice Mayor Davis stated he would like to see a comprehensive plan for the parks and the entire City as a whole.

Mayor Pigatt stressed having a plan to utilize the resources of the City fully for the benefit of the residents.

Commissioner Kelley stated staff needed to be given directions. He suggested focusing the discussion on the time sensitive nature for the building at 2105. He stated he heard a discussion about a set activities or the police department being at the building in question. He asked if the funds could be used in the building or if there were restrictions.

Mayor Pigatt requested Assistant Manager Ellis to answer the question along with what is budgeted to be done at that building.

Assistant Manager Ellis referred the question to Director Austin.

Director Austin stated the funding was obtained with the premise that the facility was going to be used as a community center. He stated there were no implied restrictions except for meeting the deadline for the renovation.

Commissioner Kelley asked for clarification on whether the funds could be used for the building to be used by the police department.

Director Austin stated he needed to ask CBDG and get clarification.

Commissioner Kelley stressed that was a major question. He asked Assistant Manager Ellis for the projected dollar amount and the square footage.

Assistant Manager Ellis explained that there have been several organizations reaching out to use the building and they would take care of the upkeep. He asked for clarification on whether he was requesting the operational or renovation budget.

Mayor Pigatt asked how much the City had budgeted to operate and do something in that building. He stated he was thinking in terms of moving forward, after renovations.

Assistant Manager Ellis stated that moving forward, some of the non-profits have offered services, if there was not enough funding in the City's budget to operate it. He stated those were just options on the table that are being considered but not approved.

Mayor Pigatt asked Assistant Manager Ellis if the City Manager was going to choose an organization that approached them.

Assistant Manager Ellis stated that was not correct. He clarified that these organization have approached the Office of the City Manager and a decision has not been made. He stressed that the City has no budget for running the building at this time.

Mayor Pigatt suggested figuring out what to do with the building and clarify what decision the Commission wanted to make. He asked if they wanted the input from the Commission and the community documented.

Commissioner Burke stated that this discussion should have been had with City Manager Pate present, as it was only fair and necessary.

Commissioner Kelley stated that the purpose of the meeting was to get the ideas from the Commissioners and that he wanted to be clear on any restrictions so that the ideas would fall within those parameter. He asked Director Austin to have that information by next meeting.

Director Austin stated he will have an answer by the following day.

Commissioner Kelley stated that the Commissioners need to be sure in order to make a determination and clear decision on what is desired of the building and whether non-profits should be engaged. He suggested moving the discussion to next week.

Commissioner Bass requested the answer on the restrictions as soon as possible.

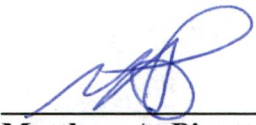
Vice Mayor Davis shared his experience with CDBG funds and stated they usually do not have much wiggle room.

Assistant Manager Ellis agreed with Vice Mayor Davis and stated a definite answer will be given the following day. He stated that he believed the City Manager was looking forward to the Park Summit to gather the information from the community.

Mayor Pigatt requested a memo which clearly detailed what the facility could be used for, the capacity, the square footage, what it would cost the City in maintenance, the non-profit options, the City's ability to staff the center, how would it be connected to other centers and how it would impact the COVID-19 realities. He encouraged the Manager's office to speak individually with the Commissioners to better understand those details and ideas, in order to be clear moving forward.

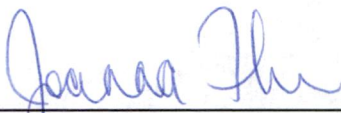
7. ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the City Commission, it was moved by Commissioner Burke, seconded by Vice Mayor Davis to adjourn the workshop meeting at 7:03 p.m.



Matthew A. Pigatt
Mayor

Attest:



Joanna Flores, CMC
City Clerk