

Town of Melbourne Beach

TOWN COMMISSION WORKSHOP

**WEDNESDAY, September 2, 2020, 6:00 p.m.
MASNY ROOM, 507 OCEAN AVENUE**

MINUTES

Commission Members:

Mayor Jim Simmons

Vice Mayor Wyatt Hoover

Commissioner Steve Walters

Commissioner Sherrie Quarrie

Commissioner Corey Runte

Staff Members:

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro

Town Clerk Jennifer Torres

Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr

1. Call to Order

Mayor Simmons called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

Mayor Jim Simmons
Vice Mayor Wyatt Hoover
Commissioner Sherrie Quarrie
Commissioner Corey Runte

Staff Present:

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro
Town Clerk Jennifer Torres
Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr

Commissioners Absent:

Commissioner Steve Walters

3. Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

Led by Mayor Simmons

4. Public Comment

Dan Brunger
400 6th Ave.

Mr. Brunger said he heard there was some theft of the recently issued beach parking decals and suggested residents “score” them to keep them from being stolen.

Thijs Stelling
902 Oak Street

Mr. Stelling said that upon his return from vacation he learned of the proposed RV/Boat Ordinance. He expressed frustration that this issue is back because he thought it was already settled. He didn’t agree with separating the boats and RVs in the Ordinance because boats can be just as big as RVs. Mr. Stelling also mentioned receiving a letter in March which he proceeded to hand out and said many people who received this letter made financial decisions based on it.

Mayor Simmons said he needed to clarify the issue. The motion made in March was for the Town Attorney to develop an Ordinance. It was then sent to Planning & Zoning for a non-binding recommendation. So despite what the letter says – the Town Commission did not pass the changes – only permission for the Town Manager to authorize the Town Attorney to draft an Ordinance. He said the second reading of the draft Ordinance will be at the September 16 RTCM.

*Judith Neal
316 Banyan Way*

Ms. Neal said she moved to Melbourne Beach five years ago – looking for a home where they could park their RV and were told they could have the Fifth Wheel they own on their property. She said none of her neighbors have complained and when Mr. Stelling let her know about the proposed Ordinance she wanted to come and say that she was opposed to being told what she can do with her property and what she can't.

Mayor Simmons said she should not have listened to the Realtor – instead she should have contacted someone from the Town because that wasn't the code.

Commissioner Runte asked Ms. Neal to clarify that she is in favor of increasing the length of RVs to 45- feet and therefore in favor of the Ordinance – and she said yes.

*Deborah Marchese
310 1st Avenue*

Mr. Marchese said there are a lot of trailers and cargo trailers sitting out by the road and nothing is done about that.

5. Presentation

A. Presentation on beach re-nourishment by Michael McGarry of Brevard County Natural Resources Management

Mr. McGarry discussed how the recent decision of the Town Commission to create resident-only permitted parking at the Town dune crossovers may have possible effects on funding local beach re-nourishment projects.

He shared a series of before and after photos to demonstrate how beach re-nourishment has significantly improved local beaches after various storms and reminded the Town that without beach re-nourishment, the area would be significantly less attractive which would affect the Town's tax base.

He explained that the recent decision of the Town to create resident-only parking in certain areas could make the area ineligible for beach re-nourishment funding because it impacts the federal funding which he said requires beach parking access to remain public and that the Town is free to charge for parking – but they must allow residents and non-residents access to the parking permits.

In the current budget he said there is about \$12 million dollars for re-nourishment and that while Ocean Park is currently open to the public, it

still counts as public accessible, but with the current resident-only permit parking at the dunes that makes 43-percent of the Town's shoreline ineligible for funding – amounting to about \$1.8 million. He said he realizes the Town never signed on the dotted line and agreed to certain terms that would keep beach parking public, however, the Town was very supportive of the project years ago when it was conceived and he hopes the Town agrees the beach has value and the re-nourishment has value. Cocoa Beach and Indialantic charge for parking but structured their program to comply with the program and are therefore eligible for funding.

He went on to explain that normally they won't let you skip areas when they re-nourish – they have to do the whole area. So, in the event they can't reach a resolution with Melbourne Beach it could also affect other areas like Indialantic.

Mayor Simmons asked how the City of Melbourne gets away with not allowing public parking on their beachfront property and instead builds high-rises on it – but they are still eligible for re-nourishment funding.

Mr. McGarry said much of Melbourne Beach is also private such as the Breakers.

Commissioner Runte said there is an easy solution and that is that the Town should simply offer visitor parking passes.

Commissioner Quarrie said we are only talking about eight crossovers and this area is the Town's access and our residents are paying for that.

Further discussion ensued about the issue and possible options.

Mr. McGarry said he was only recently made aware of the newly instituted resident-only parking and wanted to reach out to the Town to try and work through the issue before others have to get involved.

Commissioner Runte suggested that Mr. McGarry talk to his contacts at the County and help them understand that the County has to work better with the Town to enable things to work both ways – because it feels that the county is always asking for things from the Town without ever giving anything back.

Mr. McGarry said he is willing to do what he can but wants the Town to understand he is in a specific department and can likely only do so much to improve the relationship.

Mayor Simmons asked Mr. McGarry, if we went to all paid parking, would residents have to pay as well?

Mr. McGarry said the City of Cocoa Beach phrased their program so that residents pay for their parking through their taxes and non-residents pay a fee.

Vice Mayor Hoover asked how many visitor passes they would have to issue to comply. Mr. McGarry said he did not know the answer to that – but if the intent is clearly seen as one that restricts visitors - that may be an issue. He said he would ask the state if there is a specific number.

Commissioner Runte asked what the deadline is to comply.

Mr. McGarry said it won't be looked at closely until next June when he will have to mark the parking truthfully and submit that to the state. However, if someone from the state comes to Town and sees the signs – resident-only parking – they may take action sooner and that may result in a loss of grant funding, adding that money may even have to be returned.

Vice Mayor Hoover suggested they discuss this issue and possible solutions at the October RTCM.

Mayor Simmons recognized Doug Hilmes, who had raised his hand and said while they do not typically allow public comment at this time but Mr. Hilmes was being insistent so he would allow it.

*Doug Hilmes
443 Riverview Lane*

Mr. Hilmes said that while on a walk he saw Ocean Avenue Park was full but Avenue A and Avenue B were empty. He then discovered all eight accesses were empty with only one car parked. Despite resident passes being handed out, he said no one is using them and suggested the Town sell guest passes and make some money for the Town.

*Deborah Marchese
310 1st Avenue*

Ms. Marchese said she is unhappy that handicapped parking was eliminated. She also said there is not enough room to park on one side of the street and have two-way parking – so they should be made one-way. Also she suggested the Town speak to everyone on those streets because they don't understand what resident-only parking means.

The Mayor thanked Mr. McGarry for coming to the meeting and explaining the situation.

Vice Mayor Hoover said he had a side-issue to discuss. He said the whole county is growing and the population is exploding. These people come to

Brevard's beaches and he thought there should be more traffic mitigation effort on the part of the County. As an example, he proposed offering more of a public transportation network.

Town Manager Mascaro said there once was public transportation offered in this area but very few people used it.

Further discussion ensued about how the County could do more to help the Town of Melbourne Beach.

6. Adjournment


Commissioner Runte moved to adjourn; Commissioner Quarrie seconded; Motion carried 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

ATTEST:



Wyatt Hoover, Mayor



Jennifer Torres, Town Clerk