

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 3, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Special Town Council Meeting of January 3, 2022 was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Council President Zeidman. On roll call all Councilmembers were found to be present.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Zeidman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Councilmember Crampton and seconded by Council President Pro Tem Lindsay to approve the agenda. On roll call, the Motion passed unanimously.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS - 3 MINUTE LIMIT

None.

V. REGULAR AGENDA

Council President Zeidman gave an overview of the agenda items. She spoke regarding the quasi-judicial meetings of Architectural Commission (ARCOM), Code Enforcement (CE), and Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and the advisory boards. Jay Boodheshwar, Deputy Town Manager confirmed that all boards/commissions were meeting in person but the public was allowed to participate virtually for ARCOM and LPC. President Zeidman stated that she had been in contact with the Chairs for LPC, ARCOM and CE but not the advisory boards.

A. New Business

1. COVID-19 Situation Update
Kirk W. Blouin, Town Manager

Kirk Blouin, Town Manager gave an update of the COVID-19 situation and spoke regarding the protocols in Town buildings and facilities and stated that all Town facilities will remain open and business will continue as normal. He stated that most of the previous protocols were not removed, so the mask policy remains in effect for both employees and visitors. In an effort to limit the spread of the virus some administrative staff will be working remotely. In the Recreation department, the fitness center will revert to reservations in order to limit the number of people in the center.

a. Concurrence with and Extension of the Chief of Police's Declaration of a Local State of Emergency

Manager Blouin announced that the Chief of Police has issued a State of Emergency for the Town of Palm Beach which will allow the flexibility to conduct some meetings virtually.

President Zeidman stated that the positivity rate in the County as of last Friday was 30% and hospitalizations were increasing. She explained that the Omicron variant was extremely contagious but it does not make you very sick. She also pointed out that the 30% positivity rate was not accurate as a lot of people were doing at-home testing and the results are not reported to the FL Dept. of Health. She stated that there were a lot of breakthrough infections in people who are vaccinated and boosted and that the CDC now considers full vaccination to include the booster shot. She spoke regarding protecting ourselves and others, proper mask wearing and the different types of masks that should be worn.

Manager Blouin stated that the Chief of Police has issued the Declaration of Emergency which will remain in effect if the Town Council so agrees.

b. RESOLUTION NO. 009-2022 A Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, Extending the Chief of Police's Declaration of the Existence of a State of Emergency Within the Corporate Limits of the Town to January 11, 2022, Unless Earlier Terminated by the Chief of Police, at Which Time the Town Council Will Address the Need for Any Extension of the Declaration of Emergency; Providing for an Effective Date.

John C. Randolph, Town Attorney read the Resolution by title.

Motion was made by Councilmember Crampton and seconded by Council President Zeidman to approve Resolution No. 009-2022. On roll call, the Motion passed unanimously.

At the urging of Councilmember Cooney, President Zeidman informed all that on May 3, 2021 the Governor by Executive Order limited the actions local municipalities are able to take regarding emergencies. The Town Council will not issue any orders for curfews or to close the beaches.

c. Discussion Regarding Public Meetings

President Zeidman suggested grouping the meetings as follows: Advisory Boards, Quasi-Judicial Boards and Town Council for discussion.

After lengthy discussion and with advice from Town Attorney Randolph, it was decided as follows:

Advisory Boards/Committees: Will meet virtually until February 8, 2022
Quasi-Judicial Boards: Will meet virtually until February 8, 2022, but any applicant may request a deferral if they are not comfortable presenting their applications virtually.

Motion was made by Councilmember Cooney and seconded by Councilmember Crampton to require Town Advisory and Quasi-Judicial Boards to hold meetings via Zoom until the February 8, 2022 Town Council Meeting. On roll call, the Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Jimmy Zisson, 3400 S. Ocean Blvd., spoke regarding various healthcare experts who will be able to advise the Town Council if necessary. In response to Mr. Zisson, President Zeidman stated that Dr. Scheppke, Head of EMS and Deputy Surgeon General for the State of Florida and Dr. David Dodson, Infectious Disease Specialist have advised the Town Council regarding medical matters.

Mayor Moore spoke regarding the Town Council as a governing body that is most effective when present in person but will support whatever decision is made.

Councilmember Crampton expressed his agreement with Mayor Moore and commented on the legal effect of decisions being made by the Town Council.

Council President Pro Tem Lindsay expressed her agreement with in-person meetings of the Town Council.

Councilmember Araskog spoke regarding having the Town Council meetings virtually and if applicants for Development Review were not comfortable presenting virtually, they may request a deferral.

Deputy Town Manager Boodheshwar stated that it is possible to have presenters participate via Zoom.

Councilmember Cooney stated he was comfortable with whatever decision is made.

Motion was made by Council President Pro Tem Lindsay and seconded by Council President Zeidman to hold the January 11, 2022 Town Council Meeting in person, wearing masks properly and not having lunch together with the public participating via Zoom. For the Development Review meeting, applicants will participate via Zoom and there will be no charge for deferrals. On roll call, the Motion passed unanimously.

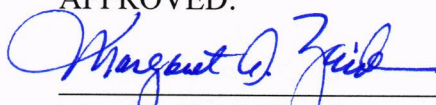
VI. ANY OTHER MATTERS

Council President Zeidman expressed her appreciation to the Palm Beach Police and Fire Foundation for acquiring 2500 COVID-19 Rapid Antigen test kits to be administered to Town residents by the Palm Beach Fire Rescue. The testing will be carried out on Tuesday and Thursday and appointments can be made online.

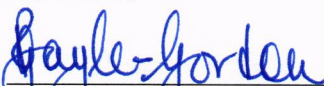
VII. ADJOURNMENT

The Special Town Council Meeting of January 3, 2022 was adjourned at 3:55 p.m. without benefit of a Motion.

APPROVED:


Margaret A. Zeidman, Town Council President

ATTEST:



Pat Gayle-Gordon, Acting Town Clerk



Date

