

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE STUART CITY COMMISSION
HELD ON JANUARY 31, 2011
AT 9:00 A.M. IN THE CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
121 S.W. FLAGLER AVE.
STUART, FLORIDA 34994**

**Mayor Jeffrey Krauskopf
Vice Mayor James Christie Jr.
Commissioner Michael Mortell
Commissioner Eula R. Clarke
Commissioner Troy A. McDonald**

**Also in attendance were:
City Manager Dan Hudson
City Attorney Paul J. Nicoletti
City Clerk Cheryl White**

Mayor Krauskopf delivered the Invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by the Commission.

General Overview of Stuart City Government – City Manager

City Manager Dan Hudson Gave a general overview of the meeting. He invited the Commission to ask questions and be interactive. He presented a visual presentation to the Commission.

Legal and Constitutional Framework for Municipalities – City Attorney

City Attorney Paul Nicoletti gave a visual presentation on Legal terms, and the laws regulating City's and Commissioner's.

Discussion of Goals and Priorities - Mayor

Mayor Krauskopf asked the new City Commissioners what they would like to accomplish in the next two years, so we can help you, and what things we are looking to accomplish.

Commissioner Clarke: She would like to get more involved with the entire CRA in the downtown and going into other neighborhoods. She also wants to look at easement boundaries in the City, like behind homes. She would like to discuss working on cleaning up those easements of the native plants. This will attract more birds, keep them clear and safe. She feels the CRA needs to work with everything, streets drainage in the areas of the downtown and South of Martin Luther King, going all the way to the end near 10th Street Park. She also wants to look at having a good plan for the 10th Street Park.

Commissioner McDonald: Keep Stuart the business center of Martin County, working toward bringing the Constitutional offices to downtown. He also wants to identify what properties are available or vacant in the City, and get the word out to the business community, through both the, Business Development Board, and the Chamber of Commerce. He also wants to look at properties within the CRA to see what we can do to help.

Have Stuart push the County to bring the U.S. Customs Office to Martin County. He felt it would be very beneficial to our Marine Industry. Work on environmental aspects, to stop releases of the water Lake Okeechobee. He felt that now would be the time to revise the building codes to enhance or create incentives, for contractors or building owners, to make their buildings greener or environmentally sensitive.

Commissioner Mortell: Stated he was contacted by the people from the P.A.C.E. program, LEEDS Environmental. Their purpose is to set up grant money, loans. He said he can have them contact the City for a future presentation. He also stated that his idea of keeping Stuart a vital location is to remind people that it is the County seat. He also said he has been focusing on the train station, which could produce a customs office. He said the one thing that still comes up is that if the City of Stuart wants to be a destination, then the reality is it needs a hotel that is a resort style hotel and not an overnight hotel. We have talked about the Waterfront, and the Dockside. There is resistance to go out and do an RFP. I still feel very strongly that if Stuart wants to reinvent itself, and create itself as a destination, and be a business and tourist destination, and if don't do that then we are going to miss it. At some point we should look at RFP to see what's out there, and if we get good ideas send that out and work with the community.

Commissioner Clarke asked that the City look at a whole master plan for public use, and all of the City property along the waterfront. She said the City should focus on City owned property.

Vice Mayor Christie: Said for the next two years he wants to focus on older neighborhoods in the City. He felt the City had a good partnership with Habitat and he wants to continue in that direction with green building. Hoping to work with some of the youth's organizations in the City, and keep young families involved in the government process.

Mayor Krauskopf stated that his goals are mainly financial. He wants to look at how to be better financially, for the benefit of the citizens. He wants to keep the millage within an operating band so there are no big spikes. He said the City has always tried to assure the citizens of that continuity. He also wants to see betterments in Capital Improvements. Generally where we have had them in years past was the City was blessed with a 1 cent sales tax, and has benefitted the City enormously. Grants have allowed the City to produce many environmental projects. He also noted the good financial effects of the City's property management fund. He stated the City of Stuart is on record that they will only annex only for infill, and that we are not trying to take over Palm City or points South right now. We should focus on a magnet, a hotel or a destination down here that will help reinvigorate the 25 year cycle that is starting to show up now in vacancies. "One of the items I have tried to do is look at the deficiencies. The best thing we did was pull all of the budget numbers forward six months earlier, to stay ahead of everything financially. He felt the sales tax would be good this year, but felt Ad valorem would suffer. He said the City needs to build an environmental presence and a stronger one at the Florida League of Cities. He asked the City Manager to begin calendaring Troy and Eula to attend some of the governmental education seminars. He said if the City begins to start thinking about filling empty store front then he suggested linking up with local Realtors. He suggested the Commissioners consider attending the Council of Shopping Centers in Orlando next year. This will put the City in touch with those people who are looking for space and will put the Commissioners or City staff in the retail thought process, which is healthy.

Commissioner McDonald felt it would be beneficial if a City Commissioner approached retail rather than a Realtor.

City Manager Hudson expressed concern over the funding shortfalls in training of City staff, and asked the City to consider this year what level of training can be reestablished.

Mayor Krauskopf stated he would be looking at environmental acquisitions, and hopefully adds to the environmental portfolio. He said he recently visited Boynton Beach and they have large boardwalks, as we have done with Haney Creek. He said the City may want to keep that environmental presence that may not really be the right place for Development. I personally am involved with some of the condos along Palm City Road, trying to deal with traffic volume and calming, and hopefully will come back to the City Commission at a future date.

He gave a visual presentation to the Commission of the Ad Valorem Food Pyramid, as far as the City's concerned.

Mayor Mortell asked the audience if they have any questions.

Gail Byrd stated she was excited to hear their thinking, continued thinking and the plan for the City, and business community. She recently visited St. Augustine where the downtown is strictly a walking pedestrian friendly area, with parking nearby. She said I think your ideas are right on.

Dottie Zaharako, Financial Services Director stated the City has been challenged ever since the State imposed Mandatory cutbacks in the Ad Valorem 4 years ago. She said the City will experience a lag by one year once the economy picks up.

Betty Smith stated that Conquistador Condominiums is in the County, but they are supplied with City Water and Sewer and are very pleased and comforted with the services.

Terry O'Neil, Interim Development Director, looking at home occupational offices, and property conversions. He stated they are also looking at vacant land and what its development potential.

Mayor Krauskopf asked how the hiatus on Code Enforcement was coming along, and how are we working on that?

Terry O'Neil stated that they are working on the matter. He said Code Enforcement has gone back and taken stock of our program, particularly in the neighborhoods, particularly with issues of parking on grass, motor homes, trucks, vehicles, and other things. He stated they will be coming back to the Commission with a compromise or rather a code for people to reach compliance, more so than we have now, but without abandoning the aesthetics, and the maintenance of the community that we need to do with our Code Enforcement.

Sam Amerson stated the Commission mentioned the CRA and Redevelopment, which he feels is a key issue, and they have been somewhat active with that including Memorial Park. This will include on street parking. He also mentioned providing Water and Sewer to those people who have to rely upon septic systems. He noted Frazier Addition and that it was very successful. He stated they have been very successful with grant funding. He also stated that he is now responsible for overseeing the Community Services Department,

including Parks and Recreation. "We are going to reestablish the Advisory Committee which has been inactive over the last two years, and we are hoping to develop a master plan for the Guy Davis Field."

Fire Chief Sunderman noted the City and County are working toward an update to the Mutual Aid agreement.

City Manager Hudson said they are working on the agreement with Martin County Fire Rescue, and should have something back to the Commission in about 3 months or so. He noted they do have some analysis ready on the County Administrative Offices, and spoke briefly with the County Administrator on Friday. He stated the County Administrator would just assume the City do the evaluation of properties, and then communicate to the County what our recommendation is on the lead property for the County Office Building. He said it is ready to schedule for a February workshop meeting.

Commissioner Clarke asked when it comes to extending the CRA, what is happening as far as communicating with the residents, and how do we get these people on board?

She also noted the City of Royal Palm Beach, and noted where they had many code enforcement issues, and I think they got some kind of a grant, where they actually received funds to provide to those violators which would allow them to come into compliance. This was a work together thing to improve the community. I would like to explore that myself or have Development explore that.

City Manager Hudson said he would look into that, and call Royal Palm Beach, and address this when they bring the Code Enforcement matter to the Commission. He also noted the dialogue between the City and East Stuart has been a perennial problem. The ownership patterns, and there are a handful of people who control a lot of the property. He stated they have been reluctant to facilitate development in that area. He said that in the past year the owner of the property adjacent to the Police Department was approached to have discussions regarding setting up the office for East Stuart Main Street. He said that it went along a little ways then the conversations just stopped. He said as you know the City no longer has eminent domain power for economic development.

Vice Mayor Christie suggested a town meeting setting in the neighborhood to try and get them interested again to do something with their properties.

Commissioner Clarke suggested holding neighborhood meetings to walk or drive the neighborhoods, and get out there and talk to the people. One of my things I want to implement as a Commissioner is a Town Hall Meeting with different neighborhoods, so I can get out there and hear and meet people in various neighborhoods.

City Manager Hudson mentioned in the past the neighborhood cleanup, which is a great way to get a Commissioner, involved getting out and meeting people. He said that because of the departmental changes in the City it creates challenges, but will work on that.

Commissioner Clarke expressed concern that there needs to be a Community Center for the seniors. The City does not have a Senior Services Center within the City, and maybe look at setting up a program with Recreation where we know people are going to have access to some of the facilities at the Charlie Keen Center, not just on their own but something that is provided through the City so they know that a bus can run out there for

the Senior, through the Council on Aging, so we can have that kind of thing for people who are more disadvantages to go to the Senior Services Center.

City Manager Hudson said he would look into that.

Mayor Krauskopf stated that in an over view Fire disagreement has been ongoing since the mid 1980's. He said the County chose to reach contractual agreements with all the cities in the County except Stuart. Because what they wanted was the underlying base ad valorem, of which they could apply a millage rate to, and at that point we had no control of our cost.

Commissioner McDonald noted reaching out to the Economic Council and felt that was a great idea. I think we need to make sure the business community knows the City of Stuart is here to do business. He suggested maybe sponsoring a networking breakfast with the Chamber.

Commissioner Clarke noted she was downtown over the weekend, and stated the Arts is a very important and good thing for the City. She encouraged continuing that in the City. She noted that many people who attended the event were from Port St Lucie, so it shows Stuart is a destination.

ADJOURNMENT 11:25 A.M.

ATTEST:

Cheryl White, CMC, City Clerk

Jeffrey A. Krauskopf, Mayor

**Minutes to be approved at the Regular Commission
Meeting This 14th Day February 2011.**