

Town of Melbourne Beach

TOWN COMMISSION WORKSHOP March 6, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. COMMUNITY CENTER – 509 OCEAN AVENUE

MINUTES

Commission Members:

Mayor Alison Dennington

Vice Mayor Sherri Quarrie

Commissioner Corey Runte

Commissioner Marivi Walker

Commissioner Adam Meyer

Staff Members:

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro

Town Clerk Amber Brown

1. Call to Order

Mayor Alison Dennington called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Town Clerk Amber Brown conducted roll call.

Commission Members Present

Mayor Alison Dennington

Vice Mayor Sherri Quarrie

Commissioner Corey Runte

Commissioner Marivi Walker

Commissioner Adam Meyer

Staff Members Present

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro

Building Official Robert Bitgood

Public Works Director Tom Davis

Town Clerk Amber Brown

3. Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

Mayor Alison Dennington led the Pledge of Allegiance. She then had a Moment of Silence for a resident who had passed.

4. New Business

Vice Mayor Sherri Quarrie made a motion to switch the order of new business item A and item B, Commissioner Corey Runte seconded, all in favor 5-0

~~A. Discuss traffic calming devices.~~

B. Discuss the rules and procedures of the Parks Board.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about sections within the Town Code related to establishing advisory boards and also the Parks Board (passed in 1987) Article VIII section 11-90 through 11-94. Does not feel the language and spirit of the code has been adhered to. Would like to utilize the Parks Board to vet any changes to the parks.

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about staying on topic and discussing the Parks Board not the Public Works Department.

Vice Mayor Sherri Quarrie spoke about the agenda items that were tabled at the last Commission meeting and the agenda item did not include the Public Works Department.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how the Parks Board and Public Works Department are intrinsically combined.

Commissioner Corey Runte asked what the goal of this agenda item is.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about the Town has not been using the Parks Board as much as required. Would like to have parameters that any changes to the parks are first vetted by the Parks Board and then the Commission.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about being the administrator of the Town so the Public Works Department reports to her. The Town's interpretation of this is that the Parks Board looks into enhancing the parks. She does not answer to the Parks Board. The Parks Board should not be involved in the daily operations of the parks.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about specifically wanting changes to the park to go through the Parks Board, not daily operations. Suggested creating a policy of what things need to go to the Parks Board to be vetted then submit a recommendation to the Commission.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about being okay with having a list of items that would and would not need to go to the Parks Board.

Dawn Barlow, Chairperson of the Parks Board spoke about how looking at the ordinance related to the Parks Board mainly breaks it up into two categories: events and park enhancements. There are a lot of entities that have events in the park. What else is going on in the parks? There is an opportunity to use the Parks Board more, and increase transparency, public involvement, and allow the Parks Board to vet things.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about liking the idea of vision planning and having meetings around that.

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about wanting to increase communication, a matrix of shared responsibility, because there is going to be crossover between all departments.

Vice Mayor Sherri Quarrie said that there are things that need to be addressed, such as playground equipment and veterans memorial, that takes over a year to figure out. Wants to have the focus on big projects first and thinks the primary function should be focusing on the big stuff.

Dawn Barlow, Chairperson of the Parks Board, spoke about the Board being happy to run with things, but what are the other items that are in the works? Part of this is to understand what the priorities are and what is already being worked on.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how having Parks Board meetings would make the park information accessible to all residents, including newer ones. The original creation of Public Works was passed in 1977, 2017 prior manager proposed getting rid of Public Works.

Recess 6:43-6:48 (45:00)

Mayor Alison Dennington stated she did not wish to get rid of Public Works and if there is ambiguity in the code to address it. Having more meetings amongst the volunteer groups would be cheaper and keep the main meetings and workshops shorter.

Town Clerk Amber Brown conducted roll call.

Commission Members Present

Mayor Alison Dennington
Vice Mayor Sherri Quarrie
Commissioner Corey Runte
Commissioner Marivi Walker
Commissioner Adam Meyer

Staff Members Present

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro
Building Official Robert Bitgood
Public Works Director Tom Davis
Town Clerk Amber Brown

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about wanting a structured goal-oriented meeting. He had very concrete recommendations. He recommends having a responsibility matrix, delineate responsibility between Public Works and Parks and Rec, Parks Board sets up a resident prioritization workshop, list of prioritizations from the Board, monthly meeting with the Town Manager.

Heidi Brewer, Parks Board Member, spoke about hearing a lot of unity in the discussion and is excited to be involved, and it seems people are on the same page.

Commissioner Marivi Walker spoke about wanting to look into the items that the Town has been putting aside, does not think there is enough money put aside yet, but to start the process.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about an example, the Veteran's Memorial Park because it was not budgeted, so there needs to be a vision, plan, a cost idea, and then there can be a budget. If there's not enough money to do it in the first year, it can be done over two years.

Commissioner Adam Meyer spoke about liking the responsibility matrix, and a big item to add is that physical changes to the parks go to the Parks Board, what events go to them, they have a budget, how should it be spent.

Dawn Barlow, Chairperson of the Parks Board, asked about setting up a meeting with the Town Manager and then taking the appropriate steps.

Haley Conrad, Parks Board Member, there is a missing piece to this, how does the Parks Board find out about things they should be doing? When the Commission says take an item and run with it, what does that mean? What if someone outside of the Parks Board has an idea, does that go to the Parks Board? This communication was the goal of this meeting.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about the Parks Board coming up with a vision and plan then bringing it to the Town Manager to go over the details, then it gets presented to the Commission.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how no matter where the idea comes from, it should be vetted by the Parks Board. When the Parks Board makes recommendations then they should have descriptive minutes to provide to the Commission, or if someone can attend the meeting do that.

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about how the Parks Board wants to be involved and that is a good problem to have. The Town Manager needs to be the point person for both the Parks Board and the Town Commission.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about the responsibility matrix to clarify who has what responsibilities, but must include that changes to parks go to Parks Board, and clarifies which events/budget concerns go to the Parks Board.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about the mention of the crossovers and that they're considered maintenance. As far as the long-standing events, they should not need to ask the Parks Board, but need to be able to coordinate efforts and have respect for all of the events.

Julie Samuels, Parks Board Member, spoke about how the special event application caused hiccups, it needs to be the same for everyone. There is a signature spot on the special event application, but the Parks Board does not receive them. If an event is large enough to have a banner then it should go to the Parks Board. People ask her all the time when an event is and she has to ask town staff.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about how the size of the event determines the added needs such as porta potties and police.

Commissioner Corey Runte said that long standing events should not need to be reviewed in a Commission meeting, but they all should be treated the same way.

Commissioner Marivi Walker said that if there is a signature spot for the Parks Board then it should either be filled out or removed from the form.

Mayor Alison Dennington suggested that the Town Manager create a policy that will include a list of events already established and what events will not need to come to the Commission for approval. They do require signatures from the various Boards so they are aware that the events are happening.

Commissioner Marivi Walker spoke about how a shared calendar that all the Boards have access to should be sufficient.

Haley Conrad, Parks Board Member, spoke about quality control and how it is not a bad idea to have another entity look at the packet to acknowledge when an event is. If the Parks Board signature is removed, then the ordinance needs to be changed because it says the Parks Board will review special events.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how it is an option to contact the Town on a monthly basis to ask if there are any new special event applications.

Town Clerk Amber Brown clarified the packets are not online, because the Town Commission did not want additional special events.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro spoke about from the Town's standpoint the long-standing Town events have not been considered special events.

Mayor Alison Dennington said it was important to define the difference between Town events and special events.

C. Discuss traffic calming devices (1:33:55)

Commissioner Marivi Walker spoke about how there have been changes since the removal of stop signs. The entire Town needs traffic calming. The paving and curbing is going to be happening and that project needs to include traffic calming.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about disallowing the discussion of this, but it is a workshop not an official meeting, so she called for a recess before determining if this topic should be discussed.

Recess 7:46 pm to 7:54 pm (1:43:42)

Town Clerk Amber Brown conducted roll call

Commission Members Present

Mayor Alison Dennington
Vice Mayor Sherri Quarrie
Commissioner Corey Runte
Commissioner Marivi Walker
Commissioner Adam Meyer

Staff Members Present

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro
Building Official Robert Bitgood
Public Works Director Tom Davis
Town Clerk Amber Brown

Commissioner Marivi Walker spoke about wanting to hear feedback from the residents, then discuss doing a professional study.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about wanting to listen to the residents first.

Kate Wilborn – 502 Second - Spoke about how Riverside Drive is a gift to everyone. She is so glad the stop signs were taken down so you don't have to worry about hitting a bumper, the speed bumps are really hard on cars, when people feel punished they get disgruntled.

Aaron Anderson – 901 Riverside Drive - Spoke about being in favor of slowing the traffic on Riverside. Anyone who thinks there is not a problem has their head in the sand. Stop signs were not necessarily the right solution. Respects his neighbors and anything that causes noise is not ideal, but something needs to be done or someone will get hurt.

Haley Conrad – 2011 Oak St – Spoke about agreeing with the holistic way of traffic calming for the entire town as noticed from the 2 traffic crashes this week. Turn the crosswalk at Ocean and Pine into a school zone to lower the speed limit to 15 mph. Find creative ways to accomplish slowing traffic and beautify the Town at the same time. Licensed professional civil engineer to do a study. Another idea is to lower the speed limit on Riverside Drive.

Commissioner Marivi Walker spoke about wanting to wait to see what the options are and hire someone for traffic consulting.

Dawn Barlow – 1710 Pine St - Spoke about the new installation of speed limit sign on A1A was wondering what has the effect of that been since installation. She looks at that as a calming device, and would be interested in comparing that to the more holistic approach.

Commissioner Corey Runte said it is too early for data.

Mayor Alison Dennington reiterated needing to let all public comments be made first.

Todd Albert – 1710 Pine St - Spoke about in other communities, speed bumps do not work. What does work is a police car being at the intersection. When he first moved here he was told Melbourne Beach was a speed trap, but we have gotten away from that. Indialantic has a good idea when you come down Riverside Drive traffic is slowed down from 35 to 25. Melbourne Beach should slow it down from 25 to 20. The most dangerous point on Riverside Drive is the corner at Ocean and Riverside. He wants to see Melbourne Beach become a speed trap again. Another idea is to have Pine a one-way and Orange a one-way and Avenue A and Avenue B. Everyone will protest, but it could help.

Rebecca Stevens – 610 Atlantic St - Acknowledges being conscious of slowing down at points where there is a police officer or the signs that take pictures of license plates. She may not know if that information is going anywhere but still makes her slow down. She believes those signs might be something to think about for the Town.

Julie Samuels – 2320 South River Road - Spoke about how she used to live on Orange and she would protest if it was a one way street. The quickest cheapest way to slow people down is to write tickets.

Aaron Anderson – 901 Riverside Dr - Spoke about how he emailed the police chief, asked for a public records request for 12 months, June '22-June '23, there were only 7 tickets written on Riverside Drive in that period.

Haley Conrad – 2011 Oak - Spoke about she would protest one way streets as well because it would add more traffic to the streets because you would have to go one direction in order to go the other direction. Is there a way to make money on tickets, can you raise the cost of tickets, can you always send the new officer to attend?

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about each Commissioner getting 5 minutes to speak.

Commissioner Marivi Walker spoke about being concerned about blinking lights in people's houses, liking the idea of flower beds to beautify and slow down traffic. She says you cannot have ticket quotas, it's against the law, believes slowing the speed won't be effective, not sure about a one way lane. She does not think we need to issue warnings, just issue the ticket no matter the speed, and is concerned about the number of police officers.

Vice Mayor Sherri Quarrie spoke about the cost of the speed sign was in the budget. We need an expert so perhaps that could be put on the next agenda.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about how it bothers her that there is not a police presence at the last several meetings, it is important for the police the Town does have to actually write tickets. She spoke about how some streets do not have any speed limit sign on them, what streets are those and do we need to have at least one sign on each street? The red brick crosswalks are not visible, make it like a regular more visible crosswalk.

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about Bowman and BSE Engineering, the speed humps at Ocean and Pine work, that is a big intersection for kids going to school. Regarding the police chief not being here, the Town is in the process of hiring a police chief. The Town needs to have a traffic study done by a licensed traffic engineer, safety for the residents is the number one priority. Riverside Drive and Oak St are not safe.

Commissioner Adam Meyer spoke about agreeing with getting a traffic engineer to get a study done, have a public meeting where everyone can hear ideas and no one is surprised. He is excited to meet with the possible new police chief tomorrow to ask questions about writing tickets and speeding.

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro said to bring that forward as an agenda item.

Mayor Alison Dennington spoke about the police chief cannot be hired tomorrow because things still need to be done such as a background check.

Haley Conrad - 2011 Oak St - Spoke about there is usually more than one solution or a combination of solutions. Agrees with it needing to be presented to the public prior to the Commission voting on it. If you can get general buy in from the public it would be very important. You will never please everyone, and at some point the Commission will have to make a decision. Hopefully if it is at least presented to the public and they are allowed to comment then hopefully it will alleviate some of the issue. When you lose public trust, it is really hard to get it back. The whole theme of tonight's meeting is communication which is so important.

Commissioner Marivi Walker asked if no one likes any of the presented solutions then what.

Commissioner Corey Runte spoke about no one likes change, but at some point you have to put resident safety first.

Todd Albert - 1710 Pine St - Spoke about if no one can agree at least get a professional's input then make an educated decision. Get the reputation of being a speed trap back.

Mayor Alison Dennington commented that that can be implemented right away.

5. Public Comments

After being acknowledged by the Mayor, members of the public should state their name and address for the record. The Commission encourages citizens to prepare their comments in advance. Each individual will have three (3) minutes to address the Commission on any topic(s) related to Town business, not on the Agenda.

6. Adjournment

Commissioner Corey Runte moved to adjourn; Vice Mayor Sherri Quarrie seconded; Motion carried 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm.



Alison Dennington
Mayor

ATTEST:



Rachel Pembrook
Transcriptionist

