

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
DESTIN CITY COUNCIL
MAY 20, 2019
CITY HALL ANNEX COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6:00 PM**

The Council of the City of Destin met in regular session with the following members and staff present:

Destin City Council

Mayor Gary Jarvis
Councilmember Steven Menchel
Councilmember Cyron Marler
Councilmember Parker Destin

Councilmember Prebble Ramswell
Councilmember Chatham Morgan
Councilmember Skip Overdier
Councilmember Rodney Braden

Destin City Staff

City Manager Lance Johnson
Deputy City Manager Webb Warren
Public Services Director Michael Burgess
Public Information Manager Catherine Card
Community Development Director Louis Zunguze
City Land Use Attorney Kimberly Kopp

City Clerk Rey Bailey
Tim Whaler, Consultant
Finance Director Bragg Farmer
Code Compliance Manager Joey Forgione
Parks & Rec. Director Lisa Firth
City Attorney Kyle Bauman

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Gary Jarvis called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Pastor Barry Carpenter of the Destin United Methodist Church gave the invocation; which was then followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Councilmember Marler moved to approve the agenda with the following changes; seconded by Councilmember Destin.

- Approval of Letter of Support for the re-nomination of Dr. Tom Frazer to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council added to Consent Agenda
- Move agenda item 7A(2) - *Crosstown Connector* ahead of Agenda Item 4A – *Short-Term Rental Task Force*
- Add agenda item 7F(2) – *Discussion on potential expansion of TDC boundaries*

Motion passed 7-0 (Council members Morgan, Destin, Marler, Overdier, Menchel, Ramswell and Braden voted “yes”).

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of minutes of April 1, 2019 Regular City Council Meeting

Motion by Councilmember Marler, seconded by Councilmember Menchel, to approve minutes of April 1, 2019 Regular City Council Meeting passed 7-0 (Council members Morgan, Destin, Marler, Overdier, Menchel, Ramswell and Braden voted "yes").

B. Approval of minutes of March 18, 2019 Regular City Council Meeting

Motion by Councilmember Menchel, seconded by Councilmember Ramswell, to approve minutes of March 18, 2019 Regular City Council Meeting passed 7-0 (Council members Morgan, Destin, Marler, Overdier, Menchel, Ramswell and Braden voted "yes").

2. PROCLAMATIONS / RECOGNITIONS / SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Presentation "Connecting Communities Through the Trails" – Ms. Britney Moore, Regional Coordinator, Office of Greenways and Trails

Presenter not available to make the presentation. Presentation to be rescheduled at a later date.

B. FDOT Resurfacing, Restoration and Rehabilitation (3R) Project Update – Mr. Brad Brenner, Project Engineer, Volkert Engineering, Inc.

The City Manager informed the Council the presenter asked that this presentation be rescheduled.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS THAT ARE NOT PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ANY OTHER MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Ms. Marcie Bell, a Destin resident, asked the Council not to sunset the Short-Term Rental Task Force and to have the Task Force review the current short-term rental ordinance to determine its effectiveness. She also informed Council that in terms of the proposed Beach Safety Corridor Ordinance, she has photographs showing there is no beach for a beach safety corridor on Holiday Isle and Sandpiper Cove. Finally, she reported having a video recording of a vendor driving people out of the swimming areas of the East Pass at the jetties to make way for snorkel boats. She stated this is a public beach and that was an inappropriate action by the vendor.

The Mayor asked the City Manager and Code Compliance Manager to investigate this matter.

Ms. Carrie Harbarger, a Destin resident, stated that the City needs to clarify the status of the Destin Crosstown Connector Project because many people believe for quite a while now that this project has been discontinued.

Ms. Julie Cotton, a Destin resident and Chairperson of the Destin Chambers of Commerce, expressed her support of the crosstown connector project. She stated it would make it much easier for people who work in Destin to get to their place of employment and for

residents to get to their homes. She asked Council to move forward with the crosstown connector project and take advantage of the money already allocated for it.

Mr. Dewey Destin, a Destin resident and former councilman, gave a brief history on the crosstown connector. He informed the Council that in the early 2000, the State of Florida informed the City of Destin the level of service on US Hwy 98 was so horrible that the City must do something, or they would stop the issuance of any permits along the corridor. The seated Council at the time started looking at the issue and came up with several possible solutions. One suggestion was taking out the median on US Hwy 98, reducing the lanes to 10 feet and putting 3 lanes in each direction. Another option was turning the road into two parallel, one-way roads. East bound would have been on the present road, and west bound would have been along Mountain Drive, which would then have provided 3 lanes in each direction. Both options would have cost a lot of money. He continued that the crosstown connector had been discussed since early in the 1990's. It also would entail spending money and it would entail routing traffic from US Hwy 98 to the West Destin residential neighborhoods. He also stated that the multi-modal concept allowed the City to ignore the capacity and congestion on US Hwy 98. The concept requires business owners to put bicycle racks in front of their businesses, which give them a bonus on their parking requirements. It has not provided a real solution to the traffic problem in Destin. He stated that building the crosstown connector is one of the worst things the City could do; and that the only reason FDOT is agreeing to pay for part of it and put money into municipal road is because it would increase the capacity on US Hwy 98. The crosstown connector has been discussed on several occasions for the past 20 years. It has been put back "on the shelf" because they realize the impact it would have on their residential neighborhoods and it is not going to address the traffic issues on US Hwy 98. He urged the Council not to go forward with the project and to determine what to do with the Stahlman/US Hwy 98 intersection; adding that to build the crosstown connector without a solution to the worst intersection in the City makes no sense. He suggests turning the Old Campground, the property the City already acquired, into a park or sell it and use the money to purchase a beach access for the City's beaches.

Mr. Mike Buckingham, a Destin resident, noted that the County built Destin Commons and that road is now in full capacity. The west end of Destin has a 100-foot right-of-way and the plan is to build a 4-lane road all the way to the Marler Bridge. It would create a bottleneck of traffic worst than what is currently happening on Commons Drive, and that residents on the west side of town will suffer. He also stated that the crosstown connector is nothing more than an alternate road to US Hwy 98. If constructed, it would increase traffic capacity on US Hwy 98 resulting in more building construction thereby adding to the traffic congestion. He urged the Council not to go forward with the crosstown connector project.

Mr. Ken Wampler, a Destin resident, stated that residents on the west end of Destin are looking for the safest and easiest ways to get from the Destin harbor to their homes. Residents of Destin struggle with US Hwy 98 traffic and there is no easy solution. They are 6-laning the road all the way to Airport Road, resulting in more traffic coming through Destin. He stated that there may not be a perfect solution to this problem, but there is a better solution which is the crosstown connector. It is better than the alternative, which is to do nothing. He suggests moving forward with the crosstown connector project sooner rather than later.

Mr. Bill Reddington, a Destin resident, stated that with the advent of the GPS, visitors to the City are discovering the back roads as alternate routes. He does not consider the crosstown connector as a solution to the City's traffic problems as it will only turn residential

neighborhoods into a freeway. He continued they need to listen to residents who will be affected by it to find out what they want. They also need to improve upon the situation on Stahlman/US Hwy 98 intersection. He added that traffic would only get worse if they approve the crosstown connector project. He suggests tabling this issue until they come up with a more viable alternative.

The Mayor pointed out that traffic is already in the back roads and through the City's residential neighborhoods; and that they would be giving up \$7.2 million if they do not go forward with the crosstown connector project.

Mr. Lockwood Wernet, a Destin resident and member of the Destin Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, stated that the City should develop their policies in their adopted comprehensive plan and develop a grid network to help move traffic through town; adding they have an opportunity to do so by developing the crosstown connector. He then read the following sections of the Comprehensive Plan:

OBJECTIVE 2-1.1: SYSTEM DESIGN. *Continue to provide a safe, convenient, efficient and cost-effective multimodal transportation system and roadway network that optimizes access for present and future residents.*

Policy 2-1.1.1: Pursue Additional Road Corridor Improvements. *The City shall continue to pursue the acquisition of rights-of-way, the design and the construction of multimodal facilities for future and existing corridors that will facilitate the east-west and north-south movement of all modes of transportation as shown on Maps 2-1 and 2-2 of this Transportation Element.*

Policy 2-1.1.3: Maintain New Road Corridor Alignments. *The City shall continue to implement the multimodal corridor management plan that identifies alignment opportunities and challenges for all modes of transportation, including parallel facilities for Harbor Boulevard/Emerald Coast Parkway and Main Street shown on Maps 2-1 and 2-2 of this Transportation Element.*

Policy 2-1.1.4: Rights-of-Way (ROW) for Additional Access Road. *The City shall acquire the necessary ROW east of Azalea Drive/Mountain Drive to complete the east/west route and north-south connections referenced in Policy 2-1.1.1 above. Nothing in this policy shall prohibit the City from accepting or obtaining the necessary rights-of-way in advance of 2020.*

Policy 2-1.3.2: Maintain Road Networks. *Operations of the existing road network shall be maintained and enhanced with strategic new connections, reconstruction, and widening projects as appropriate. Investment in sidewalks, cycling facilities, and transit service shall be significantly increased. Urban design standards shall ensure that development is designed to be integrated and accessible, while encouraging increased use of non-auto forms of transportation.*

Policy 2-1.3.16: Develop Interconnected Street Network. *The City shall continue to develop an interconnected road network providing an alternative to Harbor Boulevard/Emerald Coast Parkway for local traffic. The alternative corridor shall provide a continuous connection from Danny Wuerffel Way in Okaloosa County along*

Commons Boulevard and through the City to Stahlman Avenue. Additional north-south alternatives east of Main Street shall also be considered to further the creation of a grid network. The recommended network is shown in Map 2-1.

Mr. Dion Moniz, a Destin resident and Destin Chamber of Commerce Board member, stated that members of the Chambers unanimously support the crosstown connector. He also stated that as a partner in a local law firm, he represents a lot of local clients – both businesses and homeowners – and that 100 percent of all the clients he has spoken to about the crosstown connector was in favor of it. They believe it would help ease up traffic and make it more efficient and more effective for residents to get to their homes and/or to local businesses. He urged the Council to approve the project.

Mr. Bruce Craul, a Destin resident and TDC Chairman, stated that the TDC voted for the crosstown connector and set aside some money for it and was approved by County Commission. This project is already funded. They feel it is a good idea, and that it is hard to believe there are parties that are against it. He added it is not a perfect solution to their traffic problem; however anything they could do to east traffic would surely help.

Mr. Shane Moody, President and CEO of the Destin Chamber of Commerce, noted that traffic is already going through residential neighborhoods; and that with the crosstown connector they would be building a safe road with no residential units on either side of it. It would take cars off Mountain Drive and Legion Drive which are heavily populated areas. They would be alleviating traffic in the neighborhoods. He also pointed out that the Destin Campground was bought in 2008 for the sole purpose of continuing this connector from Beach to Benning Drive. He added that the Stahlman/US Hwy 98 intersection is the worst intersection in town; however, it is the number one project on the County's list of projects for the half-cent sales tax. He asked for Council's approval of the project.

Ms. Beverly Henry, a Destin resident, stated that many residents are quite uncertain about this project. They tried to get some confirmation and spoke recently with someone in the City about it. They were told it would take a while for this project to materialize, and that there was nothing to worry about at this time. But now they are hearing the money is available and the City wants to move forward with the project. She urged the Council to find another way to address the traffic problems; adding that all they can expect to gain from the crosstown connector project is more traffic from US Hwy 98.

Ms. Marcie Bell remarked that listening to comments from several members of the Destin Chamber of Commerce led her to question what business would want to support a project that would divert traffic away from their storefront.

Mr. Greg Davis, a Destin resident and commercial real estate appraiser, informed the Council that the homes on Legion Drive are being materially affected through the realtors because of the many rumors going around about the crosstown connectors. People are being deterred from making a decision based on these rumors and not on the quality of the homes. He urged the Council to make any kinds of decision regarding this project; adding that doing nothing is not a very good option.

Ms. Jeannelle Izell spoke on the long-term rental issue. She stated that when she registered her property and paid her permit fee, she asked City staff how many other rental property owners have paid for their permit; and that the response given was 280 permits have been issued over the past two years. She stated there are many more long-term rental houses than those that are currently registered; and that the City needs to do a better job tracking all these unregistered rental homes because not only is the City losing out on a lot of money, but it is unfair to those who obey the rules and pay for the permit.

Mr. Ken Wampler noted that when the short-term rental sign ordinance was created, one thing that was not considered was where to post the rental signs. The current code states that signs cannot be posted on fences, telephone posts and windows. He continued there are white decorative picket fences in the Crystal Beach area with signs posted on them. For over 20 years, rental signs have been posted predominantly on those fences because they are located right at the edge of the right-of-way. He asked the Council to take the necessary action to allow the placement of rental signs on these fences instead of having these signs posted on dedicated posts. It would be a lot better for the community from the appearance standpoint.

Mr. Bill Reddington noted that many long-term rental property owners are not aware of the requirement to obtain a permit to rent their property; especially owners that do not live in Destin. He stated that the City needs to do a better job notifying the general public of this requirement.

Following public comments, the next item discussed was agenda item 7A (2) - Crosstown Connector.

4. CITY MANAGER REPORTS

A. Short-Term Rental Task Force

The City Manager noted that the City Council directed staff to review the establishment and any sunset of the Short-Term Rental Task Force and to determine the current status of the Task Force. He informed the Council that the Task Force was formed via motion of the Council on October 2, 2017. The motion included a provision for automatic sunset of the Task Force after 12 months. Therefore, the committee sunsetted on October 2, 2018 and is no longer in place. If the Council wishes to re-establish the committee, it would require appointing new members. He also stated that staff recommends giving the new Short-Term Rental Ordinance a chance to work over the summer season and perhaps re-establishing the Task Force in the fall to evaluate the result.

Councilmember Destin suggests they go ahead and form the Task Force, appoint some members, and then direct them to start meeting in the fall.

Councilmember Destin moved to re-establish the 7-member Short-Term Rental Task Force; seconded by Councilmember Braden.

After some discussion, the Council agreed to follow the same format and use the same criteria from the previous appointments.

The Mayor called for a vote on the motion, which passes 7-0 (Council members Morgan, Destin, Marler, Overdier, Menchel, Ramswell and Braden voted “yes”).

B. Quarterly Financial and Investment Report

No discussion on this item.

C. Announcements

- Webb Warren and Michael Burgess attended the Governor’s Hurricane Conference. Mr. Warren and Mr. Burgess provided a brief highlight of the conference.
- Destin’s Week of Blessings starts Monday, May 27th

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Innerlight Engineering Corporation, on behalf of Legacy Properties of Northwest Florida, LLC is requesting approval of a Major Deviation to an Existing Development Order and Major Subdivision identified as “Tuscan Village.” The proposed development consists of 86 townhome units. The proposed project is generally located west of Mattie M. Kelly Boulevard, addressed as 500 Mattie M. Kelly Boulevard. The total site area is 7.81 acres, more or less.

The City Attorney sworn in the following individuals for testimony:

Mr. Louis Zunguze
Mr. Tim Whaler, City Planner
Mr. David Smith, Project Engineer

Community Development Director Louis Zunguze presented the project. He explained this is a request for a Major Deviation to a development order and Major Subdivision plat approval. The project consists of 86 townhouses with the associated infrastructure and planning. The proposed deviation is an overall reduction in density. The site was previously approved for 104 dwelling units; a combination of 36 condominiums and 68 townhomes. The project was reviewed by the City’s Technical Review Committee and found it to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map and the Land Development Code from the zoning standpoint.

Mr. David Smith, the project engineer, stated that this project was originally approved in 2004 and amended several times over the years. They are now proposing a reduction in density. Mr. Smith produced a map and pointed out where the reduction will occur.

The Mayor opened a public hearing to receive comments for or against the proposed project. Hearing none, the Mayor closed the public hearing portion of this item and turned the matter over to the City Council for further discussion and consideration.

Councilmember Menchel moved to approve the Major Deviation to an existing Development Order and Major Subdivision identified as “Tuscan Village”; seconded by

Councilmember Ramswell. Motion passed 7-0 (Council members Morgan, Destin, Marler, Overdier, Menchel, Ramswell and Braden voted “yes”).

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Annual Adjustment to Professional Rates for 3TP Ventures, Inc
- B. Request for Council Approval to Purchase FY 19 Additional Vehicle
- C. Agreement with Wet N Wild Water Sports, LLC and TW Calhoun, LLC, pursuant to section 4(b) of Ordinance # 1908CN.
- D. Modification of TDD Operation and Maintenance Agreement
- E. Request for approval of Letter of Support for the re-nomination of Dr. Tom Frazer to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council be added to Consent Agenda

Councilmember Marler moved to pull Consent Agenda item 6C for further discussion, and approve Consent Agenda items 6A, 6B, 6D and 6E, as printed above. Councilmember Overdier provided a second to the motion.

With regards to Consent Agenda item 6E, Councilmember Ramswell asked who previously appointed Dr. Tom Frazer to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and the reason this Council’s support is necessary.

The Mayor replied that former Florida Governor Scott made the initial appointment. Dr. Frazer has served on the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council for 6 years and is presently serving as the Chairman. He is a fair-minded person with a lot of integrity, and he has done a lot for the fishing community. The current Florida Governor Desantis has reappointed Dr. Frazer as the Florida representative to the Gulf Council and named him his chief scientist for his water quality management initiative for the State of Florida. The fishing industry and other stakeholders’ groups are garnering support to encourage the Secretary of Commerce to reappoint him on the Gulf Council.

The Mayor called for a vote on the motion, which passes 7-0 (Council members Morgan, Destin, Marler, Overdier, Menchel, Ramswell and Braden voted “yes”).

With regards to Consent Agenda item 4C, the City Attorney noted there was a code compliance issue with Wet N Wild Water Sports, LLC and TW Calhoun, LLC; and that this issue was quickly resolved.

Councilmember Marler moved to approve Consent Agenda item 4C; seconded by Councilmember Braden. Motion passed 7-0 (Council members Morgan, Destin, Marler, Overdier, Menchel, Ramswell and Braden voted “yes”).

7. COMMENTS / PRESENTATIONS FROM MAYOR, COUNCIL, LAND USE ATTORNEY AND CITY ATTORNEY

- A. Councilmember Braden
 - 1) Outdoor seating in the harbor district

Councilmember Braden would like staff to bring back a recommendation to the Council for parking requirements for outdoor seating in the harbor district. Currently, there are no parking requirements and he feels it contributes a lot to their parking problems in that district.

Councilmember Braden moved to direct staff to bring back a recommendation for parking requirements for the outdoor sitting in the Harbor District; seconded by Councilmember Destin. Motion pass 7-0 (Council members Morgan, Destin, Marler, Overdier, Menchel, Ramswell and Braden voted “yes”).

2) Crosstown Connector

According to Councilmember Braden, he has spoken to Ms. Jane Moore, a former Community Development Director for the City in the late 1980s to early 1990s, about this subject. Ms. Moore informed him they were trying to put a moratorium on building construction on US Hwy 98 during that period, and that they were considering different alternatives. Mountain Drive was considered to be one of the solutions; but it did not happen. Fifteen years later the City adopted the Multi-Modal Transportation District (MMTD) concept. It masked but did not solve the traffic problem. He stated that he has been asking for a copy of the crosstown connector plan for two years, but nobody has been able to produce one. He continued that the previous City Engineer denied the fire district's request to move into the old fire department building because there was supposed to be a plan to demolish that building and run a highway through that area; and that there was also a plan to move the Destin Community Center from its current location. He also noted that the Okaloosa-Walton TPO has put out their 2040 plan, which is called the feasibility plan, which would include the Stahlman Avenue/US Hwy 98 intersection. The TPO has set aside \$240,000, from 2021 to 2025, for the design fee for a total cost of \$1.2 million for this project expected to be completed in 2040. He stated that according to the information Council received recently, the projected completion date for the crosstown connector/alternate Hwy 98 was 2042, which would include 4-laning it; even though according to former City Mayor Craig Barker, the initial intent for the crosstown connector was to give residents a safer and easier path from one end of town to another, and four-laning it was never part of the plan.

Councilmember Braden asked City staff to display two versions of the crosstown connector drawings on the screen. He then explained that the first picture, which everybody gets when they asked for a crosstown connector design, shows a road being connected to another running through the neighborhoods and to the highway. The other design, which he considers the true alternate US Hwy 98, shows a road from Danny Wuerffel Way running all the way to Stahlman Avenue. This design includes a four-lane highway running through the neighborhoods. Councilmember Braden also believes that the reason the crosstown connector has been garnering support from members off the Destin Chamber of Commerce was it would increase traffic capacity on US Hwy 98 resulting in more building construction on that highway. He further stated that the City does not have millions of dollars committed to this project regardless of what they have read on social media; and that the money that was used to purchase the Old Campground may have even come from a grant. If they decide not to go forward with the crosstown connector, they could turn the Old Campground into a public park. He added that residential neighborhoods at West Destin will get a 4-lane highway as the current PD&E clearly shows and that residents need to know about it. He would like to schedule several workshops to discuss this issue to have more public involvement.

Councilmember Morgan noted that the last .4-mile Council agreed to fund at the last meeting is only a two-lane road; adding it could become four lanes subsequent to a future Council's decision. This road would take traffic off Legion Drive, from Beach to Benning Drive. With regards to a claim that building the crosstown connector could somehow help development, FDOT cannot approve development. It is something this Council could control through their Land Development Code.

According to Councilmember Ramswell, when she came on the Council in 2014, she thought the crosstown connector has been decided and there were no further decisions to be made by this Council. As time goes by, she started realizing they could still change things; and that the previous Council has gone back and forth on this issue in the past because they had some concerns about it and which is why this project has not been implemented 30 years later. She continued that a lot of the misinformation they have been receiving and are being disseminated throughout the community are quite disconcerting to her. For instance, it is being reported that Legion Drive and Azalea Drive are only going to be two-lane roads; but the current PD&E Study completed in 2016 says otherwise. The study reads, *"Because Azalea Drive and Legion Drive are not currently 4-lane roads, the proposed project would be constructed in phases. The first phase would provide a two-lane roadway. The second phase would expand ultimately providing a four-lane facility when Azalea Drive and Legion Drive are ultimately widened to four lanes each."* She also stated that a lot of the residents do not use US Hwy 98. They are already using the back roads because they do not want to sit in traffic on US Hwy 98. The level of service on US Hwy 98 in Destin has been an "F" since 2002. It is getting worse because they are not widening US Hwy 98 all the way down to the harbor. They have been at 33 percent over capacity for US Hwy since 2013, and it should be much worse 6 years later. The traffic count for US Hwy 98 was anticipated to be 62,000 vehicles by 2021. There have been reports that they have already exceeded that estimate. Commons Drive was built as part of the master plan; but its level of service has been an "F" since 2015. She also noted that back in 2000, FDOT brought forward 4 different options for the Council to consider for the crosstown connector. The first option was to do nothing. The second option was a 4-2 concept; which was to four-lane US Hwy 98 and then construct a two-lane parallel road. It was subsequently determined this option would not work because it would only provide a short-term level of improvement and it would not be cost-effective or meet the projected 2020 level of service. The third option was a 6-2 concept; which was to 6-lane US Hwy 98 with a two-lane parallel road. This option was also disapproved because it would not increase to the projected 2020 level of service. The fourth option was a 6-4 concept. A six lane US Hwy 98 and a two-lane parallel road. It was determined this option would provide more of a long-term and a higher level of improvement by possibly increasing the level of service to a "D." She added that several options have been provided but none has been implemented because of concerns from the Council. They need to look at other creative options because the crosstown connector is not the solution to their traffic issues. This Council has recently discussed other ideas such as synchronization of traffic lights to include pedestrian crossings which had worked in other larger, highly populated cities.

Councilmember Marler noted that the original intent for the crosstown connector was to provide residents the opportunity to get off US Hwy 98 and take a faster and safer route to their homes. He stated they paid \$4.7 million for the Old Campground property and a large sum of money for the other two adjoining properties as well as the Sandalwood property. He stated that even if they vote to stop this project tonight, it would not stop future Council from bringing it back. They have a traffic situation now that could only get worse even if they build the

crosstown connector. Tourists have discovered the back roads and there is no way to stop them from using these roads. He continued he supports the crosstown connector based on its original intent. The City, not FDOT, controls development in the City. He has not heard anyone come up with some solutions to their traffic problem. There have been some good suggestions on what to do with the land they have already acquired. They could build a public park, a parking lot or affordable housing. They could also sell it and try to purchase more beachfront property for the City.

Councilmember Braden noted that approximately 70 percent of US Hwy 98 traffic is thru traffic. He sees no reason why they would want to divert this traffic through residential neighborhoods and ruin the quality of life for a lot of their residents.

Councilmember Destin stated that his biggest apprehension regarding the crosstown connector is that it would dead-end into Stahlman/US Hwy 98 intersection which is a dysfunctional intersection for a variety of reasons. He continued he would probably be more supportive of the connector once they have figured out how to improve upon this intersection. According to the reports from the TPO, they might have a study done in 6 years on how to fix that intersection; which means they do not have a really good solution to this problem and that the right-of-way acquisition is going to be quite expensive since the 3 major properties surrounding the Stahlman interchange are Whataburger, a gas station and Emerald Grande.

Councilmember Destin moved to instruct staff to take no further action on the crosstown connector; seconded by Councilmember Ramswell.

Councilmember Menchel asked staff to confirm that there will be a dedicated right turn lane into Emerald Grande.

According to the City Manager, it has not been confirmed by FDOT.

Councilmember Menchel inquired as to the accuracy of an earlier statement made by Mr. Shane Moody that the Stahlman Intersection project is listed on the County's list of projects for the half-cent sales tax.

Mr. Moody replied that County Administrator John Hofstad and Deputy County Administrator Greg Kisela met with the Chamber Board and confirmed this project is on the list of projects for the half-cent tax clause.

Councilmember Menchel noted that the Mayor recently posted a variety of information concerning some timelines relating to the crosstown connector. This is a variety of events dating back to 1987. This information gave him a great historical perspective, and it opened a plethora of questions about the crosstown connector. The email he sent to the City Manager had 13 different questions staff is trying to answer, and which may consist of a hundred pages of documents. He would have been in favor of postponing the vote on this issue until he receives those documents in order to make a more informed decision on this issue.

The City Manager noted that at their previous meeting, the City Council approved a resolution endorsing the advance funding agreement supporting the advanced funding agreement

with FDOT for the City's Crosstown Connector Project, which staff has sent to FDOT. He asked if Council wants staff to withdraw the agreement.

There was a consensus from the Council not to withdraw the document, but for staff to simply take no further action on the crosstown connector if the current motion on the floor passes.

The Mayor noted they have \$7.5 million earmarked to finish 2100 feet of road that would benefit the residents. The motion on the floor is to do nothing about the crosstown connector; which means if it passes, they could lose \$7.5 million of free money. They currently do not have an alternative plan to consider. He continued that the crosstown connector is not a perfect solution to their traffic woes; but he does not believe in the insinuation it is going to make things worse in the neighborhoods. Traffic in the neighborhoods already exists and this road will provide a better flow of traffic from Beach Drive to Benning Drive.

The Mayor called for a vote on the motion, which passes 5-2 (Council members Destin, Marler, Menchel, Ramswell and Braden voted "yes"; Council members Morgan and Overdier voted "no").

There was a consensus of the Council to instruct staff to schedule a workshop to discuss fast tracking the Stahlman Avenue and US Hwy 98 intersection improvements project.

The next item discussed following this item was agenda item 4A - *Short-Term Rental Task Force*

B. Councilmember Ramswell

Councilmember Ramswell discussed the City's policy regarding requests for information from a member of the Council. Currently, when a Council member requests information from staff, it is provided to the entire Council and Council. She stated that according to the City Manager, the current protocol was put in place by a previous City Manager, but it is not in writing. She suggests they formalize a policy that anytime a member of the Council or the Mayor requests information from staff, that information will be provided to the entire Council and Mayor; or that information will only be provided to the member who requested it unless they specifically instructed staff to share the information with the other members of the Council and the Mayor.

Councilmember Ramswell moved to formalize a policy that anytime a member of the Council or the Mayor requests information from staff, that the information is provided only to the requester unless the person specifically instructed staff to share the information with the entire Council and the Mayor. Councilmember Destin provided a second to the motion.

Councilmember Braden stated that he has no problem sharing any of the information he asked for with everybody.

Councilmember Menchel stated that if a Council member or the Mayor asked for information that they plan to bring forward in a public meeting, that information should be

shared with everybody. He also stated that sharing information prevents other members from duplicating requests.

Councilmember Ramswell offered an amended motion to formalize a policy that anytime a member of the Council or the Mayor requests information from staff, that information will be provided to the entire Council and Mayor; seconded by Councilmember Destin. Motion passed 7-0 (Council members Morgan, Destin, Marler, Overdier, Menchel, Ramswell and Braden voted "yes").

B. Councilmember Menchel

Councilmember Menchel suggests that any email to the City that is addressed to the City Council that it also goes to the City Manager; especially if there is any required action involved. This would prevent several members of the Council from having to forward the email to the City Manager.

The City Manager noted he already receives a copy of any email addressed to "Council" but not email addressed to individual member of the Council or Mayor.

Councilmember Menchel announced that FDOT will not allow a three-dimensional crosswalk which he previously recommended to the Council.

Councilmember Menchel mentioned that the small portion of grass located between the sidewalk and the roadway all along US Hwy 98 is almost knee high; and that according to City staff, it is the business owner's responsibility to cut the grass. He is encouraging all business owners to maintain the grass located in front of their property.

Mr. Burgess will get further clarification as to whose responsibility it is to maintain the grass and report back to Council.

Councilmember Overdier

E. Councilmember Marler

Councilmember Marler asked the City Manager to check on the status of the traffic light that was supposed to be placed at the Henderson Beach Drive and Commons Drive intersection, behind the Wal-Mart Shopping Center. He stated that the traffic situation at that intersection is getting worse and many residents in that area have come to him and complained about it.

Councilmember Ramswell noted that during their previous discussion about this issue, they were informed that the original owner of the apartment complex was supposed to conduct a follow-up traffic study for that intersection. Apparently, the building has been sold and that the new owner is not claiming responsibility for conducting that study, and so the traffic study became the responsibility of the County.

The City Manager stated that installation of the traffic light at that intersection is in process. When the apartment complex was built, there were fees of about \$100,000 charged to

the contractor. The City forwarded the money to the County for the engineering and installation of traffic light. He will check on the status and report back to Council.

F. Councilmember Destin

1. City of Destin Election

According to Councilmember Destin, he previously proposed this idea to improve the turnout during City elections which are currently held in March of even numbered years. The low voter turnout at their municipal elections has been a concern to him. They need to get as many members of the public engaged in the political process as possible. He continued that according to the City Charter, their elections are held during the General Election in November and he would like to know the reason they deviated from their charter. They have previously instructed their legal counsel to prepare an election memorandum in terms of election rules and Council's options in this regard; and it appears the conclusion is the Council can change their municipal election from March to November.

Councilmember Destin moved to instruct the City's legal counsel to draft an ordinance changing the City's election date from the Presidential Preference Primary in March to the General Election in November beginning the year 2020; seconded by Councilmember Menchel.

Councilmember Marler asked what would happen to the terms of the current members of the Council and the Mayor.

According to the City Attorney, State law allows those terms to be extended.

Motion passed 6-1 (Council members, Destin, Marler, Overdier, Menchel, Ramswell and Braden voted "yes"; Councilmember Morgan voted "no").

The City Attorney suggests Council also directs staff to speak with the County's Supervisor of Elections regarding the practical ramification of changing the election date.

Councilmember Destin moved to direct staff to coordinate with Okaloosa County's Supervisor of Elections to determine what is necessary to facilitate the change in election date; seconded by Councilmember Marler. Motion passed 6-1 (Council members, Destin, Marler, Overdier, Menchel, Ramswell and Braden voted "yes"; Councilmember Morgan voted "no").

2. Potential expansion of TDC boundaries

Councilmember Destin announced there have been some discussions at the County TDC about expanding the tourism development district. Currently it is only Fort Walton Beach and Destin. He continued that there could be some legal ramifications with regards to how the money is divided, and whether or not Destin and/or Fort Walton Beach would still have a seat on the TDC because Florida Law specifically sets up the Council once they are created.

It was the consensus of the Council to direct the City's legal counsel to coordinate with legal representatives for Okaloosa County, the TDC and Fort Walton Beach, and discuss the legal ramifications involved in the potential expansion of the TDC boundaries.

G. Councilmember Morgan

1. Occupancy signs for short-term rentals on decorative fences in Crystal Beach

Councilmember Morgan moved to direct staff to draft an amendment to the Short-Term Rental Ordinance to allow for placement of occupancy signage on picket fences; seconded by Councilmember Braden. Motion passed 7-0 (Council members Morgan, Destin, Marler, Overdier, Menchel, Ramswell and Braden voted "yes").

H. Mayor Gary Jarvis

The Mayor asked the City Manager to find out who is responsible for the maintenance and landscaping of the entrance to Terracota Village.

I. Land Use Attorney

1. Update on TRC Status, as of May 15, 2019

The Land Use Attorney noted that the only item that went before the TRC this month is included in the agenda packet that was provided to the Council.

2. Update on the Beach Safety Corridor Ordinance

The Land Use Attorney noted that the Council passed this ordinance on first reading. The ordinance went before the Local Planning Agency (LPA). The LPA did not make any recommendations and tabled the item to their next meeting. They may have to make some revisions to this ordinance and bring it back to Council on first reading.

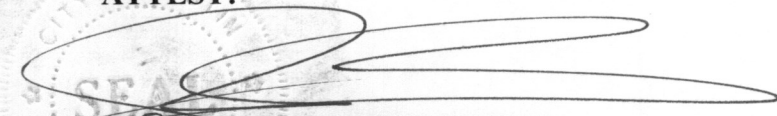
J. City Attorney

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 9:32 PM.



Gary Jarvis, Mayor

ATTEST:



Rey Bailey, City Clerk