

**MINUTES of CAUCUS MEETING**

April 9, 2019  
Belize City Hall

**Present:**

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

**Mrs. Stephanie Lindo-Garbutt, City Administrator**

**Mr. Rafael Sosa, Manager, Office of the Mayor**

**The meeting was called to order at 3:10 p.m. by Mayor Wagner after which he led his Councilors in reciting the Belize National Prayer.**

**1.0 Ratification of March 19, 2019 Minutes**

- 1.1 Councilor Gentle moved for the Minutes to be accepted. Deputy Mayor Arnold seconded the motion.

**2.0 Matters Arising from Minutes**

- 2.1 **Candice Miller Claim** – The City Administrator informed that the Court had ordered both parties to mediation; however, the mediation process was unsuccessful. Consequently, the parties will now move to case management with trial date set for October 1 – 3, 2019.
- 2.2 **Use of Bathroom at Mike’s Club** – Deputy Mayor Arnold provided an update following his discussion with the proprietor of Mike’s Club. Deputy Mayor Arnold shared that the proprietor indicated that he has no objections to the bus drivers using the bathroom at his establishment. The proprietor stated, however, that he would not want for his bathroom to become a free for all.
- 2.3 **Pier One Matter** – The City Administrator informed that the Council sent a letter to Mr. Rodwell Williams, Lawyer for Mr. Joseph Kee, informing him of the total cost of damages and lost in income that were brought to bear on the Council by his client.
- 2.4 **No Objection Letter for Hilton Group of Companies** – The City Administrator informed that the Council has not received a formal request from the Hilton Group of Companies for a “No Objection Letter” vis-à-vis the proposed Bellevue Restaurant.
- 2.5 **Contract for Champion Security System Limited** – The City Administrator informed that the MIS Department has been tasked with obtaining price quotations from other providers and to conduct a comparative price analysis.
- 2.6 **Entrepreneurship Training in Bahrain** – Councilor Castellanos shared that he will be traveling to the Kingdom of Bahrain to attend an entrepreneurship training. Councilor Castellanos shared that he will have the opportunity to meet with Executives of Silicon Valley. Councilor Castellanos will depart for the Kingdom of Bahrain on April 12, 2019.
- 2.7 **Dredging of Canals** – Councilor Vaughan informed that he, the City Administrator, the City Engineer and Ms. Isela Gillett, Contractor, had met to discuss the dredging of the Gungulung Canal. Councilor Vaughan shared that the previous contract had a disparity due to the fact that the City Engineer had made a miscalculation.

2.7.1 Deputy Mayor Arnold shared that the Hydrology Department has informed that there will be an early rainy season this year.

2.7.2 The City Administrator informed that revised contracts will be submitted by the respective contractors for the dredging of the North Creek, Zeitown and Gungulung Canals by April 12, 2019.

### **3.0 Mayor's Announcements & Matters**

3.1 **Trip to Taiwan** - Mayor Wagner referred to a summary report of his trip to Taipei, Taiwan which he shared with his Councilors. The Mayor's official delegation included Councilor Pollard Jr., Councilor Hylton and the City Planner.

### **3.2 Renewal of City Administrator's Contract**

The City Administrator informed the Councilors that whenever she asks them to consult about certain initiatives, it is for those initiatives that were not previously budgeted for.

3.2.1 The City Administrator shared that the Council's cash flow scenario did not improve until the latter part of March. The City Administrator shared that this was attributed mainly to property owners waiting for the very last day to make their property tax payments.

3.2.2 Councilor Pitts expressed her support for the renewal of the City Administrator's contract for an additional two years. Councilor Pitts thanked the City Administrator For supporting and assisting her initiatives and projects.

3.2.3 The City Administrator reminded the Mayor & Councilors of the state of the Council's finances when she assumed the post of City Administrator in July of 2018. the City Administrator shared that the Council was saddled with a mountain of bills and unsettled lawsuits.

3.2.4 Councilors Elijio and Castellanos expressed their support for the renewal of the City Administrator's contract. Deputy Mayor Arnold and Councilor Goodin also registered their support for the renewal of the City Administrator's contract.

3.2.5 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the renewal of the City Administrator's contract through to March 31, 2021. **ALL** Councilors voted in favor – **MOTION PASSED**

3.3. **Social Assistance** - The City Administrator requested that Social Assistance allocations be limited to the Council's high cash season

3.3.1 Mayor Wagner requested of the City Administrator that she provides Social Assistance allocation, \$500.00 monthly, to Councilors effective April 2019.

#### **4.0 Adoption of Fred Westby Park**

4.1 Councilor Gentle informed that she received a proposal from Mr. Andrew Pilgrim of Diversified Life Solutions Brokers Ltd. for the adoption of the Fred Westby Park. Councilor Gentle shared that the adoption of the Fred Westby Park would be a joint venture between Diversified Life Solutions Brokers Ltd. and Caribbean Shipping Agency.

4.1.1 Councilor Gentle informed that the two entities are proposing to adopt the Fred Westby Park for a period of two to three years. The Council would not have to bear any expenses.

4.1.2 The City Administrator stated that the Council and the two entities would have to enter into an agreement. The City Administrator shared that Diversified Life Solutions Brokers Ltd. and Caribbean Shipping Ltd. had approached the previous Council with their proposal to adopt the Fred Westby Park. They, however, did not get anywhere with their proposal.

4.1.3 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the adoption of the Fred Westby Park by Diversified Life Solutions Brokers Ltd. and Caribbean Shipping Ltd. **ALL** Councilors voted in favor – **MOTION PASSED**

**5.0 Renewal of Lease for Home Protector Park**

- 5.1 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the renewal of the lease for Home Protector Park. ALL Councilors voted in favor – **MOTION PASSED**

**6.0 BTL Park Leases**

- 6.1 Councilor Gentle informed that all leases expired in February 2019 (**ITEM DEFERRED**)

**7.0 BCC Easter Basket Initiative**

- 7.1 Councilor Gentle shared about the budget for the Belize City Council's Easter Basket Initiative. Councilor Gentle shared that the Initiative would see the Council distributing Easter Baskets to needy children at select primary schools across the City.
- 7.2 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the approval of the BCC Easter Basket Initiative. ALL Councilors voted in favor – **MOTION PASSED**

**8.0 Michael Finnegan Market – Request to Lease and Expand Existing Kiosk**

- 8.1 Councilor Gentle shared a request by Mr. Aron Castillo, meat shop vendor at the Michael Finnegan Market, for him to lease and expand his kiosk which is located over the West Collet Canal directly in front of the Market.
- 8.2 Following the site inspection report submitted by the Planning Department and shared by Councilor Gentle, Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the approval of Mr. Aron Castillo's request. ALL Councilors voted in favor – **MOTION PASSED**

**9.0 Dredging of Gungulung Canal**

- 9.1 Councilor Vaughan shared a breakdown of the dimensions and the costs associated with the dredging of the Gungulung Canal as compiled and submitted by the City Engineer.

**10.0 Report on Manhole Covers Project**

- 10.1 Councilor Vaughan shared a report on the Manhole Covers Project as prepared and submitted by the City Engineer.
- 10.2 Councilor Vaughan informed that, to date, a total of 497 manhole covers have been installed in the City.

**11.0 Albert Street Bus Stop Proposal**

- 11.1 Councilor Allan Pollard Jr. shared about the Albert Street Bus Stop Proposal that was prepared by him and the Traffic Manager.
- 11.2 Councilor Pollard Jr. shared that the proposal is for the Council to construct and and to install a bus stop on Albert Street in front of Heritage Bank Ltd. Councilor Pollard stated that the buses and bus drivers, currently located at Regent Street West, would then be relocated to the new bus stop.
- 11.3 Councilor Hylton asked about where the taximen on Albert Street will be relocated. Councilor Pollard Jr. stated that the taximen would be consulted.
- 11.4 Councilor Pollard Jr. recommended that the Council install a bathroom facility at Battlefield Park.
- 11.5 Councilor Elijio suggested that the Council meet with the bus owners and encourage them to improve their service standards. Councilor Elijio also urged the Council to move forward with the installation of parking meters.
- 11.6 Councilor Pollard Jr. stated that the proposed bus stop would come at an estimated cost of \$100,000.
- 11.7 Councilor Vaughan expressed his support for the proposed bus stop and stated that the idea was originally shared at a meeting of the Traffic Management Committee.
- 11.8 Mayor Wagner lauded Councilor Pollard Jr. and the Traffic Manager for a well put together proposal and urged them to engage all the stakeholders who will be impacted by the proposed bus stop.

**N.B.** Councilor Pitts requested an excuse at 5:50 p.m. Deputy Mayor Arnold requested an excuse at 6:15 p.m.

**12.0 Submissions to Local Building Unit** – Councilor Elijo presented requests submitted to the Local Building Unit.

12.1 Mayor Wagner moved motions for the approval of the requests submitted after which the Council made the following decisions based on the Planning Department’s recommendations:

- Request by Channel Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) to erect six (6) signs – **MOTION PASSED**
- Request by Marlene Laing to Lease a Piece of Reserve on Mahogany Street Near Western Avenue to Sell Food – **MOTION PASSED**
- Request by Mr. Steve Perera to Install Billboard on Reserve Area – **MOTION PASSED**

### **13.0 City Administrator’s Matters**

13.1 **BCC Vehicle Policy & Procedures** – The City Administrator referred the Mayor & Councilors to the BCC Vehicle Policy & Procedures document which she had shared with them via e-mail.

13.1.1 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the approval and adoption of the BCC Vehicle Policy and Procedures. ALL Councilors voted in favor – **MOTION PASSED**

13.2 Councilor Vaughan reminded the City Administrator that the Works Department remains without a Vehicle Care Coordinator. Councilor Vaughan recommended that Mr. Arturo Gallego, Assistant Works Manager, be made to hold over as Acting Vehicle Care Coordinator.

13.3 The City Administrator informed that Mr. Umberto Martinez, Works Supervisor, is currently holding over as Acting Vehicle Care Coordinator. The City Administrator agreed with Councilor Vaughan's recommendation for Mr. Arturo Gallego to hold over in the interim.

**13.4 Trade License Reform -Re-evaluation Exercise** – The City Administrator shared about the proposed budget for the re-evaluation exercise that will be carried out under the Trade License Reform Initiative.

13.4.1 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the approval of the proposed budget. ALL Councilors voted in favor – **MOTION PASSED**

### **13.5 General Updates**

13.5.1 **CWU** -The City Administrator shared that, at the request of the Christian Workers Union (CWU), a meeting was held recently between the Union and the Council. The City Administrator informed that the meeting, between both parties, was very cordial and successful. The Council's team comprised the Mayor, City Administrator, Director of Administration and HR Manager. The CWU's team comprised its President, General Secretary and Executive Secretary.

13.5.2 Councilor Elijio recommended that the Council assemble a team that will meet with the CWU prior to the Union meeting with the Mayor. Councilor Vaughan recommended that other Councilors be included in talks with the CWU.

13.6 **Board of Survey** – The City Administrator shared about the Ministry of Finance's Annual Board of Survey that was conducted at the Council on April 1, 2019. The City Administrator shared that the Board of Survey teams examined receipts that were issued by the Council during its last two days of collections. The City Administrator shared that the Lead Auditor was concerned that the Council wasn't making regular deposits to the Treasury Department and wasn't using Treasury issued receipts. The Board of Survey also probed into the Council's expenditures. The City Administrator stated that Board of Survey has been an annual exercise; however, this is the first time that the issue of the Council's expenditures has been scrutinized.



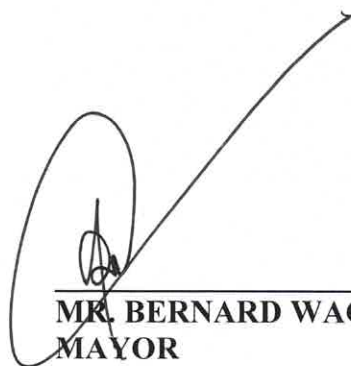
#### **14.0 Other Business**

- 14.1 Mayor Wagner informed his Councilors about ten (10) brand-new wheelchairs that are being donated by businessman, Mr. Steve Perera. Councilor Vaughan stated that Mr. Perera has been and continues to be very generous to the Council.
- 14.2 Councilor Vaughan shared about a recent community meeting that was held between a team from the Council and a group of residents in the Sir Sandy Hunter Street area, Belama Phase II. The Council's team comprised Mayor Wagner, Deputy Mayor Arnold, Councilor Vaughan and Councilor Norales. Councilor Vaughan reported that the plan of action, agreed upon by both parties, has been successfully executed.
- 14.3 Councilor Vaughan shared that the Works Department has spent over \$20,000 on Street Works & Maintenance in the first week of April.
- 14.4 Mayor Wagner raised the matter of a fundraising event that has been taking place in front of the Lake-I Baptist Church on Mahogany Street. Councilor Eljio informed that it is a weekly business activity and not a fundraising event. Mayor Wagner tasked Councilor Eljio with looking into the matter.
- 14.5 Councilor Goodin shared a request from residents of the Fort George Division for a speedbump to be erected on Gabourel Lane where the Vital Statistics Office was previously located. Councilor Vaughan stated that the issue is the lack of proper enforcement and recommended that the word "STOP" be marked out on the pavement at the said location Councilor Norales shared that a recent Shelter Management meeting in Belmopan, the topic of speedbumps was discussed. At the meeting, it was stressed that ambulances and fire trucks must have ease of passage.

14.6 Councilor Goodin shared about two concerns of residents in the Pickstock Division (Back-a-Town Area), namely that their job applications are not being given any attention/consideration and no works are being carried out on their streets.

**15.0 Adjournment**

15.1 Councilor Norales moved for the meeting to be adjourned. Councilor Elijo seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.



---

**MR. BERNARD WAGNER**  
**MAYOR**



---

**MRS. STEPHANIE LINDO-GARBUTT**  
**CITY ADMINISTRATOR**