

MINUTES of REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Caucus Room, Belize City Council

10:00 a.m.

November 23rd, 2022

Present:

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| 1. His Worship Bernard Wagner | Mayor |
| 2. Mr. Allan Pollard Jr. | Deputy Mayor |
| 3. Ms. Natasha Pipersburgh | Councilor |
| 4. Ms. Kaya Cattouse | Councilor |
| 5. Mr. Edmund Kwan | Councilor |
| 6. Mr. Michael Novelo | Councilor |
| 7. Ms. Stephanie Hamilton | Councilor |
| 8. Mr. Javier Castellanos | Councilor |

Mrs. Stephanie Lindo-Garbutt
Mr. Eluide Miller

City Administrator
Manager, Office of the Mayor

Present Virtually:

- | | |
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| 9. Mr. Micah Goodin | Councilor |
| 10. Ms. Deannie Requeña | Councilor |

Absent with Reason:

- | | |
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| 11. Mr. Albert Vaughan | Councilor |
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Mayor Wagner called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m.

Mayor Wagner announced that Councilor Albert Vaughan had sent his regrets as he has other obligations and would be unable to attend the meeting.

1.0 Belize National Prayer

Mayor Wagner led all in reciting the Belize National Prayer.



2.0 Welcome Remarks

- 2.1 Mayor Wagner welcomed all Council members to the meeting and noted that it will be the last meeting for the calendar year.
- 2.2 Mayor Wagner thanked all Council members for making the meeting despite the short notice. Mayor Wagner then reiterated the importance of taking time out to carry out the business of the residents of Belize City.

3.0 Ratification of the October 27th, 2022, Special Meeting Minutes

- 3.1 Mayor Wagner asked all members to review the minutes of the October 27th, 2022, special meeting in the event they did not get to do so beforehand.
- 3.2 The City Administrator highlighted several grammatical corrections and additions which needs to be made to the minutes of the meeting. All Council members agreed.
- 3.4 Councilor Pipersburgh moved for the October 27th, 2022, regular council meeting minutes to be ratified. Seconded by Councilor Kwan.

4.0 Matters arising from Minutes

- 4.1 (5.18) - The City Administrator noted that she shared a copy of the correspondence sent to Puma Energy and the Port of Belize Ltd. in reference to the Council's request for their partnership in making the necessary upgrades to Caesar Ridge Road which remains in a deplorable condition. Mayor Wagner then stated that he will be following up with the Puma Energy and the Port of Belize on this matter.
- 4.2 (5.21) - The City Administrator shared that K&M Construction Ltd. has been paid 70% of the contract value which is in accordance with the agreement. The City Administrator then noted that shipment of traffic lights is in transit and stated that she expects that this project will be completed by the mid December.



The City Administrator also highlighted that the concreting of the intersection of St. Thomas Street and St. Joseph Street will be carried out by the Council's Works Department who were tasked to liaise with K&M Construction Ltd. to ensure that both projects are carried out seamlessly.

- 4.3 Mayor Wagner asked the City Administrator for an update on the upcoming Christmas Staff Social and Awards.
- 4.4 The City Administrator informed the Council that the Christmas Staff Social and Awards is being rescheduled from December 2nd to December 9th, 2022, to allow for more lead time.
- 4.5 (5.14) - The City Administrator shared that the Belize Water Service (BWS) indicated that they would provide a schedule for works needed to be done on those streets the Council will be upgrading. The City Administrator shared that BWS did not provide this work schedule but instead provided a list of the streets they will be working on with no set timeline. As such, she has asked the City Engineer and the Works Manager to meet with BWS to let them know the dates when the Council is looking to work on each street with a view to have them complete the required works ahead.
- 4.6 The City Administrator shared that the Council's Revenue Team met with the vendors at the Michael Finnegan Market following the recommendation made at the Regular Council Meeting held in August 2022. The City Administrator noted that these vendors have been informed that come January 1st, 2023, they will be billed for the water they consume. They were also advised on an adjustment made to their lease rates based on booth size. The City Administrator noted that a few vendors expressed some concerns but, in the end, all vendors agreed.
- 4.7 The City Administrator also informed the Council that some vendors at the market expressed concerns of being extorted by street figures. As such, the Council's Enforcement Manager and Market Clerk met with the Police Department to address this concern. As a result, the Police will be making an effort to prohibit the use of bicycles in the market zone.



- 4.8 (11.2) - The City Administrator shared that a meeting was held with representatives from the Council and the parking meter vendor who is operating the meters along Albert Street. The City Administrator then highlighted that the vendor committed to improve relations with the Council and make the necessary repairs to meters so they can accept both card and coin payment. The City Administrator noted that the Council decided to not restrict coin payment as that would result in a decrease in revenue collection.
- 4.9 The City Administrator also noted that the vendor agreed to have the parking meter cards available at more locations. However, he would not be able to upgrade the meters at this time as it is not feasible given the amount of revenues being collected.
- 4.10 (11.6) - The City Administrator announced that four (4) new employees have been recruited for the Cemetery Department. These employees reported to duty last Monday and are all ready to work to better maintain both cemeteries under the purview of the Council.
- 4.11 (11.15) - The City Administrator shared that the first harvest from the Council's Urban Garden Pilot Project yielded just over fifty-four (54) pounds of sweet peppers. The City Administrator shared that these were shared with staff members who were traversing the building and with the various representatives who were present inside the Council's Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The City Administrator also noted that the necessary repairs are being made to the Urban Garden following Hurricane Lisa.
- 4.12 (11.20) - The City Administrator shared that in July of this year, a vacancy notice for the post of cutters under the Operational Support Unit was disseminated via various mediums with a view to get as much applicants as possible. Despite these efforts, the Council only received two (2) applications in August and another four (4) in September after sending out another notice. The City Administrator shared that Deputy Pollard Jr., Councilor Requeña and Councilor Cattouse also submitted applications on behalf of several applicants. The City Administrator ended by noting that the notices were also published in Spanish with a view to attract more applicants.
- 4.13 Councilor Requeña asked for an update on the application she submitted.



- 4.14 The City Administrator shared that she only received the applications this week and as such the interview will be held in the coming week.
- 4.15 The City Administrator went on to shared that she asked the Area Representative of the Lake Independence Constituency to submit applications. As such, six (6) applications were submitted and only four (4) of those applications showed up for their interview.
- 4.16 (13.9) – The City Administrator shared that GEL Quarry Co. Ltd. has been working diligently to carry out the works on the canal along Holy Emmanuel Street. The City Administrator noted that the gabion baskets have now been secured and as such the lining of the canal with the gabion stones will commence. The City Administrator also highlighted that a buffer will be left between the canal lining and the newly concreted street where the Council will be implementing some element of greenery in order to further beautify the area.

5.0 Announcements by the Mayor

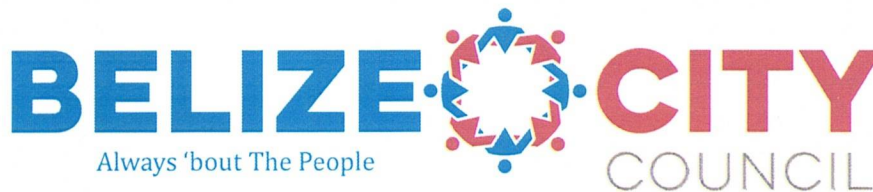
- 5.1 Mayor Wagner thanked all Council members, employees, and government institutions who participated in or contributed to the Belize City Cleanup Campaign. Mayor Wagner stated that it is difficult to comprehend that just three weeks after Hurricane Lisa made landfall in Belize City, the city is now clean. Mayor Wagner also commended Councilor Cattouse for her outstanding leadership of the cleanup campaign and for personally being on the ground with the Sanitation Department throughout the Council's efforts.
- 5.2 Mayor Wagner also thanked the Belize Defense Force, Belize Cane Farmers Association, NEMO, all municipalities in Belize, Belize Tourism Board, Belize Coast Guard, Department of the Environment, and others who were on the ground in large numbers. Mayor Wagner continued by stating that this is by far the largest demonstration of collaboration across sectors that the country has ever seen, and it demonstrates what could be accomplished when all parties work together toward a common goal.



- 5.3 Mayor Wagner stated that as of last Friday, November 18th, 2022, a total of 2,910 loads or 61,110 tons of debris had been removed from city streets. Mayor Wagner then reported that the Council conducted an assessment that same evening, which estimated that 265 heaps of debris remain on approximately 98 streets. Since then, a follow-up evaluation was conducted on Monday, November 21st, 2022, which found that about 126 loads were removed over the three-day period and that the city should be back to normalcy by November 25th.
- 5.4 Mayor Wagner then thanked all those fellow Council members who joined him in delivering relief supplies to needy city residents and noted that the distribution of these supplies is of equal importance to the cleanup efforts being undertaken.
- 5.5 Mayor Wagner revealed that the Ministry of Human Development had given him a contribution of pantry packages and encouraged all Council members to help with the delivery of these packages to needy residents. Mayor Wagner also indicated that he will submit a motion to the Caucus at a future date to approve the procurement of additional pantry packages to be distributed in the run-up to Christmas.
- 5.6 Councilor Castellanos thanked Mayor Wagner for the pantry packages shared with him over the past week.
- 5.7 Mayor Wagner highlighted that the Council has received monetary contributions to support the Belize City Cleanup Campaign from the Central Bank of Belize, Chinese Association of Belize, Belize Tourism Board, San Pedro Town Council, and the Ministry of Local Government.
- 5.8 Mayor Wagner invited all Council members to join him in distributing goods to needy residents tomorrow, November 24th, 2022.
- 5.9 Councilor Cattouse suggested that the new cohort of the Youth Shadow Council be included in the distribution of these goods to introduce them to some of the works that the Council carries out in support of its residents.



- 5.10 The City Administrator and Mayor Wagner shared that this is a good idea especially given that the new cohort has now officially been indoctrinated and have taken their official photographs. The City Administrator shared that they are set to record their introductory videos which will be shared across the Council's social media pages in the upcoming week.
- 5.11 Mayor Wagner shared that the Council received a donation of housing materials from the International Women's Club of Belize which valued \$11,000.00. Mayor Wagner shared that these materials will be distributed to those needy residents who have been assessed by the DANA team and who require small repairs to get their homes back to some state of normalcy.
- 5.12 Mayor Wagner then announced that the Feinstein Group of Companies had committed to donated housing materials to the Council. Mayor Wagner stated that the Group wishes to have these materials distributed to needy residents throughout Southside Belize City.
- 5.13 Mayor Wagner revealed that he prepared a report for the Ministry of Finance outlining all of the funds spent on the Belize City Cleanup Campaign since its inception which covered (meal, water, heavy-duty equipment rental, fuel, labor, tools, and supplies). Mayor Wagner noted that the Ministry has now reimbursed the Council for the full amount spent. Mayor Wagner stated that the Council should be able to process all payments relating to the cleanup campaign without delay since he took it upon himself to ensure that the Council receive financial backing from the government to support this effort.
- 5.14 Mayor Wagner shared that he was a bit disturbed last week Friday to learn that an outstanding payment for the cane farmers, who were instrumental in the cleanup, was not processed. Mayor Wagner expressed that he believes the staff should have worked a bit longer in order to prepare the necessary payments given that the Council has been depending on these individuals to carry out the necessary cleanup works across the city.



- 5.15 Mayor Wagner reported that he was informed that the City Administrator would not sign the cheques for the cane farmers on Friday but would wait until Monday morning to sign them because she had working long hours the preceding days. Mayor Wagner expressed his displeasure after learning of the remarks made by the City Administrator, who also serves as the Council's Chief Accounting Officer.
- 5.16 Mayor Wagner then highlighted that this is borderline insubordination given that he requested for these payments to be processed and finalized and this request was ignored. Mayor Wagner also highlighted that to date some caneroes are yet to be paid for their labor or for their equipment utilized during the cleanup, despite his personal efforts to source funds to pay them.
- 5.17 The City Administrator interjected, stating that the funds from the Ministry of Finance have yet to be transferred to the Council's Operating Account, despite being told that they were sent last Friday. The City Administrator then noted that the Finance Department will follow up with the Ministry of Finance to determine why those payments have not yet been reflected in the Council's account.
- 5.18 The City Administrator highlighted that the cleanup campaign was being funded by the Council's Overdraft Facility and whatever savings the Council had. The City Administrator then shared that this has been to the tune of close to \$400,000.00 over the course of three (3) weeks.
- 5.19 Mayor Wagner shared that the City Administrator should have consulted him and request that the Council use funds from its Municipal Papers Account on a temporary basis to cover those costs associated with the cleanup campaign in the interim until reimbursement is secured.
- 5.20 The City Administrator shared that she is simply saying that administratively, the importance of the payments associated with the cleanup campaign is understood by all employees of the Finance Department.



- 5.21 The point being made, according to Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr., is that Mayor Wagner believes a legitimate request was made, which the administrative staff of the Council was entirely capable of carrying out. As a result, the City Administrator should have made every effort to ensure that it was executed, even if it meant working outside of regular working hours. Deputy Mayor Pollard stated that the mayor has the right to express his views to the other Council members.
- 5.22 Mayor Wagner noted that flexibility is vital, especially during times of crisis. Mayor Wagner then stated that a terrible precedent was set when the City Administrator bluntly refused to sign a cheque payable to the cane farmers for works done in the cleanup campaign, even after being requested by the mayor.
- 5.23 Councilor Castellanos expressed his disappointment with the situation and indicated that he supports the mayor's position on the matter. Councilor Castellanos noted that he has been belittled by the City Administrator on numerous occasions and that this is why he now limits his interactions with her as much as possible.
- 5.24 Councilor Requeña stated that she came to see what employees had been telling her about the toxic working environment created by the City Administrator while working in the Emergency Operations Center during Hurricane Lisa. Councilor Requeña stated that employees had approached her on several occasions to express their dissatisfaction with the way the City Administrator treats the Council's personnel. Councilor Requeña then voiced her support for the mayor's position and suggested that the Council convene a special meeting to discuss the issue at hand.
- 5.25 Mayor Wagner expressed his displeasure with a troubling new trend in which requisitions submitted by his office are returned for the reason "Designation of account line required". Mayor Wagner stressed that this is the responsibility of the City Administrator, who acts as the Council's Chief Accounting Officer. Mayor Wagner continued by providing one example of this and asked Council members to weigh in.
- 5.26 Councilor Kwan expressed his disappointment by highlighting that this should never be done as it is the Chief Accounting Officer or the CEO's responsibility to identify account lines to be charged.



- 5.27 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. also expressed his discontent with such occurrences.
- 5.28 The City Administrator shared that the cheque for the cane farmers have been printed and signed.
- 5.29 Mayor Wagner highlighted that the City Administrator upheld her word and signed the cheques the following Monday. Mayor Wagner went on to say that the City Administrator's conduct border insubordination.
- 5.30 Mayor Wagner highlighted that he had a successful meeting with the Social Security Board (SSB) following Hurricane Lisa to discuss the possibility of having them rollover their investment in the Belize City Council's Municipal Securities.
- 5.31 Mayor Wagner then highlighted that he also met with the Central Bank of Belize (CBB) and noted that meeting also went very well.
- 5.32 Mayor Wagner shared an invitation sent by the Secretary General of the People's United Party (PUP) for all Council members to attend a meet and greet session with a delegation from Houston which includes a Councilor from Houston and other business officials. The session is to be held at the Biltmore Plaza on December 5th, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. Mayor Wagner encouraged all Council members to take part in the session.
- 5.33 Mayor Wagner announced that he has canceled his scheduled trip to South Korea with Hon. Rodwell Ferguson, Hon. Gilroy Usher, and other Ministry of Transport representatives due to the Council's ongoing hurricane relief efforts and other upcoming Council-hosted activities.

6.0 Presentation: Operational Updates – Mrs. Stephanie Lindo-Garbutt, City Administrator

- 6.1 The City Administrator started her presentation on operational updates by sharing the following quote from Mother Teresa.

"I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things."



- 6.2 The City Administrator presented a snapshot of the Council's financial performance (revenues) in October 2022, comparing it to the Council's performance in October 2021. The City Administrator then analyzed the Council's financial performance from April to October of 2021 and 2022, underscoring that the Council's taxes are now performing better than they were the previous year.
- 6.3 The City Administrator continued by stating that this is reflected in the property taxes collected during this period, as well as the revenues collected through Municipal Court judgments. The City Administrator also noted that the Compliance Unit is now performing significantly better than it did the year before.
- 6.4 The City Administrator also stated that revenues collected by the Council's Traffic Department exceeds the budgeted amount. The City Administrator attributed these increases to personnel changes that were made.
- 6.5 The City Administrator highlighted that revenues from Licenses were lower in October of 2022 when compared to 2021. The City Administrator stated that this is still a cause for celebration because it signifies that the Council has received fewer early payments on trade licenses. Similarly, less prepayments were taken on property taxes for the upcoming year as well. The City Administrator shared that operations were sustained using the Council's overdraft facility and savings during this period.
- 6.6 The City Administrator emphasized that revenue from the Market was extremely low in October 2021 because the Council was offering some relief to sellers amid the Covid-19 outbreak. The City Administrator then stated that Market revenues are now back on track as a result of improved efforts by the Council's collectors. The City Administrator also stated that the Council have seen a two million dollar increase in revenue collected from April to October 2022 when compared to the same period in 2021.
- 6.7 The City Administrator went on to say that the expenditure side of the Council's report does not appear as encouraging. The City Administrator ascribed the rise in pension and gratuity payments to the Council's decision to retire those staff members who were over the retirement age of fifty-five (55). The City Administrator stated that some of those individuals have since been replaced, with new personnel being hired on a lower pay scale.



- 6.8 The City Administrator reported that the Council's expenditure on travel and subsistence increased from April to October of 2022 when compared to the same period in 2021. The City Administrator emphasized that this is still well within the approved budget.
- 6.9 The City Administrator shared that the Belize City Council has created and maintained a payment schedule with the Belize Waste Control Ltd.
- 6.10 The City Administrator noted that maintenance costs are over budget and ascribed this to the Council's aggressive commitment to infrastructure rehabilitation, drainage, and beautification of the city.
- 6.11 The City Administrator indicated that social assistance is also over budget for the period April to October of 2022. The City Administrator noted that this is not unusual, but felt it was important to mention.
- 6.12 The City Administrator went on to share a list of streets which were recently rehabilitated by the Council. These include Wood Street (concrete), Neal Pen Road (concrete), Juliet Soberanis Street (concrete), St. Thomas (perma patch), Nurse White Street (pave status), Albert Street (perma patch). The City Administrator also shared a list of streets which are currently being rehabilitated which includes Antelope Street Extension, Apollo Street, Tv Ramos Street and Hoy Emmanuel Street. The City Administrator ended by noted that the Council will be carrying out rehabilitative work on Freetown Road and Mahogany Street in the coming weeks.
- 6.13 The City Administrator explained that TV Ramos Street should have been finished by now, but construction was stalled by the Belize Water Services (BWS) because they needed to complete some work before the work could proceed.
- 6.14 The City Administrator then announced that the concreting of Holy Emmanuel Street has commenced, and that the dredging of the adjacent canal has been completed, and that the lining of that canal with gabions has begun.

- 6.15 The City Administrator shared the following details in reference to Hurricane Lisa.
- Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated and staffed from November 2nd to November 6th, 2022. The logistics team went on up until November 18th.
 - Over 700 streets affected (fallen trees, debris, clogged drains, white garbage)
 - Over 2,900 truckloads or over 61,000 tons of debris removed from city streets.
 - The Council managed to get 125-600 persons to participate in the cleanup efforts on the ground daily.
- 6.16 The City Administrator shared a few points on the impact the Hurricane Lisa had on the Council.
- City Hall received moderate damages.
 - Recently renovated Digi Park suffered significant damages to the pier, structures, and lighting equipment.
 - Memorial Park and Lord Rhaburn Square suffered severe damages to the stage roof, structures, and lighting equipment.
 - The Works Department suffered minor damages to the roof and ceiling of the new structure which was constructed for the Council's welder to utilize.
 - The Flag Monument and Marine Parade suffered damages to flag poles and lighting equipment.
 - Two of the Council's pick-up trucks suffered minor damages. These two vehicles were being utilized by the Council's EOC.
 - Approximately 50% of the Council's staff suffered damages personally.
- 6.17 The City Administrator shared a list of upcoming activities to be undertaken by the Council which focuses on social and physical infrastructure.
- 6.18 The City Administrator shared that the Council's corporate gifts will be distributed by the Public Relations Department by December 14th, 2022.
- 6.19 The City Administrator further stated that the new cohort of Youth Shadow Councilors has been given the opportunity to interact with the outgoing cohort in order for them to know what to expect from the program. The City Administrator then revealed that members of the new cohort participated in the city's cleanup campaign the previous week and that they will be recording their introductory videos over the upcoming weekend.



- 6.20 The City Administrator stated that she is seeking to obtain a quote from a vendor to resurface the NICH Parking Facility on Regent Street. The City Administrator stated that Belize Electricity Limited (BEL) is currently attempting to incorporate its charging ports into the plan, and that the project would be able to proceed once that is completed.
- 6.21 Mayor Wagner suggested for BEL to identify another location for the charging stations as the rehabilitation of the NICH Parking lot must proceed at the earliest.
- 6.22 The City Administrator announced that the rehabilitation of Constitution Park is approximately two to three weeks away from completion.
- 6.23 The City Administrator shared that the City Planner is approaching retirement age and as such, her contract needs to be considered. The City Administrator shared that the City Engineer has provided a letter of recommendation for the City Planner to continue working for the Council on a contractual basis.
- 6.24 The City Administrator shared that the Job Classification is the only outstanding element of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the Belize City Council and the Christian Worker's Union (CWU). The Council and CWU have agreed to all other elements of the agreement.
- 6.25 The City Administrator ended her presentation by sharing a notice which has been translated in Mandarin to inform Trade License holders that their bills have been sent to them via electronic mail and those who have not received that correspondence can get a printed copy of the bill at the Council. The notice reiterated that all bills need to be paid by December 31st, 2022.
- 6.26 The Deputy Mayor asked if there has been any improvement in terms of the accessibility to applications for Trade Licenses other forms.
- 6.27 The City Administrator shared that the application form for Trade License as well as many other services can now be accessed on the Council's website and submitted online.
- 6.28 Deputy Pollard Jr. shared a suggestion for electronic forms to be developed in this regard as they may prove more effective and efficient.



7.0 Notices

- 7.1 No notices were tabled.

8.0 Questions

- 8.1 Councilor Requeña inquired about the activities the Council will be hosting in the upcoming Christmas season.
- 8.2 Councilor Novelo asked if the Council will be reviewing the budget for the upcoming fiscal year.
- 8.3 Mayor Wagner shared that both matters will be addressed by the City Administrator later in the meeting.

9.0 Petitions

- 9.1 No petitions were tabled.

10.0 Presentation of Reports from Councilors

- 10.1 Councilor Pipersburgh announced that the newly created Memorial Park Steering Committee would hold its first meeting later today to chart a course of action for the park's renovation and rejuvenation. Councilor Pipersburgh revealed that the City Administrator, Administrative Director, and Belize Tourism Board each hold a seat on the newly created Committee and expressed her excitement to work with them.
- 10.2 Councilor Pipersburgh then shared that she will be partnering with Ms. Melecia McDougall and the Diaspora to put together Christmas packages to share with single parent homes across the city.



- 10.3 Councilor Pipersburgh also stated that work has begun within the Constitution Park and that the Belize Tourism Board is revisiting the initial design with the contractors to identify where modifications can be made. Councilor Pipersburgh concluded her update by applauding the City Emergency Management Organization (CEMO) and the Damage and Needs Assessment (DANA) team for their steadfast commitment during and after Hurricane Lisa.
- 10.4 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. expressed his delight that the city will be in good shape by the end of the week but noted that many streets now require much more significant rehabilitative work because of Hurricane Lisa's devastation.
- 10.5 Mayor Wagner asked Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. to have the Works Manager submit a list of all the materials needed to carry out the necessary rehabilitative works.
- 10.6 Mayor Wagner and Councilor Cattouse were praised by Councilor Novelo for their unwavering leadership in directing the Belize City Cleanup Campaign. Councilor Novelo continued by stating that he believes all the Council's personnel should be commended for their efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Lisa.
- 10.7 Councilor Cattouse applauded the entire Sanitation Department for their tireless efforts to rid the city of debris following Hurricane Lisa. Councilor Cattouse then underscored that the Department's Manager, Mr. Simeon Alvarez, truly took over and led a honourable campaign to get city streets cleared. Councilor Cattouse also thanked each of the other staff members who assisted with logistics and ensuring that all participants were equipped with the necessary tools and equipment.
- 10.8 Councilor Cattouse concluded her briefing by stating that all 713 city streets have been cleared of debris to some extent, and that areas known to be hotspots would be revisited to remove material that was left out after the initial cleanup.
- 10.9 Councilor Castellanos praised the Council's Public Relations Department for keeping residents informed during and after Hurricane Lisa, and he also commended all his colleagues on the Council for their ongoing commitment to city residents.



- 10.10 Councilor Requeña commended those Council employees that went beyond what was required to clear the city of all debris left behind by Hurricane Lisa. Councilor Requeña also complimented her colleagues on the Council who joined in the cleanup efforts on the ground during the campaign.
- 10.11 Councilor Requeña announced that the Council's After-School Program will begin in January with roughly 40-50 students and will gradually expand.
- 10.12 Councilor Requeña ended her update by noting her excitement for all the Council's scheduled Christmas initiatives and highlighted that she is elated to see all Council members working in unison for the betterment of Belize City.
- 10.13 Mayor Wagner thanked Councilor Requeña for her presence during the cleanup campaign and for her steadfast commitment to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during Hurricane Lisa.
- 10.14 Mayor Wagner was recognized by Councilor Hamilton for his work in organizing the cleanup operations. Residents in the Albert Division explicitly requested that Councilor Hamilton thank Mayor Wagner on their behalf for the extraordinarily swift reaction to Hurricane Lisa, according to Councilor Hamilton.
- 10.15 Councilor Hamilton then thanked Mayor Wagner for meeting with Belize Tourism Board (BTB) representatives to advance the Mahogany Street Food Hub Project and reminded the Council that the inauguration is tentatively scheduled for January 2023. Councilor Hamilton stated that the Memorandum of Understanding for the first eight (8) booths to be officially passed on to their new owners has been finalized and signed.
- 10.16 Councilor Hamilton emphasized that the Council has committed to enhancing the existing bus stop, which falls within phase one of the project, as well as the painting of all eight (8) new booths in more vibrant colours. Councilor Hamilton stated that the initial phase of the project will include the construction of eight (8) new booths, two (2) parking lots, and one (1) bathroom facility for vendor/customer use.



10.17 Councilor Hamilton concluded her update by thanking Mayor Wagner on behalf of the BTB for preparing the city for the arrival of the first cruise ship in the aftermath of the Hurricane Lisa. Councilor Hamilton emphasized that this was no easy task given the significant amount of waste left behind in the Fort Street Tourism Village area, as well as Marine Parade and Princess Margaret Drive.

10.18 Councilor Goodin commended Mayor Wagner for leading the cleanup efforts following Hurricane Lisa and noted that though he was not able to participate, he was following closely.

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 No motions were tabled by Councilors.

13.0 New Business

13.1 Mayor Wagner highlighted that the Council's Damage and Needs Assessment (DANA) Team recently concluded an analysis of the damages Belize City Council's employees suffered to their homes at the hands of Hurricane Lisa. The team assessed a total of 214 properties and placed their respective damage levels into different categories as outlined below:

Level 1: No Significant Damage – structure is useable and can be occupied.

Level 2: Minor Damage – structure is useable and can be occupied after urgent temporary measures are taken.

Level 3: Major Damage – structure is not useable and cannot be occupied until after repairs are made.



Level 4: Destruction – structure is not useable and cannot be repairs.

The Mayor and the Damage Assessment Team has since quantified the damages sustained at the various levels and is making the following recommendation to the Council.

- The Mayor and the DANA Team recommends for the 78 employees who suffered Level 1 Damage to receive a grant of \$250.00 each to assist with necessary materials and labour costs.
- The Mayor and the DANA Team recommends for the 61 employees who suffered Level 2 Damage to receive a grant of \$350.00 each to assist with necessary materials and labour costs.
- The Mayor and the DANA Team recommends for the 36 employees who suffered Level 3 Damages to receive a grant of \$500.00 each to assist with necessary materials and labour costs.
- The Mayor and the DANA Team recommends for the 16 employees who suffered Level 4 Damages to receive a grant of \$1,200.00 each to assist with rental/relocation costs given the complete destruction of their homes.
- The Mayor and the DANA Team recommends for the 5 other employees who suffered damages but were not included in this assessment to receive a grant of \$350.00.

Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Belize City Council to approve for the Belize City Council's employees who suffered damages to their property as a result of Hurricane Lisa to each receive a grant from the Council as recommended by the Mayor and the Council's Damage and Needs Assessment (DANA) Team. Seconded by Councilor Cattouse. **MOTION PASSED.**

- 13.2 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Belize City Council to approve the draft contract between the Embassy of Japan in Belize and the Belize City Council for grant assistance in the sum of \$267,747.00 USD or \$534,100.00 BZD through the Grassroots Human Security Project. This grant is to be used to finance the procurement of two (2) new garbage compactor trucks with a view to improve the Council's garbage collection efficiency. Seconded by Councilor Kwan.
MOTION PASSED.

- 13.3 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Belize City Council to approve the following amendments to the terms of the **Series V Restoration Municipal Paper** as per **Resolution No. 60 of 2022 dated November 15th, 2022** as follows:

Tranche No.	Est. Principal Amount \$('000)	Anticipated Interest Rate (%)	Term (Days)
1	0	n/a	91
2	0	n/a	182
3	15,000	4.50	2 years*
4	13,000	5.50	3 years*
Total	28,000	4.95	

**Since the proposed Municipal Securities Bill, which will provide Belize City Council with the ability to issue longer term municipal securities, has not been passed, the Belize City Council is structuring the 1 year (365 days) municipal papers into a contractual 2 to 3 year municipal paper to allow time for the proposed Municipal Securities Bill to become law.*

Seconded by Councilor Novelo. **MOTION PASSED.**

- 13.4 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Belize City Council to approve a marketing contract for Belize News Network (BNN) for a period of one (1) year commencing December 1st, 2022, and ending December 1st, 2023, with a total cost of \$540.00 monthly or \$6,480.00 annually. Seconded by Councilor Novelo.
MOTION PASSED.



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

- 14.1 A request submitted by Ms. Daisy Amaya to construct a booth measuring 6' x 15' on the public reserve on the corner of Holy Emmanuel Street and La Croix Boulevard for the purpose of vending food. **MOTION DENIED.**
- 14.2 A request submitted by Ms. Slyvia Audinett to close a portion of an undeveloped street in the Lake Independence area for the continued use as a private property. **MOTION DENIED.** The Council is requesting that Ms. Audinett be referred to the Area Representative.


15.0 Other Business

- 15.1 The City Administrator stated that she takes note of the Council members' concerns about the working relationship she maintains with them and the Council's employees.
- 15.2 The City Administrator requested twenty (20) days of vacation commencing next Monday, November 28th, 2022. The City Administrator indicated that the Council would need to designate someone to act in her capacity while she is out.
- 15.3 The Mayor asked the City Administrator if she had given thought about her request, and he then cautioned her to be careful and to not act in a knee-jerk manner.
- 15.4 The City Administrator stated that it is a well-thought-out decision which she believes is necessary for her to reflect and address her recent health complications.
- 15.5 Mayor Wagner asked the City Administrator if she would be sending this request for vacation leave to the Council via email for their approval.
- 15.6 The City Administrator committed to sending the vacation request via email to the Mayor and all Council members before the end of the day.



16.0 Adjournment

- 16.1 Deputy Mayor Pollard Jr. moved for the meeting to be adjourned. Seconded by Councilor Cattouse. Meeting adjourned at 2:14 p.m.



BERNARD WAGNER
MAYOR



MRS. STEPHANIE LINDO-GARBUTT
CITY ADMINISTRATOR