



COUNCIL MEETING

July 13, 2016

1:30 p.m.

Belize City Hall Council Chambers

Members to be attending

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Mr. Darrell Bradley | Mayor |
| 2. Mr. Jason Edwards | Councilor |
| 3. Mrs. Alifa Elrington Hyde | Councilor |
| 4. Dr. Alain Gonzalez | Councilor |
| 5. Mrs. Hyacinth Latchman Cuellar | Councilor |
| 6. Mr. Kevin Singh | Councilor |
| 7. Mr. Michael Theus | Councilor |
| 8. Mr. Dion Leslie | Councilor |
| 9. Mr. Philip Willoughby | Councilor |
| 10. Mr. Bernard Pitts | Councilor |
| 11. Mr. Dean Samuels | Councilor |

12. Candice Burke, City Administrator

Persons to be attending by invitation

1. Floyd Williams, City Engineer
2. Marilyn Ordonez, Director of Finance
3. Sharlene Rudon, Director of Administration
4. Margaret McKenzie, Legal Counsel

Agenda Items

1. Prayer
2. Confirmation of Minutes
3. Matters Arising

Mayor's announcements/matters

- i. Infrastructure
- ii. Renovation of Commercial Center
- iii. Trade License Reform
- iv. Municipal Authorities Bill
- v. Land Use Policy
- vi. Kings Park Zoning
- vii. Staff Land Program

4. Notices/reports/ discussion/information

- CAB Update (Latchman)
- Overtime (Theus)
- Supplies for Funeral (Theus)
- Taxi Moratorium (Pitts)
- Update Dollar Van (Pitts)
- Taxi Fee (Pitts)
- Staffing MIS (Pitts)
- BCC App (Pitts)
- Features Driver's License (Pitts)
- Ticketing Machine Traffic (Pitts)
- Vehicle MIS Manager (Pitts)
- Weed Trimmers (Pitts)
- Paid Event BTL Park (Elrington)

5. Any other business

- Proposed Rates Revenue Committee (Ordonez)

6. Petitions from members of the public

7. Questions from members of the public

8. Request for leave to move adjournment of Council on matters of urgent public notice

9. Motions relating to Council business or sitting

10. Adjournment

12. Setting the date for the next Council meeting



MINUTES OF ORDINARY CLOSED COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday July 13th, 2016
Belize City Hall Mayor's Office

Present:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Mr. Darrell Bradley | Mayor |
| 2. Mr. Dean Samuels | Deputy Mayor (3:42pm) |
| 3. Mr. Michael Theus | Councilor |
| 4. Mr. Jason Edwards | Councilor |
| 5. Mrs. Alifa Elrington Hyde | Councilor |
| 6. Mr. Bernard Pitts | Councilor |
| 7. Mr. Dion Leslie | Councilor |
| 8. Mrs. Hyacinth Latchman- Cuellar | Councilor |
| 1. Ms. Candice Miller | City Administrator |
| 2. Mr. Jermaine Hyde | Administrative Officer |

Present by invitation:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Mr. Floyd Williams | City Engineer |
| 2. Ms. Margaret McKenzie | Director Legal Services |
| 3. Mrs. Marilyn Garvin | Chief Internal Auditor |
| 4. Ms. Sharlene Rudon | Director HR/PR |

Absent with explanation:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Mr. Philip Willoughby | Councilor |
| 2. Dr. Alain Gonzalez | Councilor |
| 3. Mr. Kevin Singh Sr. | Councilor |

Minutes of Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 1:55 pm.

Councilor Latchman- Cuellar opened the meeting with a prayer.

The Mayor welcomed Councilors and Directors to the Council meeting.

Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting was circulated and Councilors were given time to read thoroughly before confirming. Due to some typographical errors it was voted to review the minutes at the next meeting.

Matters arising

- i) Councilor Hyde asked about the contingency outlined in number 16, where a letter was to be received from IE.
- ii) Mrs. Ordonez indicated that the letter was received and that the issue has been sorted out since they reviewed the many change orders that were done to the project.
- iii) Councilor Hyde asked about the status of the vehicle care unit since paragraph 23 spoke of a meeting that would've been held to address the unit.
- iv) Mrs. Ordonez said that the matter was addressed and the unit will remain. Ms. Miller indicated that she had a meeting with the sanitation and works managers and Mr. Lawrence where they looked at the entire fleet of council vehicles. They looked at what was done and what is needed for the other vehicles. She held a subsequent meeting earlier today with the managers along with Mrs. Ordonez. The main issue is finance.
- v) Mrs. Ordonez listed the vehicles that are down and in need of repair.

Mayor Darrell Bradley

i. Infrastructure

1. The Mayor informed that from the contracts signed with RJB the works on University Drive and Cinderella Plaza were completed. He added that RFG want to adopt the plaza.
2. A team comprised of Councilor Cuellar, Councilor Pitts, City Engineer and Ms. Rudon is tasked to liaise with Mr. Alberto Balderamos from the company to finalize the plan.
3. Councilor Hyde noted her concern of limited space in that area especially in front of K&M restaurant. Mayor indicated that Mr. Jenkins could look at the flow and make a recommendation.
4. Mayor Bradley noted that a small food court would be incorporated which could become a new revenue stream. A sidewalk is being done as well which would be safer for pedestrians along with a green area.
5. He ask that a meeting be held on site coordinated by Ms. Rudon with the business owners in the area, to see how they feel about the plan.
6. Currently construction work is ongoing on St. Joseph St. thereafter they will move to West Canal Street. Queen Street, Cinderella Plaza and University Drive have all been completed. The Mayor reminded that at a previous meeting it was decided that construction would be paused on East Canal due to pending issue with the contractor, Mr. Coleman. That money would be relocated for the construction of Ebony Street. Ms. Miller stated that Duck Lane needed attention as well.

7. Ms. Miller did an inspection on the Manhole covers project and Mr. Williams will compile a report on it and circulate to Councilors. Over 3600 covers should be made by the contractor and he's about 20% completed.
8. Some concerns have been raised relating to the amount of steel used and the fact that many of them are already breaking. The contractor will replace the newly damaged manhole covers and the City Engineer will implement some testing mechanism to ensure that the covers are strong enough. Presently, the payments to the contractor has been placed on hold.
9. Councilor Hyde recommended that documentation of the streets and the number of manhole covers needing replacement be sent to the contractor and that a deadline be set for him to comply.
10. The Mayor asked the City Engineer what was the reason for the breakage. Mr. Williams indicated that it was a structural problem because the covers didn't have the proper length of steel.
11. The Mayor indicated that since all the covers do not have the required length of steel, that all be replaced. He asked Mr. Williams to write the contractor and inform him of this and ensure that the replacement be built with the needed amount of steel.
12. Mrs. Ordonez pointed out that many of the sidewalks do not have the necessary framework to support the covers and that contributes to the breakage. Councilor Pitts suggested that the works be suspended and then fix what needs to be mended.
13. Councilor Hyde said that Mr. Williams should prepare a report on the sidewalks that do not have the required framework so funds can be allocated to repair the framework before the covers are installed.
14. The Mayor stated that the contractor should cease production of new manhole covers and replace all manholes with the proper steel.
15. Councilor Theus indicated that the contractor has built the covers according to the drawing that was given to him by the City Engineer. He added that the length of steel that was used in the covers was the length Mr. Williams placed on his plan.
16. Mr. Williams stated that the length of steel used was the length from the drawing.
17. Mrs. McKenzie added that the contractor ought to have indicated to Mr. Williams given his expertise that the length of steel would have been an issue.
18. The Mayor asked Mr. Williams to write the contractor in a non-threatening way indicating the change, which is required, and the need to replace all the covers.
19. Councilor Hyde raised the issue that the report Mr. Williams submitted is saying that there are other causes for the breakage and it is unclear in her mind what really is causing the covers to break. She suggested that the City Engineer do a proper inspection and document what really is the issue and write the contractor.

ii. Renovation of Commercial Center

20. The Mayor updated that by Friday July 15, 2016 the bank would advise whether they would approve the loan. If the answer is no, Mayor suggested that the Council approach another financial institution.
21. He added that another option would be to approach the contractor to see if they would fund the project.

iii. Trade License Reform

22. The Mayor informed that the taskforce had been meeting for 2 years and a proposal was prepared. All municipalities will circulate a schedule within a two (2) weeks period and get a fixed rate. Mrs. Ordonez was asked to circulate the proposal to the Councilors.
23. Chamber of Commerce is lobbying for a fixed fee and they have given a tentative approval of the proposal.
24. Council Theus asked what would be the loss from the proposal. The Mayor indicated that they are unaware at this point since they haven't agreed to a fixed rate as yet.
25. The Mayor indicated that the Council needs to move towards a fix rate because the rate as it exists is arbitrary.
26. Councilor Hyde added that while the Council wants to move towards a fixed rate, the Council needs to bear in mind that other municipalities have lower fixed trade licenses but many other taxes that help to compensate for their revenue. The Belize City Council only charge two taxes, one of which is trade license. A lower trade fee will have an impact on the revenue collection.

iv. Municipal Authorities Bill

27. The Mayor asked that Mrs. McKenzie circulate a final draft of the Bill to Councilors. Ms. McKenzie added that a Cabinet paper was prepared and the Minister will take it to cabinet.
28. The Mayor noted that the Council is very appreciative of Mrs. McKenzie for her work with Local Government. Additionally Mayor acknowledged the work of Ms. Miller and Mrs. Ordonez for their leadership roles in making Belize City Council set the trail for other municipalities.
29. Negotiations were concluded with Christian Workers Union for the Collective Bargaining Agreement, which was done in line with the MSR. It is now at the Labor Commissioner for approval and ratification. This will be brought back to the Council after the Commissioner's ratification and resolution.
30. Councilor Hyde pointed out to the Mayor that this would put the Council in a position whereby they will be held accountable for not complying with these regulations.
31. The Mayor said that Council has been following the MSR and they will continue to do so as best as they could. He added that the system isn't perfect but they are trying.

v. Land Use Policy

32. The Mayor indicated that the Council is continuously faced with problems as it relates to zoning. He added that the Council should take the Land Use Policy and adopt it as a 30 year plan by means of a resolution and apply it in our trade license zone.
33. The Mayor asked that this be discussed at the next Public Meeting.

vi. Kings Park Zoning

34. The Mayor indicated that he reviewed the draft sent to him by Ms. McKenzie and he is satisfied with it. He asked that she circulate the draft to Councilors and let them vote on it at the next meeting.
35. The Mayor asked Councilor Latchman and Theus to inform the sub-committee of the process so they can remain in touch with its development.

vii. Staff Land Program

36. The Mayor requested an update on the status of the staff land program. Ms. Rudon indicated that the only thing holding it back is the final work being done by the surveyor.
37. She added that the papers have already being taken to the LUA. The land has been cleared and only the subdivision plan was left.
38. The Mayor stated that staff members from each department were taken to view the property.

Latchman

39. Councilor Latchman stated that students from the CAB are advancing in school, 2 to High School and 2 to Sixth Form. Hence she is asking that Council approve \$300.00 to each student as a donation/ school grant.
40. Councilor Hyde added that Councilors sit on four school boards and they need to be more proactive and present in these schools. Mrs. Ordonez stated that the Council just cannot afford to assist all these schools with the donations.

Theus

41. Councilor Theus stated that over time is too high. Mrs. Ordonez stated that Managers met with herself and the City Administrator and they decided that they will coordinate with each other and share the use of equipment to minimize the need for over time.

[Councilor Leslie left at 3:29]

42. The Mayor requested that Mrs. Ordonez prepare a report on the cost of overtime. She indicated that the Audit department has already done so.

43. She added that one of the factors that influencing the rise in overtime is the instructions coming from Councilors to staff members to conduct extra clean-up projects, which could have been incorporated in the regular weekly schedule.
44. Councilor Theus requested that more coordination be done when purchasing supplies for funerals. He suggested that instead of buying materials per funeral, that purchases should be made in bulk and stored for when it is required. He added that the Cemetery is in need of urgent improvement.
45. Ms. Miller indicated that they did a walk through at the cemetery and she saw the conditions of the cemetery and requested that Mr. Camal prepare a sketch of the grounds with some aesthetic developments. She added that they are trying to discourage people from reopening tombs at Lord Ridge, hence they need to ensure the new cemetery is in a good condition that will let people want to bury their love ones there.
46. She added that since the new policy on reopening, the Council has cut down on the amount of tombs being reopened. She discussed it with Mrs. Ordonez and they agreed to seek an increase on the fee for reopening of a tomb to \$600.00 because it cost the Council \$575.00 for the workers to open a tomb.
47. Councilor Theus added that the workers be given the proper suiting and equipment to do the reopening, because he has seen pictures where they are not properly clothed. Ms. Miller indicated that they were purchased and given to the staff. Councilor Theus stated that the managers should enforce the dress code for reopening as the Council will be liable should anything happen to a staff.

Pitts

48. Councilor Pitts indicated that Council needs to make decision on the Moratorium of taxis. He added that Ms. McKenzie had assisted greatly with the new traffic initiatives being implemented.
49. Councilor Pitts stated that the \$1 Van association had been formed in April 2016 and met all requirements in terms of registration, attire and using logos.
50. Councilor Hyde voiced her concern with the operators being forced to join an association. Councilor Pitts stated that they aren't forced to be a part of the association.
51. Mayor said that they are not being forced, they just won't enjoy the benefits of the unionize group.

[Deputy Samuels arrived 3:42pm]

52. Councilor Pitts indicated that they would like to implement a fee for taxi operators with multiple vehicles. He stated that after the first vehicle, every subsequent vehicle will attract a small fee to cover registration.
53. Mayor indicated that such a fee would not be fair because the law sets a standard fee for registration. He suggested to Councilor Pitts that he sit down with Ms. McKenzie to draft a proposal and bring it back to Council.
54. Councilor Pitts added that he is in negotiations with the union for them to pay a fee of \$20- \$25 monthly for each member, so they can have a reserved parking space.

55. Mayor asked that this proposal be drafted as a motion, and an agreement be signed with each taxi union. He added that should the agreement be accepted, he would lift the moratorium.
56. Councilor Pitts requested that when Councilors sign recommendations for taxi, that the form be dated. He added that persons wanting taxi plates apply on their own and not through a third party.
57. Councilor Pitts highlighted that for 1.5 years MIS department has been understaffed. He noted that with the many projects with IDB the day-to-day workload from the Council had been neglected; hence they need to fill the vacancy for an IT Technician.
58. Councilor Pitts informed Council of a project to launch Belize City Council App for general public at no cost. This app will feature all government offices, restaurants and other businesses. He added that the businesses featured can make a small contribution for having their establishment on the app. Mayor requested that he include the LED unit since they were looking at developing a map of the city with similar features.
59. Councilor Pitts stated that Council incorporate some features of the driver's license and traffic database, so that enforcement personnel would be able to text in and get information about a particular vehicle.
60. Councilor Hyde voiced her concern with how the information will be restricted to just these bodies. Deputy Samuels added that the information is already public so he doesn't see why it as an issue as it would help with enforcement.
61. Councilor Pitts stated that he is looking for a ticketing machine for the traffic department. He will be liaising with his counterparts in New York City who use these machines to get more information on them.
62. Councilor Pitts requested a vehicle for MIS, since Mr. Benjamin uses his personal vehicle to pick up parts and transport equipment. Mayor indicated that due to current financial issues it would not be possible now but it can be revisited.
63. Councilor Pitts voiced his concern with the current financial position of the Council. He added that in comparing last year and this year, we are not in a better position. He asked that Mrs. Ordonez be more prudent in monitoring the expenditure. Mayor stated that though we are not able to save as much funds as we'd like. The good thing is that there are no new litigation issues.
64. Councilor Pitts noted that at the last meet he requested four weed cutters for a youth program and he has not received them. Also, two of his recipients from the business initiative didn't receive their cutters as well. Mayor stated that everyone who came to the ceremony got their cutter. Councilor Pitts requested that the Audit Department do a check of the cutters so that the cutters be located. Mrs. Garvin indicated that the number of cutters requested was delivered and signed for. Ms. Miller added that the cutters were not missing and that Michelle Smith in PR would have a list of all recipients and they can all be accounted for.

Elrington- Hyde

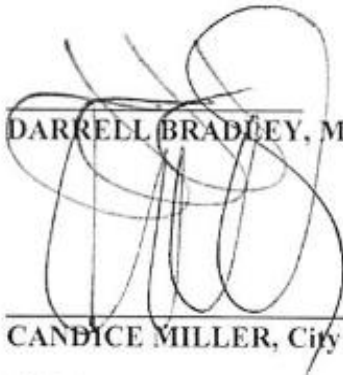
65. At an earlier meeting, the Council decided that they would not approve any paid event at the park. She stated that this weekend a paid Carnival event was scheduled inside the park. Ms. Miller added that the event was to be hosted by the park vendors association. The Mayor stated that the policy does not apply to the park vendors. He added that no outside entity can close the park for an event but if the vendors wants to do an event that is fine. Councilor Pitts asked if it would be a concert type event. Ms. Miller indicated that it would be a competition among the carnival group that would be done on stage in the afternoon.
66. Ms. Rudon stated that something needs to be put in place to monitor the events because people who are turned down by the Council would use the association as a route to get their event done.
67. Mrs. Ordonez requested that Council approve the change in fees proposed by the Revenue Committee. The proposed rates are:
 - a) Change of ownership \$15 to \$25
 - b) Change of color \$15 to \$25
 - c) Duplicate Registration \$15 to \$25
 - d) Duplicate Sticker \$15 to \$25
 - e) Road service permit \$250 annually

Additionally she requested enforcement of the Grave fees by law.

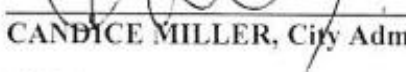
[Councilor Edwards left 4:32 Quorum lost]

68. Councilor Hyde informed Mrs. Ordonez that this would have to be passed through local government. Mrs. McKenzie said that she would review the proposal since she wasn't aware of it and discuss it with Mr. Palacio from Local Government. The Mayor said the enforcement of the fees can occur but the change in rates has to be brought back.
69. Councilor Hyde raised the issue for the Liquor license granted to the Chill Spot. She stated that the bar is across from a church and a school. Ms. McKenzie stated that no objection came from YWCA and the opening hours of the establishment is outside the hours of the church.
70. Councilor Hyde stated her concern with Get Moving Belize; she stated that although it is not operating currently she feels that it should not be continued in the future.
71. Deputy Samuels raised the issue of police shutting down of Chinese owned stores at 9 p.m. even though they have a license to sell beyond that time. Mayor stated that they are working with the police as best as possible. Ms. Miller indicated that they can't stop the police, however they met with Mr. Williams and he assured the Board that they would not close the shops until next year after the Board reviews the licenses. None the less, the police continues to close the stores.

72. Mrs. McKenzie added that the LBA members should use the claim form for their attendance, instead of the minutes.
 73. Mr. Raul Pelayo was granted an audience with the Council for him to present his rendering for the Mayan Cable Tubing project.
 74. The Mayor requested that a Public meeting be held next Wednesday at 6pm for Mr. Pelayo to make a presentation to the residents.
 75. The Mayor moved for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Hyde motioned that the meeting stands adjourned; Councilor Pitts seconded the motion. **MOTION CARRIED**
- All Councilors present voted in favor to adjourn the meeting. Meeting was adjourned at 5:18 pm.



DARRELL BRADLEY, Mayor



CANDICE MILLER, City Administrator

