

MINUTES OF REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Caucus Room, Belize City Council

August 6th, 2024

10:00 a.m.

Present at the meeting were the following:

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| 1. Mr. Bernard Wagner | Mayor |
| 2. Mr. Allan Pollard Jr. | Deputy Mayor |
| 3. Ms. Kaya Cattouse | Councillor |
| 4. Mr. Javier Castellanos | Councillor |
| 5. Mr. Evan Thompson | Councillor |
| 6. Mr. Edmund Kwan | Councillor |
| 7. Mr. Eluide Miller | Councillor |
| 8. Mr. Malcolm Nunez | Councillor |
| 9. Mr. Dorian Usher | Councillor |

Absent with apologies:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 10. Mr. Sherwin Garcia | Councillor |
| 11. Mrs. Stephanie Hamilton | Councillor |

Mr. Albert Vaughan	City Administrator
Ms. Carissa Casanova	Administrative Manager, Office of the Mayor

Appearances by:

Ms. Alex Nolberto	Director of Finance
Ms. Sharlene Rudon	Director of Administration
Mrs. Michelle Smith	Ag. Director of Communications



Mayor Wagner called the meeting to order at 10:14 AM.

1.0 Belize National Prayer

1.1 Mayor Wagner led all present in reciting the National Prayer of Belize.

2.0 Welcome Remarks

2.1 Mayor Wagner welcomed the Deputy Mayor and Councillors to the meeting, he advised that they were all there to participate in the business of municipal government.

2.2 The mayor explained that sometimes their contributions may seem trivial to those who don't take the time to understand the magnitude of the work. He further advised that by participating in the discourse, they play an integral role in the development of the city.

2.3 Mayor Wagner then shared that he had listened to some of the managers talk about traffic lights on a morning show. He reemphasized that the Councillors all played a part in how far the city has come concerning traffic lights.

2.4 The role of the Councillors is to bring the concerns of residents to the Council, therefore they should not think of their role as City Councillors as being insignificant, but rather significant.

2.5 Mayor Wagner then encouraged the Councillors to give themselves a round of applause, noted that the meeting's agenda was full, and asked that they quickly ratify the minutes of the previous meeting.

3.0 Ratification of the June 12th, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes

3.1 Mayor Wagner invited the Counillors to browse the minutes of the previous meeting and make recommendations for any changes.

3.2 "10.8" Add similar to what the Belmopan City Council received.

3.3 "6.2" add Honorable Cordel Hyde and Honorable Henry Usher.

3.4 "6.10" add period after Hyde's Ln.

3.5 "12.7" remove "seconded by" (page 19), which was repeated twice.

3.6 "10.36" change to "advised that there was a meeting between the Ministry of Finance, Belize Water Services Ltd., and Digi".

3.7 Councillor Kwan moved for the minutes of the June 12th, 2024 meeting to be ratified;

seconded by Councillor Usher.

4.0 Matters Arising from the Minutes

4.1 Councillor Miller requested an update on the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

4.2 The City Administrator advised that the Labour Commissioner had completed their review of the document and made suggestions for improvement. The team is in the process of reviewing those suggestions and making edits for submission to the Union.

4.3 Concerning the matter of the booths at the Council's various locations, the City Administrator advised that the issue lies with the fact that there are tenants who have become delinquent in their payments and have not been complying with the terms of their lease.

4.4 The City Administrator then requested that the Council take action, and recommended eviction for those who are in arrears, especially since many people are eager to get into the booths. He further requested permission from the Council to issue notices to tenants whose accounts are delinquent.

4.5 The Council expressed their support for Mr. Vaughan's request.

4.6 Councillor Miller advised that he would be tabling motions on Councillor Garcia's behalf relating to the rental of booths at Digi Park, and added his support for the Council to take whatever steps necessary to address the matter of delinquent tenants.

4.7 Councillor Miller then requested an update on the recruitment of taxi drivers.

4.8 The City Administrator advised that there were no favourable applications. He further explained that Mayor Wagner suggested that candidates be sought in-house if the applications do not meet the established requirements.

4.9 The Mayor advised that drivers would need to be tech-savvy, which is proving to be an issue.

4.10 Councillor Kwan made observations as to why interest may be low and recommended that the Council include, in the Ads, a breakdown of the associated costs being published for the program.

4.11 The City Administrator further suggested that the Councillors could share the information related to the program within their circles of influence.



4.12 Mayor Wagner then explained that payments made by the taxi drivers toward the program would be taken from the revenue collected. He further explained that a percentage of every dollar earned would go towards the rent, maintenance, and towards the driver's salary. This model is the same that is currently being used by taxi operators.

4.13 The Mayor further advised that employees of the Council who are at or nearing the age of retirement could be considered for the program.

4.14 Councillor Castellanos advised that he is friendly with the taxi associations and requested that he be allowed to hold a meeting with the taxi drivers and the E-transit Coordinator, Mr. Neil Hall.

5.0 Announcements by the Mayor

5.1 Mayor Wagner noted that the E-buses have been launched and are up and running, with minor issues arising. Mayor Wagner further stated that he is encouraged by the usage he has seen of the buses. He explained that on the first day of the launch, there were 188 persons on board, 222 on the second day; and on the fifth day, 334 people boarded the bus. To date, a total of 1,584 people have utilized the service.

5.2 The Mayor further explained that from a financial standpoint, the project is clearly viable, and the service will have to be expanded eventually. The Council is looking at three additional buses and has begun discussions with investors to expand the project.

5.3 Mayor Wagner advised that they would continue to monitor the operation and financial model of the project. He noted that residents love the service, and predicted that usage will increase as schools begin to reopen. He further noted that the Council is currently losing out on business by not including call centre locations in their route, and explained that the initiative has the potential to be an excellent revenue stream for the city.

5.4 Mayor Wagner then advised that the implementation of parking meters, the smart parking facilities, and the E-taxis, provide an excellent outlook for the city in the next 10-15 years. He added that Belize City is doing great regionally and internationally, and further thanked Deputy Mayor Pollard for representing the Council recently in the Dominican Republic.

5.5 Mayor Wagner further noted that there are still other requests for representation, and stated that an upcoming conference is being held in Canada, from the 10th-12th of September. The Council's participation will be in respect to the Waterfront Strategy, and the proposed floating boardwalk.

5.6 Mayor Wagner reminded the Councillors that discussions have commenced with Blue 21, a Dutch company; a feasibility study will need to be conducted, and funding for the project will need to be sought.

5.7 Mayor Wagner asked Deputy Mayor Pollard to represent the Council in Canada, along with the City Planner.

5.8 Mayor Wanger advised that another session is scheduled in Barcelona for November but a response will not be provided to the organizers until closer to the scheduled date. He further observed that Belize City is being recognized for driving the climate change agenda. The Mayor also notified the Councillors that the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting would be taking place in Samoa and that he would be representing the Council at the event in October.

6.0 General Updates from the City Administrator

6.1 The City Administrator advised that he would be inviting the various directors to provide updates on their respective divisions.

6.2 The Director of Finance began his presentation by advising the Mayor and Councillors that the Council's operational ratio was previously hovering at 100-140% above the annual budget, however, the operational ratio is now around 109%. He further advised that the Council has had an issue with balancing capital costs vs. operational flows.

6.3 To address these challenges, there has been a drive to identify new revenue streams for the Council.

6.4 The Finance Director further advised that some revenue-generating initiatives have already been implemented at the market. He explained that the cost associated with vending on market days in relation to the amount of garbage that was left behind on those days was analysed. Following this analysis, a decision was made for an additional garbage fee to be paid by the vendors.

6.5 The vendors have agreed to contribute an additional \$5.00 for the removal of their garbage. While garbage removal would require human resources, the Council will not be bearing the cost of this upfront, since the vendors are willing to pay to keep their areas clean.

6.6 The Finance Director further added that the Council has invested in the bathroom facilities. However, the usage fees are subsidized by \$0.50. Therefore, a recommendation is being made for an increase of \$0.50, which is the normal bathroom rate.

6.7 Deputy Mayor Pollard asked if the collection of garbage fees is attached to the rent.

6.8 The Director of Finance clarified that the garbage fee is only collected on market days and added that the stakeholders have already agreed to the fees; so far there have been no issues. He also noted that the Market Manager has a good relationship with the vendors.

6.9 The Director of Finance then proposed revisiting the cost structure for the booths on the ground floor of City Hall. He advised that the Council would be trying to offset the cost of operations and maintenance.

6.10 The Director of Finance further advised that there is a cost associated with vending, and one associated with peddling, however, some vendors take advantage of this. The fee for a Peddler's License is \$25, and the Council is looking along the same range for vending as well.

6.11 The Finance Director then explained that to meet its financial obligations, revenue collection measures are being enhanced and everyone is being involved.

6.12 Deputy Mayor Pollard asked the Director of Finance when he thought the Council would return to a sense of normalcy, and further inquired whether the effects of the measures being implemented would be immediately felt.

6.13 The Director of Finance again outlined the Council's operational ratio and explained that the Council was operating at 140% of its annual budget, however as of June, that figure is now down to 109%. He further noted that the measures implemented were immediate action items, and the revenue line will be revisited to improve on what has already been done. The revenue team is working on boosting revenue while managing expenditure by cutting and improving where possible so that the Council can navigate these times.

6.14 Deputy Mayor Pollard then asked the Director of Finance to advise the Council on the areas that are being prioritized.

6.15 The Finance Director explained that areas that generate income and returns to the Council are being prioritized. He further stated that key obligations are being looked at and paid, and vendors are simultaneously being engaged so they understand the Council's position.

6.16 Mayor Wagner asked the director to explain how the new revenue streams identified would impact the Council given the flatlining of the slow season, and their potential effects within the next 5-10 years.

6.17 The Director of Finance advised that the Council's viability is looked at critically, and the level of confidence is significantly reduced when an environment is created in which the expense outflows do not match the revenue inflows. New projects demonstrate the Council's ability to improve its debt servicing, and what the Council is experiencing now is growing pains. At the end of the day, in order to achieve the Council's vision, it's important to stay the course.

6.18 Councillor Miller explained that the director's observations further emphasize the importance of addressing the issues at the park.

6.19 The Director of Finance then invited the Councillors to visit him to discuss the needs of their specific portfolios.

6.20 Deputy Mayor Pollard advised that the Works team meets on Mondays and added that their work is labour-intensive and requires a lot of resources. He further explained that it's frustrating having to reprimand the Works team for being behind on projects, and they inform him that they do not have the required materials or resources. Payments for supplies are taking longer than usual, and complaints from the public are not shrinking.

6.21 The Director of Administration began her presentation and provided a report on the progress of the MIS, CEMO, HR, and Parks Departments.

6.22 Mayor Wagner asked about the status of the Battlefield Park, and the statue being erected as there is nothing on record that the Council approved the installation of the statue.

6.23 The City Administrator then advised that the Council had passed a resolution for motorcycles, however at the time, the Ministry of Transport had indicated that they were in the process of reviewing the legislation, therefore no progress was made.

6.24 Councillor Castellanos advised that these matters, referring to the installation of the statue, should be brought to caucus so that the Mayor and Councillors can share their opinion.

6.25 The Acting Director of Communications then provided an update on the Public Relations and Programs Departments. She advised that the launch of the E-buses recently took place, with Mayor Wagner, Councillor Miller, and the City Administrator joining on the inaugural ride.

6.26 The Acting Director of Communications further advised that the Eboe Town Festival was successful; the assumption is that it will be an annual event, so there are already plans to make it better.

6.27 The Council has launched a weekly talk show, Siti Talk. Mayor Wagner was the guest on the first episode, which proved to be very informative. Residents called in to share their concerns and commend the Council.

6.28 Mayor Wagner encouraged the Councillors to show their support by calling into the show.

6.29 The Acting Director of Communications advised that a proposed schedule would be created and shared with the Councillors indicating when they would each be appearing on the talk show.

6.30 The Acting Director of Communications then informed those present that the Council's Peewee basketball final is scheduled for August 7th and will see an exhibition game, between those who participated in the program, and a team from Crooked Tree. She invited the Councillors to come out and support the youths. She further advised that there would be a friendly match between Councillors/Sr. Staff and parents. Proceeds from the event will go toward the Council's back-to-school drive.

6.31 The Council's back-to-school Super Sale is scheduled for August 10th, and so far, 140 vendors have signed up to participate. The Acting Director of Communications advised that no one wishing to participate in the Super Sale is denied and that all major school supply businesses are on board for the back-to-school edition. The PR team has been reaching out to participating businesses and some have agreed to donate prizes which will be given away throughout the day.

6.32 The PR Department is waiting for the launch of the NICH Parking Lot to be scheduled.

6.33 The Council's Summer Programs ended with a field trip to the Belize Zoo and the Museum of Belize. With respect to the upcoming cohort of Youth Shadow Councillors, 25 applications were received, which have since been shortlisted to a group of 16. Interviews have been scheduled to get the 11 Youth Shadow Councillors.

6.34 The Acting Director of Communications invited the Councillors to inform the PR Department if they have any Council-related engagements.

6.35 The Acting Director then advised that the Council's E-taxis have been wrapped, but that they are just awaiting a launch date for the initiative.

6.36 Castellanos noted a concern with Youth Shadow Councillors. He explained that his former shadow did not reside in the city, and distance proved to be an issue and hindered their participation in many of the Council's initiatives.

6.37 The E-transit Coordinator provided an update on the Council's E-mobility project.



6.38 Councillor Castellanos noted that residents are pleased with the service and have expressed their desire to widen its reach.

6.39 Deputy Mayor Pollard stated that seeing the bus operating at night was a good experience, the lights were on inside the bus; he further commended the progress that is being made.

6.40 The buses have a capacity of 40 people, sitting and standing, and come with a ramp to assist persons in wheelchairs. The E-transit Coordinator further noted that he had been advised that the Council has the fastest chargers in all of CARICOM.

6.41 The Council has been collaborating with the Ministry of Transport on the project as they have control of the 501-transit app. A recent update was made which crashed the system.

6.42 Despite the recent challenges with electricity, it costs less than \$80.00 to fully charge the buses, which can operate all day. The buses also have Wi-Fi and charging ports on board. The 501-transit app allows people to plan their trips. The E-transit Coordinator concluded his presentation.

6.43 The City Administrator apologized for the lengthy presentation and explained that he was trying something new to ensure that the Council hears from the directors.

7.0 Notices

7.1 No matters were tabled.

8.0 Questions

8.1 In relation to sanitation and beautification of the city, Councillor Cattouse asked if there is anything the Council has implemented that requires residents to take care of the area in front of their yards. She advised that doing so would help the Sanitation Department significantly and help to improve the aesthetics of the city.

8.2 Mayor Wagner advised that it goes back to Civic Pride, he further stated that there is nothing legislated, but the Council has taken on the responsibility. The key is to raise awareness and have residents participate in cleaning their communities.

8.3 Mayor Wagner advised that there may not be the political will to pass legislation, but encouraged the Councillors to promote residents taking care of their community whenever they have the opportunity.

9.0 Petitions

9.1 Deputy Mayor Pollard informed the Mayor and Councillors that he recently paid a visit to Itz'at STEAM Academy where he participated in a tour and met with staff. The Minister of Education has worked on this school and is very proud of it.

9.2 Deputy Pollard noted that there have been growing pains, and advised that it would be a nice gesture to donate to the school's marching band. The school has indicated that they would like to start a marching band for their school to participate in this year's Independence Day parade.

9.3 Deputy Mayor Pollard further noted that a quotation from CY's Music has estimated the cost of the required instruments to be about \$3,947.00. He recommended that the Council commit to covering half the cost of the instruments.

9.4 Mayor Wagner advised that the Council assisted the other schools with similar initiatives.

9.5 The City Administrator advised Deputy Mayor Pollard to have the school submit a request signed by the Chairman of the Board, in writing.

9.6 Councillor Castellanos explained that the world is at war, and anger is being used to solve issues rather than diplomacy, as is the case with the current opposition party. He complimented the Mayor and explained that even though they sometimes disagree, they can heal and move forward. Councillor Castellanos further commended the team for being able to move forward following disagreements.

9.7 Councillor Castellanos advised that he received a complaint about Nutmeg St., and further advised that drunken drivers are rampant in the city. He noted that something needs to be done to address the issue and that of cars parking on the sidewalks.

9.8 Councillor Castellanos concluded by recommending that those present read Matthew Chapters 5,6, and 7, in the New Testament, which provides a guide on how to live life.

9.9 The City Administrator requested that questions and petitions be submitted to him before the next Council meeting.

10.0 Presentation of Reports from Councillors

10.1 Councillor Thompson began his presentation by advising those present that the market is scheduled to be power-washed, the bathroom fees are being increased, and a garbage fee is now being charged.

10.2 Councillor Thompson further noted that they are planning to resurface the floor in



the garbage room to ease the removal of garbage.

10.3 The City Administrator advised that the Council needs to have a more visible presence on market day. Enforcement in particular needs to be improved, there are people riding bikes, and motorcycles through the crowd.

10.4 Councillor Thompson advised that the public does not respect our Enforcement Officers and only sees them as traffic officers. He further asked if there was anything that could be done for the public to take them more seriously.

10.5 Councillor Kwan recommended rebranding the Department or changing the uniforms.

10.6 The City Administrator advised that it is now a criminal offense to threaten or insult a public servant, he further stated that the Enforcement officers need to demand their respect; this reason they have been sworn in as special constables.

10.7 Councillor Kwan further advised that the Council educate the public on the role of Enforcement Officers.

10.8 Councillor Thompson noted that the uniform makes a difference, he further explained that if someone is riding their bike contrary to the flow of traffic, and they see a specific type of uniform, they respect it.

10.9 Councillor Castellanos suggested that enforcement officers be issued uniforms to be worn when they are working outside of their normal duties.

10.10 The City Administrator advised that additional Enforcement Officers are being recruited, and acknowledged that uniforms do play a role, but added that it is the responsibility of the person wearing the uniform to decide if they will demand their respect or be a pushover.

10.11 Mayor Wagner encouraged the Councillors to help change the culture within their departments. He further advised that it is up to the managers and employees to get serious about conducting their duties.

10.12 In his report, Councillor Nunez commended the staff of the Programs Department, for seeking funds from the business community to conduct the summer programs. He further encouraged his fellow Councillors to support the department by attending the Pee wee Finals.

10.13 In her presentation, Councillor Cattouse noted that the remedial studies program was able to accommodate 70 participants, and is scheduled to conclude on August 16th.

10.14 Councillor Cattouse further advised that she is looking at ways to make legal aid



accessible not only to residents but also to Council staff. Disability Directory in the planning.

10.15 Regarding this year's Valedictorian from Wesley College High School, Mayor Wagner approved for the Council to reach out to her to recognize her efforts.

10.16 Councillor Cattouse then advised that staff from the Sanitation Department have expressed that they are overworked due to being required to work weekends.

10.17 The City Administrator advised that the Sanitation Coordinator needs to present something in writing on the matter.

10.18 In his report, Councillor Miller advised that the MIS (Management Information Systems) Department has been working to finalize their work at the Parking Lot.

10.19 Councillor Miller further stated that he has been in discussion with a developer from Canada who was able to create the Digi Wallet app in just a couple of months. They have indicated that they would be able to develop the Belize City App and will follow up to provide an estimate.

10.20 Councillor Miller then explained that the Council is in the process of obtaining legitimate Microsoft licensing, which should provide better access to software for the Council. Additionally, the MIS Department continues to work actively to address technological issues as they arise.

10.21 Councillor Miller advised that the Council is in discussions with Total Business Solutions Ltd. to implement the GRID System. He explained that an initial agreement was being signed, and a lot of leg work had been completed. The team ultimately settled on a total of 25 units within the grid. There were initially overlapping grids but they were able to find a better and more effective grid.

10.22 A demo of the platform was sent to the City Planner to confirm that there are no overlapping grids. Within the next week, the team will go through the system in detail and make any necessary adjustments.

10.23 Councillor Miller advised that the MIS Department needs additional chairs, as they are expecting the onboarding of new staff soon.

10.24 Councillor Miller continued his presentation by advising that Mr. Kevan Jenkins has been transferred back to the Traffic Department, and Mr. Ian Blake is now responsible for managing the E-mobility project.

10.25 Councillor Miller advised that the Traffic Department has managed to bring in \$100,000 in revenues and acknowledged that the department does not have the most comfortable working environment. Councillor Miller committed to discussing the



possibility of providing a better space for the employees with Mayor Wagner.

10.26 Councillor Miller noted that the traffic department has seen an increase in the number of online payments, with 50% of the revenues being generated in this manner. He expressed that this increase is commendable and further observed that this would also translate to shorter lines.

10.27 Regarding the Local Economic Development Unit, Councillor Miller advised that there is a new policy in place for annual business reports. The LED manager has been following up with BCAP participants to ensure that they are complying with the new measures.

10.28 The LED Unit has been actively working to bring in contributions with respect to foreign assistance.

10.29 Councillor Miller also explained that a Magazine has reached out to the Council and is looking at featuring Belize City.

10.30 The Council will be participating in the New York Park Fest which is scheduled to take place in September.

10.31 Councillor Miller concluded his report by congratulating Mayor Wagner on the successful launch of the E-buses. He recalled their visit to the transport board in Barbados and recognized the accomplishment as a true feat.

10.32 Mayor Wagner advised that work on the Grid System has been led by Councillor Miller and Deputy Mayor Pollard. He also cautioned the Councillors that the budget cycle for the next fiscal year will start in September, so if all project components aren't included in the Council's budget, the project will be behind schedule.

10.33 Mayor Wagner advised that Deputy Mayor Pollard was crucial to the addition of vehicles to the traffic department's fleet back in 2018, and indicated that discussions have started with Caribbean Motors to trade in the old vehicles and upgrade the fleet.

10.34 Mayor Wagner explained that he has met with Caribbean Motors, and is looking at electric pick-up options as well. Utilizing electric vehicles will save the Council significantly in fuel costs. Currently, the Council pays \$10,000.00 weekly in fuel costs; electric vehicles would save the Council significantly in the future.

10.35 Deputy Mayor Pollard then commended City Administrator Vaughan for bringing Directors in to provide the updates to the Council. He explained that in terms of infrastructure, staff from the Works Department have been deployed to the e-Depot, where they have been working on the fence, and shed, both of which have since been completed. The works team also assisted in some improvements to the park in Belama

due to a tournament that was held there.

10.36 With respect to the NICH Parking Lot, Deputy Mayor Pollard acknowledged that the team has been deployed there for quite some months. He explained that the department is not the most equipped but by his assessment, has been doing a great job.

10.37 The works team has also reconstructed the shed at the Isaiah Morte Plaza, and the culvert at the corner of Alexandria and Bagdad Streets. The culvert replacement works were more extensive than initially thought, and required breaking the sidewalk, which is currently being reconstructed.

10.38 The department has also undertaken the patching of streets along the e-bus route. Additionally, the sidewalk at the corner of Orange St and Albert St has deteriorated and a works crew was deployed to address the issue.

10.39 The streets that were recently rehabilitated using Unicapa seem to be holding up well. Deputy Pollard suggested that the material could be used moving forward for addressing less trafficked streets. The process is quick and residents enjoy having upgraded streets. Other streets that could benefit from the usage of the material will be identified.

10.40 The department has also been working to replace manhole covers on Simon Lamb St. where 16 manhole covers have been damaged.

10.41 Deputy Mayor Pollard then explained that the department has been facing difficulties in getting the materials they need to carry out the work, however, he is confident that things will balance out soon given the report provided by the Finance Director. Currently, materials are being rationed, but the complaints are still coming in.

10.42 Deputy Mayor Pollard further noted that the department has been facing shortages in Premix, hardcore, and all-in. The heavy equipment has also been having issues, but the department has found a way to mitigate those. One of the Council's backhoes currently has a hydraulic leak.

10.43 Mayor Wagner inquired if the Works Department had any plans to paint the pedestrian crossways in school neighbourhoods. Deputy Mayor Pollard indicated that procuring adequate material has been a challenge.

10.44 Mayor Wagner then recommended that the necessary materials be sourced externally.

10.45 The City Administrator advised that durable, yellow paint should be utilized. Mayor Wagner again advised that quotes should be obtained from external business entities.

10.46 Councillor Castellanos noted that flooding has been an issue on Freetown Rd. between the gas station and the roundabout. He was advised that during one of the construction projects Bowen blocked the main culvert in the area causing water to settle.

10.47 The City Administrator advised that the electronic billboard has been removed from the overpass, and stated that he would like the overpass to be painted in time for the September celebrations.

10.48 Those present were advised that Mr. Steve Perrera has expressed interest in placing a similar digital billboard near the Cinderella Plaza.

11.0 Request for leave to move the adjournment of the Council on a definite matter of urgent public importance.

11.1 Mayor Wagner advised that mechanics operating in the city who have derelict vehicles parked along the streets obviously have no concern about the city. He instructed the City Administrator to seek legal recourse with the support of the Council through the traffic and enforcement Councillors.

11.2 He advised the City Administrator to investigate available options for addressing the issue.

11.3 Mayor Wagner further advised the City Administrator to seek advice from Magistrate McKenzie on ways in which the Council can seek legal recourse and to identify those mechanics that the Council will be going after throughout the city. He further stated that a notice should be placed in the newspaper of impending actions that will be taken against the mechanics identified.

11.4 The mechanics should be given a timeline in which to move the vehicles from off the street. There should be joint operations with the police department and advice should be sought from the judiciary.

11.5 Deputy Mayor Pollard offered his full support for the initiatives and noted that the Council has had to deal with the same issues repeatedly. It's tiring for residents to be complaining about the same issues, and it sends off a no-confidence signal in the Council.

11.6 Deputy Mayor Pollard then inquired how they could continue to campaign and expect people to support them as a Council if they are unable to enforce the laws. He further stated that sometimes they concede and believe that there isn't anything that can be done about a particular issue.

11.7 Deputy Mayor Pollard acknowledged that the Council is taking a bold position, on this matter, and advised that it cannot just be handled from a PR standpoint, but that it needs to be serious. This is the only way in which the Council will be respected, as



diplomacy isn't working.

11.8 Councillor Miller offered his support for the initiative. He noted that the street behind the Gulf Hotel was in a horrible state, and even after being addressed by the Council, it is still in the same position.

11.9 The Council was advised that the trade license board is no longer issuing trade licenses to mechanics. It was further suggested that trade licenses should be revoked for those mechanics who have not made accommodations for parking. Councillor Miller further advised that the City Planner would be making a recommendation later in the meeting, and asked the Councillors for their support.

11.10 Councillor Castellanos offered his support for the initiative and stated that enhanced enforcement is needed. He added that the Council needs to be able to sustain and continue enforcement, so it doesn't become an issue again.

11.11 The City Administrator assured the Council that he takes the matter very seriously and committed to convening a meeting by Friday to determine how to proceed. He further added that the enforcement team cannot be afraid to go out and address the matter.

11.12 Councillor Nunez offered his support for the initiative. He noted that these mechanics often interrupt the flow of traffic and shared his belief that it is long overdue. The initiative will demonstrate that the Council is in control of the city. In some instances, mechanics block streets so much that it causes traffic accidents.

12.0 Motions by Mayor & Councilors

12.1 Councillor Cattouse moved a motion for the Council to approve the purchase, subdivision, and distribution of 23 acres of land for first-time landowners, who are employed with the Belize City Council's, Sanitation Department, and staff who have reached the retirement age, as a token of appreciation for their service. The motion was seconded by Councillor Kwan.

12.2 A presentation was made describing the property and options for subdivision.

12.3 Following the presentation, Councillor Kwan noted that the subdivision may not be feasible given that subdivisions in rural areas require properties to be no less than ¼ of an acre in size.

12.4 Councillor Kwan further inquired if the cost included the surveying required to subdivide the property. He was advised that the cost was just for the land.

12.5 Councillor Thompson then asked who would be responsible for subdividing the property.

12.6 Councillor Kwan expressed his support for the initiative and stated that it would be good for the Council's Sanitation Workers. He then reiterated his concern that parcels in rural areas cannot be subdivided into less than ¼ of an acre; not everyone may benefit from the initiative, which may cause more issues among staff.

12.7 Deputy Mayor Pollard stated that he believes the initiative is being carried out with good intent. However, he noted some concerns and further advised that the work involved in subdividing the property is very technical and costly.

12.8 Deputy Mayor Pollard added that because of its location outside city limits, the Council's equipment cannot be deployed to the property to carry out the needed work.

12.9 The Deputy Mayor then explained that if the plans for the development of the property had been more comprehensive, it would have been easier to garner support.

12.10 Deputy Mayor Pollard further advised that identifying needed resources, as well as defining the full scope of a project determines its success. He recalled that Mayor Darrell Bradley had attempted a similar endeavor, however, there was no follow-up. He added that if some staff are already having difficulties in meeting their needs, they won't be able to afford the work required to develop their property.

12.11 The Deputy Mayor, concluded by explaining that a cost study needs to be carried out and stated that he doesn't want the Council to take something on that the employees will not be able to use; if the project is done, it needs to be done right.

12.12 Councillor Thompson commended the initiative but noted that the full scope of the project was not included which would lead to additional costs.

12.13 Councillor Cattouse explained that the land is what is being sold, and given her intention of catering to the Sanitation Department, she had requested a demonstration of what could be offered to the staff.

12.14 Mayor Wagner stated that he understood the concept of the project and the desire to cater to the Council's least recognized staff. He advised that the initiative is in essence, a land transaction and that the additional amenities would come afterward.

12.5 Mayor Wagner further advised that the transaction would reflect the acquisition of an asset to the Council. He encouraged the Councillors to view it not merely as a land purchase, but as a comprehensive project. He noted that considering the increased value it would provide to each staff member is important.

12.15 Mayor Wagner advised that a certified appraisal of the land in its current state should be carried out. Once completed, he anticipates no opposition to acquiring the land for future allocation to Sanitation Staff, pending consultation with the Minister of Natural

Resources. He suggested collaborating with the Ministry of Infrastructure Development and Housing (MIDH) to facilitate development for the most deserving staff at the Sanitation Department.

12.16 The Mayor noted that the land purchase is only the first step in a long-term plan and likened it to planting a seed, which may not come to fruition within the current term. He also shared Councillor Kwan's concerns with the size of the lots.

12.17 Mayor Wagner assured the Councillors that approving the acquisition would be appropriate once a certified appraisal is provided. He emphasized that the asset would be recorded on the books and reserved for future distribution to staff.

12.18 Councillor Castellanos proposed that, in addition to meeting the requirement of a property valuation in its current state, the list of beneficiaries and the plan presented should be retracted. He advised that the motion would then be accepted.

12.19 Councillor Miller emphasized the importance of having the in-house expertise needed to conduct the survey and subdivision of the properties.

12.20 Councillor Cattouse again clarified that the documents presented were solely for information purposes.

12.21 Mayor Wagner reiterated that the Council would be approving the acquisition of an asset for the Council, and he called the matter to a vote.

12.22 MOTION APPROVED, pending a valuation of the property in its current state.

12.23 Councillor Cattouse moved a motion for the Council to approve a financial contribution of \$2,500.00 to assist Ms. Briah Clarke in her educational pursuits. Seconded by Councillor Miller.

12.24 Mayor Wagner indicated that he would be more inclined to support a request for a donation towards the individual's educational expenses.

12.25 Councillor Miller advised that the Council often supports donations for similar matters; he suggested that the proposed initiative be included in the next budgeting cycle.

12.26 The City Administrator then advised that the motion should be withdrawn if approval would be given as a social contribution towards the resident's educational pursuits. MOTION WITHDRAWN.

12.26 Councillor Miller moved a motion on behalf of Councillor Garcia for the Council to approve the rental of Booth 16&17 at Digi Park to Mr. Arton Williams for the establishment of a restaurant. Seconded by Councillor Castellanos. MOTION APPROVED.

12.27 Councillor Miller moved a motion on behalf of Councillor Garcia for the Council to approve the usage of Digi Park to host Love FM's New Year's Eve Countdown, with an entrance fee of \$10.00 charged to attendees. Seconded by Councillor Kwan. MOTION APPROVED, provided that the associated fees for the usage of the parks are collected.

12.28 Councillor Miller moved a motion on behalf of Councillor Garcia for the Council to approve the rental of Booth #6 at Digi Park to Ms. Monique Meighan for the sale of snacks and frozen drinks. Seconded by Councillor Thompson. MOTION APPROVED.

12.29 Councillor Miller moved a motion on behalf of Councillor Garcia for the Council to approve the rental of a booth at the Memorial Park to Ms. Stephanie Dawson for the purpose of selling food. Seconded by Councillor Usher. MOTION APPROVED.

12.30 Councillor Miller moved a motion on behalf of Councillor Garcia for the Council to approve the rental of a booth at the Memorial Park to Mr. Derek Nisbet for the purpose of selling food. Seconded by Councillor Kwan. MOTION APPROVED. Councillors Castellanos and Thompson abstained.

12.31 Councillor Miller moved a motion for the Council to approve the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Belize City Council and Peak Outsourcing Belize Ltd. Seconded by Councillor Usher. MOTION APPROVED.

12.32 Councillor Miller moved a motion for the Council to approve the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Belize City Council and Unicomer Belize Ltd. MOTION APPROVED.

12.33 Councillor Miller moved a motion for the Council to approve the signing of a Sister City Agreement between Belize City and the City of Miramar, Florida. Seconded by Councillor Castellanos. MOTION APPROVED.

12.34 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Council to approve the upgrade/rehabilitation of Iguana St. Ext. and Freedom St. Seconded by Councillor Usher. MOTION APPROVED.

12.35 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Council to approve a three-year employment contract between the Belize City Council and mechanic, Mr. Gabriel Majano, who has reached the age of retirement. Seconded by Councillor Miller. MOTION APPROVED.

12.36 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Council to approve an employment contract between the Belize City Council and audit manager, Ms. Ursula Smith, who has reached the age of retirement. Seconded by Councillor Kwan. MOTION APPROVED.

12.37 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Council to approve an employment contract between the Belize City Council and the Sanitation Coordinator, Mr. Leroy

Young, who has reached the age of retirement. Seconded by Councillor Castellanos.
MOTION APPROVED.

12.38 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Council to approve the appointment of Councillors Evan Thompson and Malcolm Nunez to the Disciplinary Action Committee. Seconded by Councillor Kwan. MOTION APPROVED.

12.39 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Council to approve an employment contract between the Belize City Council and driver, Mr. Michael Pollard, who has reached the age of retirement. Seconded by Councillor Kwan. MOTION APPROVED.

12.40 Mayor Wagner moved a motion for the Council to approve the issuance of corporate credit cards to the Mayor, City Administrator, and the Director of Finance. MOTION APPROVED.

13.0 New Business

13.1 Councillor Castellanos asked if the Council could start the process, with the assistance from the Council's legal representative, of proposing a pension scheme for Councillors to the Ministry of Local Government, especially for those Councillor who have served two or more terms.

13.2 The City Administrator advised that once senators have served for a period of 10 years, they are entitled to similar benefits, but conceded that senators are not elected by the public.

13.3 It was further recommended that the discussion start with the Mayor's Association. The Council may pass a resolution that they will be lobbying as a group for any elected Councillor who serves for a minimum of 3 terms, to be eligible for a pension, pending approval from the Ministry of Local Government.

13.4 Councillor Castellanos further observed that this would change the mindset of Councillors.

13.5 Deputy Mayor Pollard acknowledged that Councillor Castellanos made an excellent point. He stated that in addition to a change in mindset, it would change the perception that people have of the Councillors.

13.6 Deputy Pollard further stated that the work being done by the Councillors should not be overlooked. He explained that the landscape of politics has changed and now comes with greater demands.

13.7 Deputy Mayor Pollard added that they are essentially full-time Councillors, and even if no pension is approved, stipend increases could be considered. He advised that

these changes would attract other professionals to run for office.

13.8 The mayor agreed with the previous sentiments and advised that he would be awaiting a resolution concerning the stipend. He advised that it should be brought to the Council for approval so that it can be included in the next budget cycle.

14.0 Submissions from the Building Unit

14.1 A request by George Ezewudo, on behalf of Shijing Huang, for the Council to provide a letter of no objection to the Central Building Authority, for the construction of a 2-storey commercial structure at parcel No. 3527 Mahogany St. MOTION APPROVED.

14.2 A request by George Ezewudo, on behalf of Shifeng Huang, for the Council to provide a letter of no objection to the Central Building Authority, for the construction of a 2-storey commercial structure, and modification of the existing sidewalk at parcel No. 70 Mahogany St. MOTION APPROVED, provided that no liquor license will be granted given the location's proximity to a school and church.

14.3 A request by George Ezewudo, on behalf of Lynden Jones, for the Council to provide a letter of no objection to the Central Building Authority, for the construction of two wooden structures, to be used as a clinic, at parcel No. 1082 Cor. Of Berkely St. and Albert St. West. MOTION APPROVED

14.4 A request by Salvador Guerra, on behalf of Guerra Engineering Ltd. for the Council to approve the usage of a portion of the reserve at the corner of Durgeon Dr. and Applestar Ave. as a turning radius for trucks. MOTION APPROVED, provided that there is no further development and the area is not used for parking.

14.5 A recommendation from the Planning and Enforcement Departments for the implementation of a no-parking zone on a section of Faber's Rd. from Central American Blvd. to Terrylee Crawford St. MOTION APPROVED

14.6 A request from Mr. Paul Schmidth on behalf of Don Ceviche to temporarily vend on Barrack Rd., adjacent to Moe's Pizza Pasta between the hours of 5:30 am and 4:00 pm. MOTION APPROVED, provided that the vending ceases upon written notice from the Council.

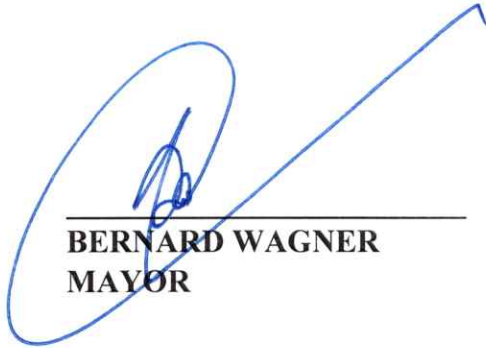
15.0 Other Business

No matters were tabled

16.0 Adjournment

16.1 Councillor Castellanos moved for the meeting to be adjourned.

The meeting concluded at 4:22 pm.



BERNARD WAGNER
MAYOR



ALBERT VAUGHAN
CITY ADMINISTRATOR

