



TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Office of the Town Clerk

MINUTES OF THE UNDERGROUND UTILITIES TASK FORCE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2016

1 **I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

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3 The Underground Utilities Task Force meeting was called to order on Tuesday, February
4 2, 2016, at 9:02 a.m., in the Town Council Chambers. On roll call, all Task Force
5 Members were found to be present, with the exception of Vice Chair Ross and Task
6 Force Member Gulbrandsen. A quorum was present.

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8 **II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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10 Chair Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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12 **III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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14 Motion was made by Task Force Member Dowell, and seconded by Task Force
15 Member Parker, to approve the agenda. On call for a vote, the motion passed 5-0,
16 with Vice Chair Ross and Task Force Member Gulbrandsen absent.

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18 **IV. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS -- None**

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20 **V. MINUTES**

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22 *(Clerk's Note: The following two items were considered and acted upon simultaneously.)*

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24 A. UUTF Meeting Minutes of December 1, 2015

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26 B. UUTF Meeting Minutes of January 5, 2016

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28 Motion was made by Task Force Member Parker, and seconded by Task Force
29 Member Dowell, to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2015, and January 5,
30 2016, UUTF meetings. On call for a vote, the motion passed 5-0, with Vice Chair
31 Ross and Task Force Member Gulbrandsen absent.

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33 **VI. OVERVIEW OF THE FINAL NON-AD VALOREM ASSESSMENT DATA**

34 *Jane Struder, Director of Finance*

Director Struder provided an overview of the final non-ad valorem assessment data.

VII. UPDATE ON UNDERGROUND UTILITIES PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM WITH REVIEW OF WEBSITE SEARCH FEATURE BY ADDRESS FOR ASSESSMENT COST

Rick Asnani, Cornerstone Solutions

Public Information Consultant Rick Asnani, Cornerstone Solutions, provided an update on the Underground Utilities Public Information Program and a demonstration on the Undergrounding website's cost search tool.

Discussion ensued regarding the information on the "Why Underground Now?" webpage, how the decision as to which properties would receive a credit for already having underground utilities was made, what constitutes a distribution line, some property owners undergrounding utility lines in their backyards for aesthetic reasons, the cost for individual properties to underground their utilities, the effect the Town's data will have on properties currently being developed, lags in property data, the Town's ability to adjust assessments up or down if property data is incorrect or changes, having an assessment appeal process being built into the Project, organized opposition to the Project and what the Town is doing to address their concerns, re-evaluating the assessments every few years, property changes that would affect assessments and how the Town plans on monitoring them, how the Project will hook up to existing underground utilities, pre-payment options and their effect on the financing of the Project, Bond Counsel's recommendation that the Town offer at least one pre-payment option, issuing the bond after the pre-payment window closes, why owners might want to pre-pay their assessments, putting a model hardened pole and transformer on display so voters can visualize their effects, not being able to see how bad the hardened poles will look by looking at just one pole, posting the photos of hardened poles provided to the Town Council in 2014 on the website, the aesthetics of areas in West Palm Beach that have been hardened, properties with generators not receiving a credit towards their assessments, pre-payment option logistics, possibly asking the Town Council to fund the Project design costs upfront and issuing the bonds prior to construction, the Town Council having the final say regarding pre-payment options, avoiding interest charges, and the possibility of FP&L cutting the existing wood utility poles and leaving them up alongside new hardened poles if the Town doesn't underground.

Task Force Member Parker requested copies of the photos depicting where FP&L shortened the wood poles and left them up alongside hardened poles and spoke regarding the need to show voters these pictures.

Discussion continued regarding FP&L's transformer access requirements, the layout of transformers on Everglades Island, having room to landscape transformers, and the Planning and Zoning Commission's current review of landscaping requirements for transformers.

Gerry Frank, 2784 S. Ocean Blvd., spoke regarding the Project including the initial

transformer landscaping, setting the transformers further back from the street, how owners can search the website to determine their assessments, advertising in the Palm Beach Post, whether the hardened poles in the South End of Town will be removed as a part of the Project, advertising that the switch cabinets will be waterproof and that the transformers will be sealed, how changes in a property's assessment might affect other properties' assessments, and advertising the facts that the assessments remain with the property and that they will be paid through property tax bills.

Task Force Member Parker requested that Mr. Frank's questions be added to the website's "Frequently Asked Questions" page.

Discussion ensued regarding the Project including the removal of all poles in the Town and the "One Town" concept.

VIII. TOWN HALL UNDERGROUND UTILITIES PROJECT FORUM

Thomas G. Bradford, Town Manager

A. POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Town Manager Bradford provided his Underground Utilities Project Forum presentation.

B. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION WITH TASK FORCE AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Gerry Frank, 2784 S. Ocean Blvd., spoke regarding posting the presentation online and what will happen if the Project costs are less than \$90 million.

Discussion ensued regarding concerns in the South End related to how flooding might impact buried utility lines, and the fact that all utility lines servicing Palm Beach already run underneath the Intracoastal.

Glenn Robinov, Sun & Surf Condominium General Manager, spoke regarding his residents' concerns that the assessments for condominium owners versus single-family property owners are disproportionate.

Discussion ensued regarding how the assessments were calculated.

Zachary Shipley, 228 Seaspray Ave., Palm Beach Residents for Undergrounding Political Committee, spoke regarding the benefits of undergrounding.

Town Manager Bradford announced that there will be a Town Hall meeting with representatives of the various condominium associations in a few weeks to address their questions and concerns.

Discussion ensued regarding plans in the event of cost overruns, the 20%

**MINUTES OF THE UNDERGROUND UTILITIES TASK FORCE MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2016**

contingency built into the project estimate, factoring in cost of living increases, purchasing materials early on, the amount of time spent on discussing and tweaking the assessment methodology, addressing cost issues, taking advantage of competition among providers, negotiating further with utility providers, changing technologies possibly offering additional cost negotiation leverage, and falling commodity prices.

Zachary Shipley, 228 Seaspray Ave., Palm Beach Residents for Undergrounding Political Committee, spoke regarding cost mitigation through fixed price contracts.

Discussion ensued regarding the 25% project cost credit being provided by FP&L, tariffs, FP&L's Governmental Adjustment Factor, Smart Poles, dead zones along Ocean Boulevard, and including the fact that the Town is considering installation of Smart Poles in conjunction with the Undergrounding Project into the Town's Public Information Program.

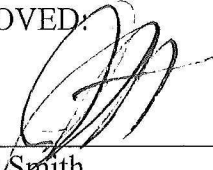
IX. ANY OTHER MATTERS

Town Manager Bradford stated that Staff will remain available after the meeting to answer any questions from the public.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Underground Utilities Task Force Meeting of Tuesday, February 2, 2016, was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

APPROVED:



Jeffery Smith
Chair

ATTEST:



Susan A. Owens, MPA, MMC
Town Clerk

3/1/16
Date