

**MINUTES of REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

Caucus Room, Belize City Council

10:00 a.m.

August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**Present:**

1. Mr. Allan Pollard Jr.	Acting Mayor
2. Mr. Albert Vaughan	Councilor
3. Ms. Natasha Pipersburgh	Councilor
4. Ms. Kaya Cattouse	Councilor
5. Mr. Edmund Kwan	Councilor
6. Mr. Michael Novelo	Councilor
7. Ms. Deannie Requeña	Councilor
Mrs. Stephanie Lindo-Garbutt	City Administrator
Mr. Eluide Miller	Manager, Office of the Mayor

**Present Virtually:**

8. Ms. Stephanie Hamilton	Councilor
9. Mr. Micah Goodin	Councilor

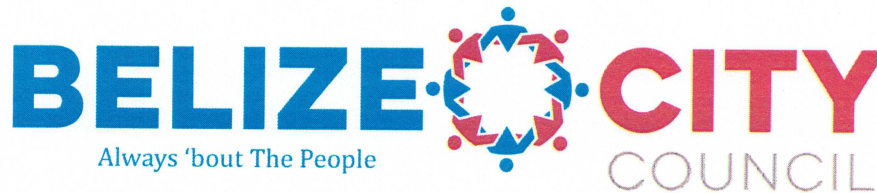
**Absent with reason:**

10. His Worship Bernard Wagner	Mayor
11. Mr. Javier Castellanos	Councilor

Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. called the meeting to order at 10:16 a.m.

**1.0 Belize National Prayer**

Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. led all in reciting the Belize National Prayer.



## 2.0 Welcome Remarks

- 2.1 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. welcomed all to the Council meeting. Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. then extended well wishes to Mayor Wagner who is currently out of office on medical leave.
- 2.2 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. highlighted the presence of Councilor Hamilton and Councilor Goodin who are both attending the session virtually and thanked them for being present. Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. highlighted the importance of participating in these sessions as it is the people's work being done.
- 2.3 Councilor Vaughan noted that the Council has been through some troubling times and noted that he is not one to pretend as though nothing has happened. Councilor Vaughan notified the Caucus that he was threatened by Councilor Goodin via phone call and demanded an apology before moving forward. Councilor Vaughan then highlighted the continued disrespect shown on the part of Councilor Goodin including the way in which he resigned from the post of Deputy Mayor.
- 2.4 Councilor Vaughan expressed that he fully supports Councilor Goodin in furthering his education but noted that he must understand his colleagues require respect. Councilor Vaughan then reiterated that the Council deserves an apology from Councilor Goodin as they have been very generous to him despite his continued disrespectful behavior. Councilor Vaughan shared that he is open to apologizing for his part and stated that he does not believe the meeting should proceed without an apology from Councilor Goodin.

Councilor Kwan arrived at the meeting at 10:24 a.m.

- 2.5 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. asked Councilor Goodin if he is willing to make an apology to Councilor Vaughan.
- 2.6 Councilor Goodin shared that he will not apologize and never will. Councilor Goodin then asked for the Council meeting to proceed.
- 2.7 Councilor Vaughan expressed that it is the Council who Councilor Goodin owes an apology to, not himself.





### **3.0 Ratification of the June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Special Meeting Minutes**

- 3.1 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. asked all members to review the minutes of the June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022, special meeting in the event they did not get to do so beforehand.
- 3.2 Correction to (3.6) of the special meeting minutes. Replace “service” with “serve”.
- 3.3 Correct typographical error at (3.7) of the special meeting minutes. “Councilors” not “Councnilors”.
- 3.4 Councilor Pipersburgh moved for the June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022, special meeting minutes to be ratified. Seconded by Councilor Kwan.

### **4.0 Matters arising from Minutes**

- 4.1 The City Administrator shared that most of the matters of the minutes will be addressed in her presentation.
- 4.2 (4.15) – The City Administrator shared that the Council has applied to the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) through its office in Jamaica for a donation of two compactor trucks. The City Administrator noted that she believes this request will be approved by all indications shown so far.
- 4.3 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. shared that the Council held a very successful Pee Wee Basketball League and highlighted that he had a good time playing the exhibition match where the Deputy Mayor’s team took on the Mayor’s team. Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. also highlighted that this match had the participation of staff members and noted that he was pleased to see so much support from the public. Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. noted that these are the type of events that will bring communities together.
- 4.4 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. noted that the various initiatives hosted by the Council over the summer shows that the Council’s mandate goes well beyond streets. Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. congratulated the Council for their efforts to improve the social fabric of Belize City through the various programs offered and thanked all staff members who played a role in bringing those programs to fruition.



- 4.5 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. also congratulated the Council for hosting its first Summer Festival held on the Belize Civic Center Grounds and highlighted that this event showcased the various cultures of Belize and all it has to offer.

## 5.0 Announcements by the Deputy Mayor

- 5.1 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. encouraged all his fellow Council members to participate in the various activities to be held as a part of the upcoming September Celebrations.

## 6.0 Presentation: Policy Decisions – Mrs. Stephanie Lindo-Garbutt, City Administrator

- 6.1 The City Administrator notified the Council that she would be making a presentation on policy decisions and updates. The City Administrator started her presentation by sharing a quote which speaks to effective leadership and highlighted that this quote sets the tone for the summer the Council has had and the upcoming September Celebrations.
- 6.2 The City Administrator outlined the Council's current fuel allocation and highlighted the increased cost in fuel over recent months. The City Administrator then introduced a proposal for the Council to issue a standard fuel allowance as opposed to issuing fuel as a cost saving measure.
- 6.3 Several Council members shared their concerns over the proposal as they believe the approach would impact productivity and morale.
- 6.4 The City Administrator shared that she would note the concerns shared by the Council members and discuss it with the Management Team to see if there is a more effective approach that can be taken.
- 6.5 Councilor Vaughan highlighted that he is aware that the Enforcement Unit has an issue in relation to their fuel allotment and asked for this to be considered when exploring alternative solutions.





- 6.6 The City Administrator shared the phased rollout of increments approach with the members of the Council. The City Administrator highlighted that approximately 17% of outstanding increments are from the 2015-2019 period. Rollout of these outstanding increments were put on pause with the onset of the covid-19 pandemic with a few being processed at separation, promotion or on a case by case basis.
- 6.7 The City Administrator informed the Council that all employees with outstanding increments received at least one increment and their retroactive increment payment. Through this exercise, more than 286 families were positively impacted during a time where it matters most. The City Administrator highlighted that this was a gesture of good faith by the Council to offer employees a helping hand in the back-to-school season.
- 6.8 The City Administrator shared that the Council is set to carry out its annual Back-to-School distribution of school bags with school supplies to all schools across the city. The City Administrator then highlighted that this year's drive was done in collaboration with the Diaspora, the Belize City Child Advisory Body and the Belize City Council Staff who helped in securing the goal of five hundred (500) packed school bags for distribution to students across the city. In addition, school packages with cleaning supplies will be distributed to all thirty-one (31) schools across the city.
- 6.9 The City Administrator then reiterated that the Council had a very dynamic summer through the various events held. A total of two hundred and thirty-five (235) youths were impacted with some of them showcasing their entrepreneurial skills at the Back-to-School Super Sale held in early August. In addition, ten (10) youths participated in the Council's Summer Work Program where they rehabilitated the Digi Park over a five (5) week period. The City Administrator highlighted that the Summer Program came to an end with the Council's Basketball Showcase where the Mayor took on the Deputy Mayor in a basketball match which had the participation of staff members of the Council. This match was held following the finals of the Council's Pee Wee Basketball League.



- 6.10 The City Administrator shared a list of upcoming initiatives which focus on the social infrastructure in the city through the provision of family-oriented events in a safe space. These events include:
- Flag Raising Ceremony (Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>)
  - Overpass Lighting (Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>)
  - Fire Engine Parade (Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>)
  - Lord Rhaburn Plaza Inauguration (Sept 9<sup>th</sup>)
  - 10th Bram (Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>)
  - National Service Day (Sept. 19<sup>th</sup>)
  - Independence Day Ceremony, Uniform Parade & Bash (Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>)
  - Half Marathon (Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>)
  - Movie Night (once/month)
  - Downtown Super Sale Anniversary Edition (Oct.)
- 6.11 The City Administrator also informed the Council that the Programs Department has put out a notice to attract applicants for Cohort 3 of the Youth Shadow Council.
- 6.12 The City Administrator then highlighted key infrastructural undertaking by the Council including street upgrades to approximately eighteen (18) streets, canal dredging and lining and Holy Emmanuel Street, the rehabilitation of Constitution Park and Memorial Park and the launch of the Student Hub at City Hall.
- 6.13 The City Administrator shared three (3) notices as it relates to the Belize City Carnival Road March 2022. These notices were in reference to:
- Parking and Standing Zones
  - Liquor License and Peddlers License
  - Motor Vehicle Clearance
- 6.14 The City Administrator noted that the Council has met with the Carnival Association, the National Celebrations Commission (NCC) and the Liquor Licensing Board to agree on these regulations with a view for the Carnival Road March to run as smoothly as possible. By way of these regulations, liquor licenses issued will be limited and the height of participating trucks and floats will be regulated.
- 6.15 The City Administrator highlighted the recent merging of the Council's Enforcement Team.





- 6.16 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. commended the City Administrator and the Council's Management Team for the merging of the Council's Enforcement arm.
- 6.17 The City Administrator ended her presentation by sharing a correspondence sent to her by the City Planner, Ms. Carla Patnett. Ms. Patnett has expressed her interest in working for the Council on a contractual basis after she reaches retirement age in the coming months. The City Administrator shared that this matter will be brought back to the Council at a future meeting for deliberation.
- 7.0 Presentation: Michael Finnegan Market Rent Normalization – Mr. Troy Smith, Valuations Manager**
- 7.1 Mr. Smith introduced a proposal to achieve rent normalization at the Michael Finnegan Market. Mr. Smith noted that this is necessary to standardize rent data. Mr. Smith then highlighted that the market currently has a total of seventy-seven (77) booths, and it is standard for the Council to charge new vendors \$2.00 per square foot but some vendors are still paying less than that.
- 7.2 Mr. Smith shared the floor plan for the Michael Finnegan Market and highlighted those vendors that are paying less than the standard fee for square foot.
- 7.3 The City Administrator shared that the Council's technical team met with the market vendors and consulted with them on this proposal. In addition to the standardizing of rental cost, the vendors will now be responsible to cover the cost of water utilized in their respective booths as the Council has been covering that cost in the past.
- 7.4 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. shared that vendors who want to expand their booths at the market should be informed that an increase in their rental fees is to be expected.
- 7.5 The City Administrator highlighted that only a small percentage of market vendors will see a very miniscule increase in their rental fees because of the proposed fee standardization.
- 7.6 Councilor Novelo noted that he believes the vendors should be consulted once more before the proposed standardization is implemented.



- 7.7 The City Administrator shared that the Council's technical team will consult with the vendors to be affected by the proposed standardizing and will also hold a more general consultation with all vendors at the market before this proposed project is brought back to the caucus for deliberation.

## 8.0 Notices

- 8.1 Councilor Pipersburgh shared a request submitted by Mr. Shane Williams to adopt the Triangle Park on Neals Penn Road. Councilor Pipersburgh highlighted that the Parks and Playgrounds Department has requested for Mr. Williams to submit an action plan before progressing his application.
- 8.2 Councilor Requeña informed the Council that she will be participating in the Carnival Road March 2022 which is scheduled for September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Councilor Vaughan asked to be excused from the meeting as he has an urgent matter to attend to.

## 9.0 Questions

- 9.1 No questions were tabled.

## 10.0 Petitions

- 10.1 No petitions were tabled.

## 11.0 Presentation of Reports from Councilors

- 11.1 Councilor Pipersburgh shared that members of the Child Advisory Body (CAB) are undergoing an air quality monitoring exercise that will end within the next two weeks. At the end of this cohort, CAB members will submit a report on their finding to UNICEF.





- 11.2 Councilor Pipersburgh shared that CAB is also planning an initiative to commemorate Literacy Day.
- 11.3 Councilor Pipersburgh shared that a Technical Steering Committee Meeting is scheduled for October 2022 where the Belize City Council should be finding out where it stands in terms of the possibility for future certifications under the Child Friendly Municipalities Initiative. The next certifications are set to be announced in the month of November 2023.
- 11.4 Councilor Novelo shared that he is delighted to see the efforts being made by the Council's Sanitation Department to carry out additional drainage works throughout the city. Councilor Novelo then shared his concern over the rain waters that are settling at the Lord Ridge Cemetery.
- 11.5 The City Administrator indicated that additional staff members will be hired to assist the Cemetery Department in its efforts to better maintain the cemeteries. The City Administrator then shared a plan to contract a private company in the interim to rectify the situation.
- 11.6 Councilor Cattouse highlighted the increased efforts by the Sanitation Department to clear drains across the city following the recent increase in rainfall. Councilor Cattouse then highlighted that the Belize City Half Marathon will be returning on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and encouraged all fellow member to participate. Councilor Cattouse then shared that a designated person will be posted at each lane to provide refreshments and to ensure all participants stay along the correct route.
- 12.0 Request for leave to move the adjournment of the Council on definite matter of urgent public concern**
- 12.1 No matters were tabled.



### 13.0 Motions by Councilors

13.1 Councilor Pipersburgh moved a motion for the Council to approve fees for the usage of Parks as follows:

- For larger parks:
  - Concerts and other paid events to be held with the attendance of over 500 people will carry a fee of \$1,500.00.
  - Other events with over 300 people but less than 500 people will carry a fee of \$700.00.
  - Other events with less than 300 people but carry a fee of \$350.00.
  - Standard Cleanup Fee of \$150.00.
- For smaller parks:
  - Standard Fee of \$200.00 inclusive of cleanup fee.

Councilor Pipersburgh shared that these fees are to be charged for daily use and religious events, schools, health promotion, promotion of arts are to be considered for waiver with the Council being listed as a sponsor. In these instances, the cleanup fee may be applied, depending on the nature of the event. Seconded by Councilor Cattouse. **MOTION PASSED.**

13.2 Councilor Pipersburgh moved a motion for the Council to seek approval from the Government of Belize to acquire Parcel No. 701, No. 702, and No. 707 and to use these parcels which have already been developed as a park (Charles Burton Park) as public space. Seconded by Councilor Requeña. **MOTION PASSED.**

13.3 Councilor Pipersburgh moved a motion for the Council to approve a write-off of for Ms. Marilyn Gabourel of M&D Restaurant in the sum of \$8,250.00 for rental fees and \$225.00 for Trade License fees. This is after Ms. Gabourel declared that she is terminally ill in the United States of America and will not return to Belize. **MOTION PASSED.** The Council will recommend to the Trade Board for the outstanding Trade License fees to be written off.





- 13.4 Councilor Pipersburgh moved a motion for Mr. Paul Ferguson to rent Kiosk #6 at the Digi Park which was formally M&D Restaurant for the purpose of establishing a restaurant that will sell various soup dishes. Seconded by Councilor Requeña. **MOTION PASSED.** This motion was approved under the condition that Mr. Ferguson finalize an arrangement with the Council as it relates to the parking of his food truck in the Digi Park area.
- 13.5 Councilor Novelo moved a motion for the Council to approve the waiving of all burial fees for individuals who pass away while in the service of the Council, and for past employees who have served the Council for a period of at least five (5) years. The proposed fees to be waived include:
- Grave Space – \$150 (Lord Ridge Cemetery), \$250 (Eternal Garden)
  - Building Permit - \$250.00
  - Administrative Fee- \$50.00
  - Traffic Escort - \$50.00

Seconded by Councilor Requeña. **MOTION PASSED.**

#### 14.0 New Business

- 14.1 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. moved a motion for the Council to renew the Marketing Agreement between Belize City Council and Breaking Belize News (BBN) for a period of one (1) year, effective 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022 through 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023. Seconded by Councilor Pipersburgh. **MOTION PASSED.**
- 14.2 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. moved a motion to ratify seven (7) motions previously passed via round robin. These motions include:
1. A motion to approve a letter of No Objection for a Helipad to be installed on Belize Healthcare Partners Roof.
  2. A motion to approve an increase in the limit of retail investments, to enact new conditions for the sale of municipal securities and to revoke resolution No. 47 of 2021.
  3. A motion to approve the Belize City Council's support for the Safe Municipalities, Safe Families Project.



4. A motion to approve the Amendment Deed to the Fiscal Services Agency Agreement between the Belize City Council and Heritage Financial Services.
5. A motion to approve the Amendment Deed to the Engagement Agreement between Alpha Capital LLP and the Belize City Council.
6. A motion to approve a contract extension for the Chief Internal Auditor.
7. A motion to approve the adoption of a Policy Framework for Enhancing Urban Public Space.

Seconded by Councilor Pipersburgh. **MOTION PASSED.**

**15.0 Submissions from the Building Unit – Ms. Chelsea Perera, Assistant City Planner**

- 15.1 A request by Inter-Coastal Developers Ltd. for a No Objection Letter to a proposal submitted for the construction of The City Marina slated to be constructed on Parcel No. 371, Block 45 in the Fort George/Pickstock Registration Section. The Planning Department has no objections to this request provided that Inter-Coastal Developers Ltd. obtain all necessary clearances from the Department of the Environment, Belize Port Authority, Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute, Land Utilization Authority, Ministry of Natural Resources, National Fire Service, and the Fisheries Department ahead of the start of the proposed project. **MOTION PASSED.**
- 15.2 A request by Mr. Jamal Carr for the Council to close a portion of land demarcated as a street at the end of Hercilett Moody Street meeting with Vernon Street in Queen Square West so that he could apply to acquire the piece of property. **MOTION PASSED.** After deliberations, Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. and the Council realized that there is a possible easement to Parcel No. 687, No. 699, and No. 700 and as such the proprietors of these parcels will still have access to their property.





- 15.3 A request by Ms. Josephine Williams for the Council to close a portion of land next to the property where she currently resides on Malcolm Street in the Port Loyola Division so that she could apply to acquire the piece of property. **MOTION PASSED.** Ms. Williams's request was accompanied by a no objection letter from the Area Representative of the Port Loyola Division, Hon. Gilroy Usher who requested for the Council to assist Ms. Williams as best as possible.

#### 16.0 Other Business

- 16.1 No other business was tabled.

#### 17.0 Adjournment

- 17.1 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. thanked all Council members for their participation and thanked the City Administrator for her very insightful presentation. Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. also thanked Councilor Hamilton and Councilor Goodin for taking time out to attend the meeting virtually.
- 17.2 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. moved for the meeting to be adjourned. Seconded by Councilor Cattouse. Meeting adjourned at 2:53 p.m.

  
**ALLAN POLLARD JR.**  
**DEPUTY MAYOR**

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

