



MINUTES of REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Caucus Room, Belize City Council

10:00 a.m.

January 20th, 2023

Present:

- 1. **His Worship Bernard Wagner** Mayor
 - 2. **Mr. Allan Pollard Jr.** Deputy Mayor
 - 3. **Mr. Albert Vaughan** Councilor
 - 4. **Ms. Natasha Pipersburgh** Councilor
 - 5. **Ms. Kaya Cattouse** Councilor
 - 6. **Mr. Edmund Kwan** Councilor
 - 7. **Mr. Michael Novelo** Councilor
 - 8. **Ms. Stephanie Hamilton** Councilor
 - 9. **Mr. Javier Castellanos** Councilor
 - 10. **Ms. Deannie Requeña** Councilor
 - 11. **Mr. Micah Goodin** Councilor
- Mrs. Stephanie Lindo-Garbutt City Administrator
Mr. Eluide Miller Manager, Office of the Mayor

Mayor Wagner called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

1.0 Belize National Prayer

Mayor Wagner led all in reciting the Belize National Prayer.



2.0 Order of Distinguished Services (ODS) Welcome

- 2.1 Mayor Wagner announced that delegates from the People's United Party's (PUP) Order of the Distinguished Services (ODS) will attend the meeting as observers to see how the Council conducts its business. Mayor Wagner notified the Council that these representatives would arrive later than expected, but that they would still be present at some point of the meeting.

Councilor Kwan and Councilor Goodin arrived at the meeting at 10:06 a.m.

3.0 Welcome Address

- 3.1 Mayor Wagner welcomed all members of the Council to the meeting, emphasizing how fantastic it is to see Councilor Goodin in person after several months of study leave. Mayor Wagner stressed the importance of convening the full team to begin the year as they strive to chart a course forward.
- 3.2 Mayor Wagner shared the video entitled "Wisdom of the Geese" to encourage all members to work together as a unified group throughout the year. The video emphasizes that the leader's responsibility is to know how to guide others; to use and build talents that will motivate their people to follow them. Authentic leaders inspire their teams, create momentum, and foster an environment in which ordinary people achieve remarkable outcomes.

Councilor Requeña arrived at the meeting at 10:08 a.m.

4.0 Ratification of the November 23rd, 2022, Special Meeting Minutes

- 4.1 Mayor Wagner asked all members to review the minutes of the November 23rd, 2022, special meeting in the event they did not get to do so beforehand.
- 4.2 The City Administrator shared a file with all Council members which outlined changes she is requesting to the meeting minutes.



- 4.3 Councilor Hamilton expressed worry about the proposed changes and requested fellow Council members to clarify whether the meeting minutes should be recorded as a summary or verbatim.
- 4.4 Councilor Castellanos noted that meeting minutes are to be a summary of matters discussed.
- 4.5 Mayor Wagner echoed Councilor Castellanos' thoughts, stating that meeting minutes have always been prepared as a summary of matters discussed and that this has been the case since he entered office in 2018 and should not be changed.
- 4.6 Mayor Wagner welcomed Mr. Adrian “Danny” Madrid of the ODS to the meeting and thanked him for taking the time out to.
- 4.7 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. was concerned about delving too far into the meeting minutes. Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. further stated that these minutes have always served as a synopsis of matters discussed.
- 4.8 Given her approach, Councilor Novelo feels as if though the City Administrator is on a completely different team than that of the Council.
- 4.9 Based on his recollection of the prior Council meeting, Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. stated that several of the changes/additions requested by the City Administrator appear to be inaccurate.
- 4.10 Councilor Castellanos moved to have the suggested changes/additions to be disregarded.
- 4.11 Councilor Kwan seconded the motion of Councilor Castellanos. Councilor Kwan then stated that he does not support the revisions since they are inaccurate based on his recollection of the previous Council meeting's discussions.
- 4.12 The City Administrator stated that the draft meeting minutes are incorrect because they do not sufficiently represent her involvement during the previous Council meeting.

- 4.13 Mayor Wagner stated that he personally reviewed the meeting minutes and that, to the best of his knowledge, they accurately reflect what occurred at the previous meeting. Mayor Wagner expressed his belief that the City Administrator's recommended changes/additions are very opinionated.
- 4.14 Councilor Castellanos shared that he supports Councilor Kwan's position that the suggested changes/additions are inaccurate.
- 4.15 Councilor Castellanos then moved for the meeting minutes to be accepted as presented. Seconded by Councilor Novelo. All Council members agreed to have the meeting minutes accepted as presented.
- 4.16 Mayor Wagner stated that the protocol for recording meeting minutes has been in place for some time and would continue to be so. All Council meetings' minutes will be presented as a summary of all discussion.

5.0 Announcements by Mayor

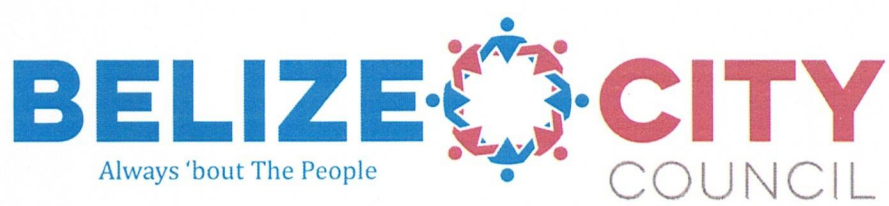
- 5.1 Mayor Wagner reported that the Stann Creek Branch of the All-China Federation of Overseas Taishanese in Belize donated 400 grocery bags to the Council. Mayor Wagner stated that these bags were provided to city residents in need.
- 5.2 Mayor Wagner emphasized that the Council hosted a flag-raising ceremony on November 25th, 2022, to mark the start of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence in Belize, in partnership with the National Women's Commission.
- 5.3 Mayor Wagner stated that the Council had accepted a \$534,100.00 donation from the Embassy of Japan in Belize to procure two new garbage compactor trucks for the city. The Council has subsequently signed the deal and is awaiting the transfer of the funds before proceeding with the procurement.
- 5.4 Mayor Wagner expressed his gratitude to his colleagues for joining him on the ground to distribute much-needed disaster relief supplies to residents on many occasions following Hurricane Lisa. Mayor Wagner stated that the total value of goods distributed currently surpasses \$350,000.00, with the majority of these being donated to the Council.



- 5.5 Mayor Wagner reported that the Council hosted the 5th Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on December 8th, 2022, and that the event was well attended despite the occasional rain throughout the evening.
- 5.6 Mayor Wagner praised the Council's staff for their efforts throughout the 2022 hurricane season. Mayor Wagner emphasized that it was a busy period, but the Council's team did an excellent job of recovering from Hurricane Lisa.
- 5.7 Mayor Wagner shared that the Council held the 2nd Annual Youth Panel Discussion on gender-based violence against women and girls on December 7th, 2022, in collaboration with the United National Population Fund Agency. (UNFPA).
- 5.8 Mayor Wagner stated that it was very exciting to receive some fresh sweet peppers from the Council's Urban Garden's first crop. Mayor Wagner stated that the first harvest was distributed among City Hall employees. Following the first harvest, the Council established a partnership with Chon Saan Palace, which agreed to purchase the Council's Urban Garden's sweet peppers. Within one month, 88 pounds of sweet peppers were harvested. Mayor Wagner commended Councilor Pipersburgh for championing this great project.
- 5.9 Mayor Wagner stated that those staff employees whose homes were damaged by Hurricane Lisa's effects got relief from the Council, as approved by the Council at the preceding Council meeting on November 23rd, 2022. Staff members were placed into categories based on the level of damages suffered and were given a monetary contribution to assist with those repairs.
- 5.10 Mayor Wagner stated that he gave a ham or turkey to one hundred (100) police officers from the Racoon Street Police Station as a gesture of gratitude for their efforts in policing the city.
- 5.11 Mayor Wagner emphasized that Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. and Councilor Requeña appeared on the Krem Krismus 2022 show, where they distributed ham and turkey vouchers as well as a flat screen television on behalf of the Council as a way of spreading the Christmas cheer with city residents.



- 5.12 Mayor Wagner stated that the Council's Annual Staff Christmas Mass and Social was held inside the Belize Civic Center on December 9th, 2022. Mayor Wagner added that this was an excellent opportunity for Council members to engage staff workers and share the holiday spirit. Mayor Wagner emphasized that several staff members won awards at this event for their great work performance for the year based on recommendations from their peers.
- 5.13 Following the staff social, Mayor Wagner announced the Council's 2nd Annual Glow Ride, coordinated by Councilor Cattouse. Mayor Wagner praised Councilor Cattouse for her efforts and stated that the event was a success yet again.
- 5.14 Mayor Wagner then stated that the Council had its Christmas in the Park Christmas event inside the Memorial Park on December 10th, 2022, and that each Council member was given the opportunity to invite underprivileged children to enjoy a Christmas movie, snacks, and a gift, courtesy of the Council. Mayor Wagner congratulated all the Council members who took part in this event.
- 5.15 Mayor Wagner stated that the Council organized its first-ever Holiday Night Festival inside Buttonwood Bay Park on December 16th, 2022, in partnership with Hon. Kareem Musa. Mayor Wagner stated that the event was well attended, and that the Council intends to make it an annual occurrence. Mayor Wagner then mentioned that on the same night, Councilor Requeña led the very first Belize Youth Fest, which was also highly attended. Mayor Wagner praised Councilor Requeña for spearheading this program, to which the Council contributed financially.
- 5.16 Mayor Wagner then acknowledged the Council's Christmas Decorating Committee and the Public Relations Department for constructing a memorial holiday season display in downtown Belize City's Battlefield Park. Mayor Wagner emphasized that this show was enjoyed by many families during the holiday season and urged the Council to build on these efforts in the coming holiday season.
- 5.17 Mayor Wagner shared that Councilor Requeña represented the Council at the Annual Salvation Army Holiday event which caters to primary school students. Mayor Wagner thanked Councilor Requeña for taking the time out to attend on behalf of the Council.



- 5.18 Mayor Wagner stated that he hosted a small holiday social for the Council's Management Team on December 21st, 2022, as a gesture of appreciation for the hard work they put into running their individual departments at the Council. Mayor Wagner stated that he handed a token of thanks to all managers at this event.
- 5.19 Mayor Wagner then announced that the Council had successfully issued its annual Christmas message, year in review video, and Christmas message video on behalf of the Youth Shadow Council and Child Advisory Body. Mayor Wagner praised the Public Relations Department for changing the structure of the Council's Christmas message video, noting that the video produced this year was enthusiastically welcomed by people.
- 5.20 Mayor Wagner notified all Council members that he accepted a \$50,000.00 donation from the Feinstein Group of Companies, which will be utilized to provide help to individuals on Belize City's Southside who experienced damage from Hurricane Lisa. Mayor Wagner expressed his appreciation for the group's significant donation.
- 5.21 Mayor Wagner said that the Council has officially begun its 2023 Property Tax Incentives, which offer a 15% discount on payments made in January, 10% in February, and 5% in March of 2023.
- 5.22 Mayor Wagner then notified all Council members that he had accepted a \$40,000.00 grant from the Belize Credit Union League, which would be utilized to provide help to residents whose homes were damaged by Hurricane Lisa.
- 5.23 Mayor Wagner stated that he began the year by appearing on numerous news outlets to convey the Council's 2023 plan with all city citizens. Mr. Neil Hall, the Council's E-Transit Start-up Coordinator, who led the discourse about the Council's Electric Bus Pilot Project, joined Mayor Wagner.
- 5.24 Mayor Wagner stated that on January 4th, 2023, the Council lost one of its staff members. Mayor Wagner emphasized that Ms. Jennifer Herrera was always a hard worker and requested the Council to pray for her family during this difficult time.

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- 5.25 Mayor Wagner emphasized that the Council finished concreting Wood Street and rehabilitating numerous other streets in the Conch Shell Bay area, as well as Santa Barbara and Zericote Street.
- 5.25 Mayor Wagner announced that the intersection of St. Thomas and St. Joseph Streets is approaching completion.
- 5.26 Mayor Wagner announced that the concreting of Holy Emmanuel Street is now complete, and that the dredging and lining of the surrounding canal with gabions has already begun. Mayor Wagner concluded his updates by stating that this project is expected to be completed within the next month.

6.0 Remarks by the ODS – Mr. Adrian “Danny” Madrid

- 6.1 Mr. Madrid indicated that it is an honor to be in the presence of all Council members and that he is there as a witness, not to disrupt the discussion. According to Mr. Madrid, the ODS will be visiting all municipalities in the following weeks and months.
- 6.2 Mr. Madrid stated that councils are not always as united as they should be, but he encouraged all Belize City Council members to work as a team to achieve their mandate in the most effective way possible.
- 6.3 Mayor Wagner expressed gratitude to Mr. Madrid for attending the meeting and for his words of support.

7.0 Notices

- 7.1 No notices were tabled.

8.0 Questions

- 8.1 No questions were tabled.



9.0 Petitions

9.1 No petitions were tabled.

10.0 Presentation of Reports from Councilors

- 10.1 As part of Phase 1 of the Food Hub Project, Councilor Hamilton announced the installation of eight (8) new booths on Mahogany Street. Councilor Hamilton stated that the project team is currently collaborating with Belize Electricity Limited (BEL) to address safety concerns associated with a power line near the booths. She then announced that a meeting has been set for this Thursday, and shared that the mayor and representatives from the Belize Tourism Board (BTB) are expected to attend.
- 10.2 Councilor Pipersburgh announced that the Digi Park now has eight (8) new solar lights that have replaced those damaged by Hurricane Lisa. Councilor Pipersburgh then declared that the debris left behind at the Pier One location has been removed and that she will bring a motion about this location to the Council's next meeting.
- 10.3 Councilor Pipersburgh then revealed that the Works Department had painted the structures in Buttonwood Bay Park and that hardcore materials had been placed down to alleviate water settlement in the park.
- 10.4 Councilor Pipersburgh then noted that neighbors in the area are now reporting that water is settling on the park's basketball court because of the other areas being filled with solid material, and she urged the Council to help address this issue.
- 10.5 Councilor Pipersburgh requested an update on the Memorial Park's electricity from the City Administrator.
- 10.6 The City Administrator stated that BEL discovered an illegal connection that was initiated by a former vendor in the park, causing BEL to disconnect the entire park. The City Administrator then stated that the Council is now trying to bring the park's wiring up to code before BEL reconnects the power.



- 10.7 Councilor Pipersburgh announced that the stage at Memorial Park has been repaired after being damaged by Hurricane Lisa.
- 10.8 Councilor Pipersburgh stated that the City Emergency Management Organization (CEMO) will begin shelter inspections on January 24th, 2023, and that Councilor Vaughan will be invited.
- 10.9 Councilor Pipersburgh stated that given what is now available in the urban garden, the Council should be able to secure at least two more harvests. She went on to say that the Council will plant cabbages after those two harvests. Councilor Pipersburgh then stated that she is working on a project plan to incorporate an urban garden at Wesley Junior College, Edward P. Yorke High School, and St. John's College.
- 10.10 Following a discussion between some of the market merchants with outstanding arrears and the mayor, Councilor Castellanos stated that the vendors at the Michael Finnegan Market should be more compliant with the payment of their fees to the Council.
- 10.11 According to Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr., the Council has just finished concreting the intersection of St. Thomas and St. Joseph Streets in preparation for the installation of new traffic and pedestrian crossing lights.
- 10.12 In order to maximize efficiency, Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. agreed with Mayor Wagner that the Council should outsource some of the street work scheduled for 2023. Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. invited all Council members to communicate with their respective area representatives on street upgrades slated for their constituency.
- 10.13 Mayor Wagner stated that he will meet with all Area Representatives in Belize City to discuss projects for each constituency. Mayor Wagner stated that this should aid in determining which streets require immediate repair.



- 10.14 Councilor Vaughan wished everyone on the Council a Happy New Year. Councilor Vaughan then thanked Mayor Wagner and the Council on behalf of the Executive of the Freetown Constituency for aiding citizens in the constituency with relief materials following Hurricane Lisa. Mayor Wagner and the Council, according to Councilor Vaughan, donated 20 mattresses and several pantries, all of which were distributed and accounted for.
- 10.15 Councilor Vaughan emphasized that the repair of the traffic signal at the intersection of Faber's Road and Central American Boulevard, which is a heavily trafficked intersection, should be expedited. Councilor Vaughan stated that he is convening a meeting with the full traffic team to determine how best to complete the repair.
- 10.16 Councilor Vaughan praised Mayor Wagner and the Council for their commitment to install traffic and pedestrian crossing lights at the intersection of St. Thomas and St. Joseph Streets in the Freetown Constituency.
- 10.17 Councilor Vaughan concluded his briefing by stating that the online payment system for traffic services has been functioning well and that the Department is aiming to digitize vehicle inspections as well.
- 10.18 Mayor Wagner informed the City Administrator that the Ministry of Infrastructure and Housing (MIDH) must be notified of the non-operational traffic lights on Vernon Street.
- 10.19 Councilor Vaughan informed the Council that the traffic team will be looking into the parking situation on Holy Emmanuel Street, which has recently been a source of concern for residents.
- 10.20 Mayor Wagner emphasized the necessity of setting a strong precedent early in terms of parking on the freshly rehabilitated street.



- 10.21 Councilor Goodin stated that he has learned a lot from his recent studies and appreciated the Council for allowing him to attend Council meetings online while pursuing higher education. Councilor Goodin then praised the Council for its efforts, particularly the Belize City Cleanup Campaign following Hurricane Lisa and the series of events hosted over the Christmas holidays. Councilor Goodin concluded his update by encouraging all Council members to continue serving the people to the best of their abilities.
- 10.22 Councilor Cattouse praised all Council members who participated in the Glow Ride and stated that it was a huge success once again.
- 10.23 Councilor Cattouse stated that the Council has been successful in hiring additional employees to increase manpower in the Sanitation Department. Councilor Cattouse stated that the Sanitation Department is sometimes sidetracked when special requests arrive that do not align with their weekly work schedule.
- 10.24 Mayor Wagner stated that these exceptional requests are completely necessary at times and that the team must do everything possible to accommodate them. Mayor Wagner then emphasized the importance of increasing the Sanitation Department's cutting team to fifty people to effectively enhance staff to continue the city's bushing efforts.
- 10.25 Councilor Cattouse stated that a handover ceremony would be held next Tuesday to thank all agencies and organizations who assisted in the Belize City Cleanup Campaign following Hurricane Lisa. Mayor Wagner said that each of these agencies and groups will get a plaque in recognition of their contributions and dedication to the campaign.
- 10.26 According to Councilor Novelo, there was a robbery/break-in at the Cemetery Department in which two persons entered the site and then abducted and assaulted the security guard. Councilor Novelo stated that three Council batteries were stolen during the robbery.
- 10.27 Councilor Novelo asked the City Administrator for an update as it relates to the installation of cameras at the Cemetery Department Compound.
- 10.28 The City Administrator shared that these cameras have been installed.



- 10.29 Councilor Novelo praised Mayor Wagner and the Council for the pantry packages, hurricane relief materials, ham and turkey, and supplies afforded to all Council members.
- 10.30 Councilor Novelo commended the Council's personnel for their hard work over the holidays in coming up with new ideas and carrying out agreed-upon policies in an effective and efficient manner.
- 10.31 Mayor Wagner commended Councilor Novelo as it seems the Cemetery is now taken care of in a better way.
- 10.32 Councilor Novelo credited this improvement to the new hires and then noted that additional hires are still required to sustain and build on these efforts.
- 10.33 Councilor Kwan wished all members of the Council a Happy New Year. Councilor Kwan then thanked the Council and the staff for the excellent work done throughout the Christmas season.
- 10.34 Councilor Kwan reported that he recently met with the Embassy of the Republic of China (Taiwan) in Belize, who expressed strong interest in contributing to the Council's BCAP Program. Once this is completed, another cohort of the BCAP Program will be formed. Councilor Kwan also mentioned that Axiory is interested in returning to the program.
- 10.35 Councilor Requeña expressed gratitude to Mayor Wagner and his aide for their assistance in getting the Student Hub ahead. Councilor Requeña also praised the maintenance unit and Nando's Wholesale for donating the air conditioning units put in the Hub. Councilor Requeña stated that city children will now have a safe and comfortable space to learn outside of the classroom setting.
- 10.36 Councilor Requeña announced her plan to reinstate the weekend zoo trip for underprivileged children. Councilor Requeña then mentioned that she had been invited by the Mayor's Aide to educate a Standard 2 class at St. Mary's Primary School about the importance of Local Government, which she did. Councilor Requeña highlighted her willingness to carry out this program in schools throughout the city in the coming months.

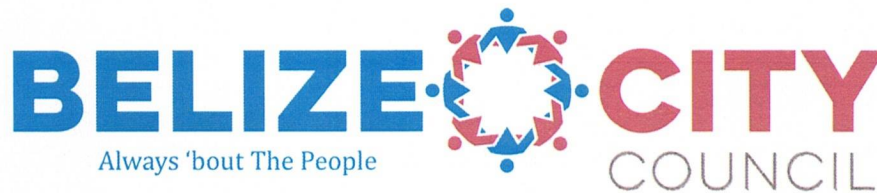
- 10.37 The Youth Fest, according to Councilor Requeña, was a huge success. Councilor Requeña announced her plan to collaborate with the Ministries of Education and Human Development to create a drive to register a few underprivileged students in school for the upcoming school year.
- 10.38 Mayor Wagner stated that he has observed Councilor Requeña grow from her time as a Shadow Councilor in 2020 to her current position as a Councilor. Mayor Wagner stated that while there may be growing pains, it is exciting to see the growth right before his eyes. Mayor Wagner went on to say that it is a sight to behold and that he is proud to see her take on the role of a positive influence and a leader.
- 11.0 Request for leave to move the adjournment of the Council on definite matter of urgent public concern**
- 11.1 No matters were tabled.
- 12.0 Motions by Councilors**
- 12.1 Councilor Castellanos offered a proposal to hold a Handyman Workshop in partnership with the Tubal Trade & Vocational Institute to certify existing uncertified workers in the disciplines of welding, electrical, woodwork, construction, hospitality, and air conditioning. Councilor Castellanos requested that the Council approve a \$1,000.00 offset for four (4) firms willing to assist with the Council by supplying the necessary resources to carry out the training sessions provided by the Tubal Trade & Vocational Institute (for 2023 only). Thrift City, Williams Supermarket, Twins Supermarket, and Golden Bay are among these four enterprises. Seconded by Councilor Novelo. **MOTION PASSED.**
- 12.2 Councilor Hamilton asked if this program would come at any cost to the Council.
- 12.3 Councilor Castellanos informed his colleagues that this program will be provided at no expense to the Council. The conceptual portion of the training sessions, according to Councilor Castellanos, will take place in the Caucus Room at City Hall, while the practical portion will take place at the Tubal Trade & Vocational Institute in Ladyville.

- 12.4 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. as well as Councilor Kwan and Novelo expressed their support for the proposed project.
- 12.5 Mayor Wagner stated that the Council would notify the Trade Board of its approval of the planned project and ask the Board to approve the offsets.

13.0 New Business

Procurement of Grader

- 13.1 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. proposed purchasing a new grader for the Council's Works Department, citing the frequent need for repairs on the present grader and the substantial amount of money spent on those repairs.
- 13.2 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. distributed a booklet outlining the grader's specifications and emphasized that this brand-new grader would only cost the Council about \$280,000.00.
- 13.3 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. stated that the purchase of this grader would undoubtedly boost the Works Department's effectiveness and efficiency, particularly when it comes to carrying out infrastructure projects throughout the city. The GR165 grader from XCMG is primarily used for big ground surface levelling, ditching, slope scraping, bulldozing, and other road maintenance.
- 13.4 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. emphasized the necessity for a new grader, adding that the current one was purchased by the previous administration many years ago. As a responsible administration, Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. believes this acquisition is fully reasonable and required.
- 13.5 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. went on to say that numerous major road building businesses in Belize use this brand of heavy-duty machinery. Deputy Mayor Pollard then revealed that an estimate obtained from Gentrac in Belize was nearly twice as expensive as the one being suggested.
- 13.6 Councilor Vaughan reiterated the need for a new grader and expressed that a new roller is needed as well.



- 13.7 Councilor Hamilton expressed her support for the motion and asked for details as it relates to the warranty.
- 13.8 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. shared that a warranty cannot be guaranteed given the favorable price point being offered to the Council.
- 13.9 Mayor Wagner indicated that a warranty agreement must be formalized, even if it means paying a bit more.
- 13.10 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. moved a motion for the Council to procure a XCMG brand GR165 Motor Grader with a view to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council's Works Department. Seconded by Councilor Castellanos. **MOTION PASSED.**
- 13.11 Given the concerns with the Council's current grader, Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. suggested that the Council rent a grader until the new one arrives in order for existing works to be completed in a more effective manner.
- 13.12 Mayor Wagner agreed with this recommendation and highlighted that Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. has been consistent since 2018, when he was instrumental in procuring the Council's new fleet of Traffic Enforcement pickup vehicles. Mayor Wagner then emphasized that the Council has significantly increased its equipment fleet and capacity since entering office, and he expressed a desire to get even more equipment in the future months.

Apollo Street Rehabilitation

- 13.13 Today, about 1,000 people dwell in the Belama Phase 4 and 5 areas, according to Councilor Vaughan. As a result, he has collaborated closely with the Honorable Francis Fonseca to improve the street and road infrastructure in the area, which was previously only accessible via London bridges and picado roads.



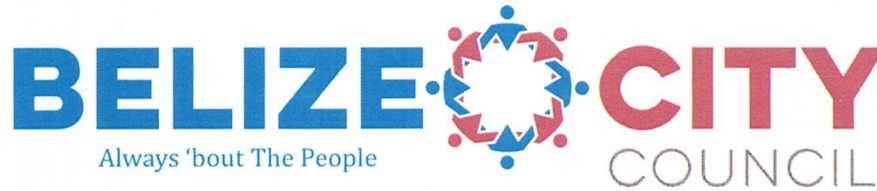
- 13.14 Councilor Vaughan stated that while Mayor Wagner was out of the country in October 2022, and the City Administrator was out on duty leave, he felt the need to address the condition of Apollo Street urgently in his capacity as Acting Mayor, given the numerous complaints expressed by residents, students, and establishments in the area. Despite this, Councilor Vaughan believes GEL Quarry Co. Ltd. is very effective and efficient when it comes to rehabilitative street work. As a result, he met with the company, which subsequently offered a strategy to keep the street from flooding. Councilor Vaughan stated that he then directed this company to hasten the street's repair due to its importance. These improvements comprised tearing old road infrastructure, laying hardcore material, and laying all-in material. Following the installation of these materials, the pavement was watered and rolled for compaction.
- 13.15 Councilor Vaughan emphasized that these renovations were done prior to Hurricane Lisa and went on to say that the street stood up well, with no water settling on it despite the enormous rains caused by the hurricane.
- 13.16 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. applauded Councilor Vaughan for spearheading the endeavor, noting that the Council has received a few complaints from residents who use the area daily because it is the only way in and out of the Belama Phase 4 and 5 areas.
- 13.17 Councilor Vaughan highlighted that the works done were to the tune of \$670,000.00 and moved a motion for the Council to approve payment to GEL Quarry Co. Ltd. for rehabilitative works done on Apollo Street in October of 2022 following numerous complaints from residents, students and business owners who traverse the Belama area daily. Seconded by Councilor Cattouse. **MOTION PASSED.**
- 13.18 Mayor Wagner stated that he once vowed to not spend any more money on Apollo Street because it is part of a failing project to mitigate floods in the area led by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Mayor Wagner stated that the Council has invested millions of dollars in rehabilitating and maintaining this street. Nonetheless, the Council has once again done its utmost to improve the quality of life for individuals who live in the area.



- 13.19 Mayor Wagner stated that he visited a resident on Bodden Route, which had also been repaired, and she expressed her gratitude for having a safe street to walk and drive on. Because the street was previously undeveloped, she would have had to park at the lane's corner and walk through water to get to her house.
- 13.20 Councilor Vaughan emphasized that these are the types of stories that need to be conveyed to the public because he believes the Council does not receive enough credit for the work it does.
- 13.21 Councilor Vaughan concluded by thanking the Honorable Julius Espat for his support in building and rehabilitating streets in the Belama community on behalf of MIDH.

Retail Market for Belize City Council Municipal Securities

- 13.21 Mayor Wagner shared a presentation with all Council members in reference to the proposed development of the Retail Market to be created for the Belize City Council's Municipal Securities.
- 13.22 Mayor Wagner gave an overview of the current state of the financial sector in Belize as it relates to excess liquidity and interest rates.
- 13.23 Mayor Wagner indicated that a total of \$42,600,000.00 in municipal papers were issued, with \$21,000,000.00 retiring. Mayor Wagner then pointed out that institutional investors make up 99.7% of the total. The average holding of an investor is \$1,300,000.00, with a maximum holding of \$5,000,000.00 and a minimum holding of \$150,000.00. According to Mayor Wagner, the high percentage of institutional investors creates a substantial concentration risk. Mayor Wagner noted that the development of this retail market will reduce the Council's high concentration risk and give a liquidity option for individual investors.



- 13.24 Mayor Wagner emphasized the investment information, which would necessitate a \$350,000.00 initial investment by the Council to cover the purchase of 3,500 units of Cumulative, Preferred, Participation Common B Stock with a par value of \$100.00 per share. These shares would then offer the Council with a guaranteed 2% return on investment and a participation dividend of 10% of the portfolio's net surplus at the end of each fiscal year of operations.
- 13.25 Mayor Wagner disclosed the expected revenue and cost associated with the establishment of this retail market for the first year following its establishment. The portfolio of the Council is expected to more than double after the first year of operation, reaching \$733,070.00.
- 13.26 Councilor Castellanos applauded Mayor Wagner and the Council for this proposed initiative.
- 13.27 Mayor Wagner stated that the Council's municipal securities portfolio would be made up of 70% small investors and 30% retail investors, resulting in a significant reduction in concentration risk. Mayor Wagner stated that the Securities Industry Act, which was passed in 2020, permits the Council to embark on this endeavor.
- 13.28 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. asked where residents will be able to purchase the municipal papers.
- 13.29 Mayor Wagner announced that residents wishing to purchase these papers could do so at Heritage Financial Services.
- 13.30 Mayor Wagner stated that the Ministry of Finance is attempting to monetize the outstanding property tax receivables on city properties, which have already surpassed \$30,000,000.00. Mayor Wagner emphasized that these are actions that modern cities take to boost development and become more sustainable.
- 13.31 Mayor Wagner stated that there is still more work to be done, but there is evident trust in the city's capacity to manage these investments because of the recently completed Council audits.
- 13.32 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Council to approve an equity investment of \$350,000.00 in a segregated portfolio asset company to create a liquid market for the Belize City Council Municipal Securities. Seconded by Councilor Castellanos. **MOTION PASSED.**



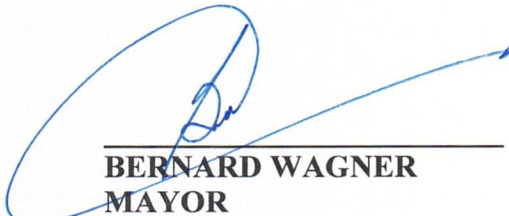
- 14.0 Submissions from the Building Unit – Ms. Chelsea Perera, Assistant City Planner**
- 14.1 A request submitted by the Belize Tourism Board (BTB) for the Council's approval to renovate the existing Belize City Craft Market to one that is more aesthetically appealing and offers higher utility to vendors. **MOTION APPROVED.**
- 14.2 A request submitted by the Belize Water Services (BWS) for the Council's approval of the proposed concept for the Eva Middleton Roundabout located at the corner of Mahogany Street and Central American Boulevard. **MOTION DEFERRED.** The Council recommended for BWS to consult the Council's City Planner to create and submit a more visible rendering of the proposed concept.
- 14.3 A request submitted by Ms. Evelyn Perez to expand her booth located on Coney Drive by six (6) feet to allow for her to be able to cook food inside given that her home was damaged by Hurricane Lisa and as such, she can no longer prepare her food for sale at her residence. **MOTION APPROVED.**
- 14.4 A request submitted by Mr. Mushea McDonald to vend shoes on the sidewalk on Albert Street in front of Heritage Bank on Saturdays only. **MOTION APPROVED.**
- 14.5 A request submitted by Mr. Moses Sulph for the Council's approval to construct a 12' x 12' structure for the purpose of vending new and used shoes, solar lights, pressure washers, clothing and watched for low-income families on the Freetown Reserve next to the Cleopatra White Clinic. **MOTION DEFERRED.** The Council's Planning Unit will work to identify and recommend an alternate location for Mr. Sulph.
- 14.6 A request submitted by Mr. Roy and Sharon Guity to construct a 25' x 15' booth and lease a portion of reserve for ten (10) years at the corner of Baymen Avenue and Princess Margaret Drive for the purpose of vending tacos. **MOTION DECLINED.**

15.0 Other Business

- 15.1 Councilor Vaughan congratulated Councilor Cattouse on placing 1st in the female category of the Krem New Year's Cycling Classic.

16.0 Adjournment

- 16.1 Councilor Requeña moved for the meeting to be adjourned. Seconded by Councilor Novelo. Meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.



BERNARD WAGNER
MAYOR



MRS. STEPHANIE LINDO-GARBUTT
CITY ADMINISTRATOR