

MINUTES OF ORDINARY CLOSED COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday June 27, 2018
Belize City Hall

Present:

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|---------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Mr. Bernard Wagner | Mayor |
| 2. Mr. Ryan Elijio | Councilor |
| 3. Mr. Oscar Arnold | Councilor |
| 4. Mr. Javier Castellanos | Councilor |
| 5. Ms. Aisha Gentle | Councilor |
| 6. Mr. Micah Goodin | Councilor |
| 7. Ms. Delthrude Hylton | Councilor |
| 8. Mr. Michael Norales | Councilor |
| 9. Mr. Albert Vaughan | Councilor |
| 10. Dr. Candice Pitts | Councilor |
| 11. Mr. Allan Pollard Jr. | Councilor |

Mrs. Marilyn Ordonez – Acting City Administrator

The meeting was called to order at 3:16 pm
The Councilors led the prayer.

Adoption of Minutes

1. The minutes from the “Ordinary Closed Council Meeting” were circulated and read thoroughly.
2. Deputy Arnold asked that item number 24 be corrected to read “Geraldo Flowers” and not “Heraldo Flowers.”
3. Councilor Hylton asked that item 33 be corrected to indicate that the Seamstress Program would amount to “\$4000.00 instead of \$400.00” monthly for rent.
4. Councilor Vaughan asked that item 90 be corrected to read “The Education Subsistence provided by the MOE would no longer be given to PUP area representatives.”
5. Councilor Vaughan asked that item 97 be corrected to read “266 manhole covers were retrieved from the Council’s previous contractor – Moro’s Construction.”
6. Councilor Pollard moved for a motion that the Minutes of the Ordinary Closed Council Meeting held on Wednesday June 27, 2018 be confirmed as a true and correct record. Councilor Norales motioned for the approval of the minutes, seconded by Councilor Pollard. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Matters Arising

7. Mayor Wagner asked for the name of the public representative selected to sit on the Traffic Advisory Committee.
8. Councilor Pollard informed the Mayor that the representative had not been chosen as yet.
9. Mayor Wagner asked about an update from the Committee formed to discuss Mr. Geraldo Flowers' proposal.
10. Deputy Arnold informed the Mayor that changes were made to the proposal after the formation. He indicated that the committee will meet again to review the proposal.
11. Mayor Wagner initiated the motion for the Animated Innovative Marketing Proposal. He stated that if the proposal is passed, jobs would be created.
12. Mayor Wagner informed the Council that under the agreement, the Council will be given eight (8) slides to host its own content. Examples of the content include the weather and news.
13. Mayor Wagner highlighted that the Council will gain income from revenue collected from the signs.
14. The proposed locations for the signs include the bypass near SaveU Supermarket and the Battlefield Park on Albert Street.
15. Councilor Pitts asked if flash news will be displayed on the boards.
16. Mayor Wagner stated that flash news will be displayed. He also mentioned that all maintenance and monitoring of the signs will be done by the partner, and the company is asking to operate for 10 years and the opportunity to renew the contract, thereafter.
17. Councilor Castellanos commented that the initiative would be a great idea, but there is the need to see how others could be involved.
18. Mayor Wagner initiated a motion for the approval of the Animated Innovative Marketing Proposal.
19. All Councilors who were present voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**
20. Mayor Wagner initiated the King's Park Charter House Lease Development Proposal for a Restaurant/Steakhouse to be built on a Government Reserve.
21. He indicated that the Council had agreed to lease the location for \$2000.00 per month.
22. Mayor Wagner mentioned that in addition to creating a family-friendly atmosphere, the Restaurant/Steakhouse will also improve the aesthetic appeal of the area and create jobs.
23. Mayor Wagner indicated that the investors were asking for a lease of 20-25 years.
24. Councilor Vaughan stated that the Council talks about consultation, so he believes that people should be consulted in regards to the proposal.

25. Councilor Vaughan made mention that there might be parking space issues at the proposed location and that development and job creation need to come with consultation.
26. Deputy Arnold stated that the developers would still need to go through the proposal, so he wanted to know what exactly the developers were asking for.
27. Mayor Wagner confirmed that the developers were asking for approval to lease so that they could go ahead with their plans.
28. Councilor Goodin expressed his support for the proposal. He remarked that it is time for the city to get more variety in food.
29. Councilor Castellanos mentioned that the Council's purpose is to develop the City, and they cannot deny all proposals that come to Council.
30. Councilor Pollard stated that the Council needs to support the business community. The area is not a residential area, so he is in support of the proposal.
31. Councilor Gentle said that the proposal is a good initiative, and it will give a different, family-friendly atmosphere to that open space near the sea wall.
32. Councilor Norales affirmed his support, but it must be stipulated to the developer that he carries out all due diligence.
33. Mayor Wagner reiterated that the Council needs to develop the City's water front view. He mentioned that the City needs to benefit from this view, not just the area residents.
34. Mayor Wagner proposed a motion for the approval of the King's Park Charter House Lease.
35. All the councilors who were present voted in favor, except Councilor Vaughan; he abstained. **MOTION CARRIED.** ✓
36. Mayor Wagner initiated a motion for the construction of a pedestrian ramp in front of the Matalon Building. He indicated that the Belize Bank would cover the cost and that he had received a quotation by the City Engineer Mr. Floyd Williams.
37. Deputy Arnold commented that there is an existing ramp, but that the existing one is only about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way across; and that it was there prior to the cementing of the City streets.
38. Councilor Norales suggested that the place of the ramp could be changed to the middle off Blue Marlin Drive.
39. Mayor Wagner motioned for the approval of the pedestrian ramp in front of the Matalon Building.
40. All Councilors who were present voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.** ✓
41. Mayor Wagner initiated the lease proposal for the Mahogany Street Public Reserve as proposed by Valuation Manager Mr. Troy Smith.
42. Mr. Smith recommended vendors who already occupy the space to lease the reserve.
43. Mayor Wagner proposed that perhaps the vendors could get a 50% off their first year in operation.

44. Councilor Castellanos commented that the area needs to be developed, and the vendors are the people from the main area who brought the Council in. He continued by saying that the poor people need to be given a chance.
45. Councilor Norales asked what BEL's concern with the vendors was.
46. Mrs. Ordonez stated that in the event of a fire, there are high voltage wires that are hanging particularly low.
47. Councilor Norales suggested consulting with Belize Electricity Limited (BEL) to ensure they adhere to building guidelines.
48. Councilor Elijo stated that he did not believe putting a fee for the existing structure would be beneficial. Perhaps an investor could be used to develop the area.
49. Mayor Wagner stated that the discussion towards doing so could start with the Belize Tourism Board.
50. Councilor Goodin asked why they would bring investors in.
51. Mrs. Ordonez indicated that investors would want to be paid.
52. Councilor Castellanos remarked that Belizeans need to own businesses and the City needs development.
53. Mayor Wagner stated that the Council cannot break the law.
54. Mayor Wagner motioned to move lease charges for structures on the Mahogany Street Reserve that are less than 144 sq. feet to \$2.00 per day and \$3.00 per day for structures greater than 144 sq. feet.
55. Eight (8) Councilors voted in favor. Councilors Hylton and Elijo abstained. Councilor Pitts indicated she needed further clarity on certain matters. **MOTION CARRIED.**
56. Mayor Wagner initiated that the Council fill the post of City Administrator. He commended Deputy Arnold for filling in since City Administrator Miller's termination. He also commented that it was time for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to fulfill their roles as policy makers.
57. Mayor Wagner mentioned that the Council will evolve more and that Councilors will begin to carry out their mission.
58. Mayor Wagner stated that the post for City Administrator was advertised, and a transparent process was followed, whereby interviews were conducted and after careful deliberation Mrs. Stephanie Lindo-Garbutt was selected as the new City Administrator.
59. It was decided that the salary for the new City Administrator Mrs. Stephanie Lindo-Garbutt will be set at \$60,000.00 per annum for the first three (3) months during an agreed probationary period and will be reviewed at the end of that period for a mutually agreed base salary not exceeding \$65,000.00 per annum. Mrs. Lindo-Garbutt will be given an insurance allowance of \$5,123.16 per annum, a telephone allowance of \$1,800.00 per annum, and an annual availability allowance of \$3,000.00. Mrs. Lindo-Garbutt will be provided a vehicle allowance of \$18,000.00 per annum and a fuel allowance of 20 gallons of



- fuel per week. Mrs. Lindo-Garbutt will also be given a vacation grant of \$4,500.00 per annum, along with 30 vacation days.
60. It was also decided that Mrs. Lindo-Garbutt will be given a one (1) year contract with the option for renewal.
 61. Mayor Wagner motioned for a vote to be taken to appoint Mrs. Stephanie Lindo-Garbutt as the new City Administrator, seconded by Councilor Norales.
 62. All Councilors who were present voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**
 63. Mayor Wagner proposed for a person to fill the post of Office Manager for the Office of the Mayor. Mayor Wagner proposed that **Ms. Monique Yearwood** be appointed to the post. Councilor Gentle seconded. **MOTION CARRIED**
 64. All Councilors who were present voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**
 65. Mayor Wagner proposed a budget for the Belize City Council and S&B Ministries Summer Pantry Program. He voiced that that the Council is partnering with a group out of Florida to provide pantry for Belize City residents, whereby there will be a mentoring program and a day's activity in each area. Thirty-nine (39) barrels of goods to be distributed have already been brought in. Mayor Wagner also mentioned that the group is asking for hotel accommodation.
 66. Councilor Vaughan asked if there is a total cost or a value assigned to what is in the barrel.
 67. Mayor Wagner said no, but the items are very good.
 68. Councilor Vaughan asked if the Council received any duty considerations from the Custom's Department.
 69. Mayor Wagner indicated that the Council did.
 70. Councilor Elijio asked if the eleven (11) barrels of goods are here in the country as yet and where they are being stored.
 71. Mayor Wagner assured Councilor Elijio that the goods are in the country and are being hosted at a house.
 72. Councilor Elijio asked if the Council could store the goods.
 73. Councilor Vaughan asked if they could get the real value of the goods to put out there.
 74. Councilor Goodin asked how the persons, who will receive the goods, be identified.
 75. Mayor Wagner stated that the area representatives/standard bearers will select the individuals for the program.
 76. Mayor Wagner motioned to approve the budget of \$13,047.15 for the Belize City Council and S&B Ministries Summer Pantry Program.
 77. All Councilors who were present voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**
 78. Councilor Goodin proposed the Council's Summer Constituency Basketball program, which will engage the City's youths in the summer months.

- Mayor Wagner reminded the Council that the proposal speaks of the Council's Mandate of community participation. He indicated that the Belize City Council will provide trophies, uniforms, etc.
79. Councilor Vaughan asked about a budget for transportation, which was mentioned in the cover letter. He recommended adjusting the budget to include transportation.
 80. Mayor Wagner indicated that the Council will offset the cost of transportation with the Council bus.
 81. Deputy Arnold brought to the Council's attention that the 15-17 age group, which will be in the tournament, will be voters in the upcoming election. He stated that various items will be donated, and for that reason they were not put in the budget.
 82. Mayor Wagner initiated a motion for the approval of the Belize City Council's Summer Constituency Basketball Program.
 83. All Councilors who were present voted in favor, except Councilor Hylton who stepped out. **MOTION CARRIED.**
 84. Mayor Wagner initiated a motion for the approval to change the Council's auditor from PKF Belize to Cedric Flowers, independent auditor.
 85. All Councilors who were present voted in favor, except Councilor Hylton who stepped out. **MOTION CARRIED.**
 86. Councilor Vaughan asked if any particular reasons were given for changing the auditor.
 87. Mayor Wagner indicated that Cedric Flowers is a well-respected, transparent auditor.
 88. Mayor Wagner proposed the motion to continue assisting the Welcome Resource Center with breakfast and transportation for the homeless.
 89. Mayor Wagner asked Mrs. Ordonez for clarity on the Council's daily breakfast commitment.
 90. Mrs. Ordonez stated she was unaware of the commitment, and it was Mr. Wayne Usher who dealt with the organization.
 91. Councilor Elijio commented that he is from the neighborhood where the Welcome Resource Center is housed. He claimed that the mentally ill patients were roaming the neighborhood and causing trouble.
 92. Councilor Hylton mentioned that the patients do not stay in the center because they are not properly entertained.
 93. Councilor Norales asked who the representative from the Belize City Council was.
 94. Mrs. Ordonez replied that there was no Council representative.
 95. Councilor Hylton informed the Council that Mr. Wayne Usher said he was the Council Representative.
 96. Mayor Wagner asked for the matter to be clarified and for him to be given a report. **MOTION DEFERRED.**
 97. Deputy Arnold left.

98. Mayor Wagner motioned to approve the proposal of Alpha Capital to refloat the bond.
99. Mayor Wagner reported to the Council that on receipt of the first analysis of the letter from Alpha Capital to engage their services to refloat the bond, the figure was too large (close to half a million dollars). He further stated that the Council did not want to undertake a prospectus of such a large figure but maybe one of about \$300,000.00. He stated that he felt that refloating the bond is essential to achieving what was proposed in the manifesto. **MOTION DEFERRED.**
100. Councilor Castellanos mentioned that all resources available is by the Council, and when finance is available businesses can be created.
101. Mayor Wagner proposed a motion for the approval to lease a location at the Michael Finnegan Market to Mr. Prakash Hedage.
102. Mrs. Ordenez stated that there was a problem with the specific location, and BEL would need to move their meters.
103. Councilor Gentle informed the Council that Mr. Prakash had applied for a specific location, but Ms. Martha Swift submitted another application from Mr. Ahmad. Councilor Gentle also stated that meters as well as high tension wires would need to be moved to facilitate Mr. Prakash's request, and would come at a cost to the Council. Ms. Martha Swift, however, proposed another location for Mr. Prakash to lease.
104. Mayor Wagner asked why the information was not conveyed to Mr. Prakash.
105. Councilor Gentle said she did, but Mr. Prakash maintained that Councilor Castellanos is the businessman.
106. Mayor Wagner asked Councilor Castellanos to explain the situation.
107. Councilor Castellanos said he told Mr. Prakash if he came with the necessary criteria, he would bring it to the Council's attention.
108. Councilor Vaughan urged the Council to give Mr. Prakash a response.
109. Mayor Wagner cautioned all Councilors not to make any promises when interacting with businessmen.
110. Councilor Castellanos commented that the technical personnel are not doing their part, particularly Ms. Patnett and that their reports are vague.
111. Councilor Elijio informed the Council that Ms. Patnett did write to Councilor Gentle about Mr. Prakash's proposal, and Ms. Patnett conveyed to him that Councilor Castellanos brought a letter for her to sign.
112. Councilor Castellanos said he did not bring any such letter to Ms. Patnett. She needs to clear his name. He further went on to request a meeting with Mayor Wagner and Councilor Elijio.
113. Councilor Gentle stated that Mr. Prakash approached her after a previous Caucus Meeting with a document for her to sign. Later, when she spoke to Ms. Patnett, she admitted to signing a document Councilor Castellanos brought to her. She did not know the document was for Mr. Prakash.

114. Mayor Wagner directed Mrs. Ordonez to have Ms. Patnett prepare an official response letter to Mr. Prakash.

Notices/Reports/Discussion/Information

115. Councilor Norales informed the Council that Mr. Wayne Usher will be retiring in September but will continue to work up until the end of the hurricane season. Mr. Usher will train an understudy to take over.
116. Councilor Pollard presented a Memorandum of Understanding between the Belize City Council and the Taxi Operator, whereby the Service fee of \$20.00 will be reduced to \$10.00.
117. Councilor Elijio applauded the initiative, but inquired what percentage of the Council's revenue will be affected.
118. Mayor Wagner assured Councilor that there will be optimization in other areas.
119. Councilor Vaughan stated that there are thirty eight (38) Taxi Unions, and there must be a system in place to collect from the taxi operators. He indicated that he supports the initiative with reservations.
120. Councilor Pollard informed the Council that he will have a briefing with the taxi Operators to inform them of the services being provided.
121. Mayor Wagner initiated a motion for the approval to reduce the Taxi service fee from \$20.00 to \$10.00, effective July 1, 2018.
122. All Councilors who were present voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Other Matters

123. Councilor Elijio informed the Council that Belize Signs Ltd. is proposing to erect a billboard near the overpass at Pallotti High School, but it was not recommended by the City Engineer.
124. Councilor Elijio notified the Council of a situation on Rasta Street, where three (3) families have been encroaching on a street. The members of the community are helping to take down a fence and reconstruct it, but a Letter of No Objection is needed.
125. Mayor Wagner motioned for the approval of a No Objection Letter to construct a fence on Rasta Street.
126. All Councilors who were present voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**
127. Councilor Gentle informed the Council that the Louise Bevans Park is leased to Mr. Ryan Reneau.
128. **The meeting was adjourned at 6:17 p.m.**

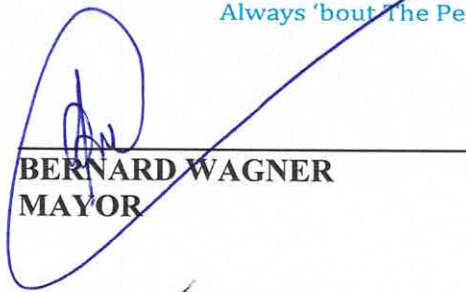
BELIZE

Always 'bout The People



CITY

COUNCIL



BERNARD WAGNER
MAYOR



MARILYN ORDOÑEZ
AG. CITY ADMINISTRATOR



