

City of Marathon
City Council Action Minutes
May 28, 2024 5:30 pm City Council Workshop Minutes

CALL TO ORDER - A Meeting of the City Council of Marathon, Florida was held on May 28, 2024 in the Marathon Council Chambers, 9805 Overseas Hwy., Marathon, Florida, Mayor Still called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL - There were present:

Councilmember Gonzalez

Councilmember Matlock

Councilmember Smith

Vice Mayor Landry—Via Zoom

Mayor Still, comprising a quorum.

Also, in attendance were:

City Manager, George Garrett

Deputy City Clerk, Hillary Palmer

City Attorney, Steve Williams

Planning Director, Brian Shea

Public Works Director, Carlos Solis

Building Official, Gerard Roussin

Code Director, Ted Lozier

Monroe County Sherriff's Office Deputy

Staff Presentation

Still and Garrett provided an introduction to the meeting, which addressed the permitting review process, staff response time and back-up staff review. Introductions to Staff members Building Official Gerard Roussin and Planning Director Brian Shea were made.

Armand Messina, Monroe County Contractor Association President, introduced himself and thanked staff for holding the workshop.

Public Speakers

Diane Scott spoke against citizens not obtaining permits and spoke on property address 501 & 507 42nd street specifically with regards to lack of permits.

Gay Marie Smith thanked Armand Messina for coordinating the workshop and asked City Staff what the 48-hour time frame includes. Garrett replied that the 48-hour response time will include responses to phone calls, emails and the online permitting portal correspondence. Smith expressed discontent with the current response times and stated Staff does not respond in a timely manner. Still commented that the new 48-hour response time will hopefully resolve the response time delays and encouraged the public to focus on moving forward in a positive manner. Smith stated the number one issue contractors are dealing with is lack of communication with City Staff and stated it has been an ongoing issue. Still stated there will be consequences for staff if response times are not adhered to. Smith suggested the City inspector's telephone number be made available for better communication.

Brad Hager spoke in favor of better communication with the Building Department.

Andrew George spoke on the various permitting issues he has encountered with the City's Building and Planning Departments and provided a handout to City Council which outlined a specific permit issue. He specifically addressed permit number P-24-291 and stated he had no response from the City in a

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timely manner and stated he has had many similar related incidences. He requested the City offer a back-up reviewer when key staff members are out of the office.

Martin Kamph spoke on 336 Calzada De Bougainville and stated his contractor worked fifty-two weeks before he was notified there was a permitting issue. Kamph referenced permit number P-20-3153.

Steve Britske, Private Provider Inspector, spoke on the release of power issues he has experienced, EBR inspection issues and various licensing issues. He requested an explanation on what private provider inspectors are expected to do, since they are unable to perform all necessary inspections. Still requested the Building Official speak to Mr. Britske about the release of power issues. Roussin confirmed he would continue to have discussions with Mr. Britske on the topic.

Roy Green spoke on his vacant Flamingo Island lot that was evaluated through the KeyWep program and expressed his discontent with Staff's response time getting back to him.

John Keller requested an explanation of the permitting and approval process. Roussin provided an explanation, detailing the step-by-step process for the permit review. Roussin explained the first step is for the permit tech to intake the application and verify for completeness then the permit is assigned to the various departments for review and approval.

Williams commented that the new permitting software program offers a streamlined approach to the prior system.

Keller stated his concerns regarding staff not receiving consequences for not following through with the response time. Keller also spoke on the "time is money" business mindset and how it relates to the construction industry. He stated staff accountability is important with regards to the permitting process and dealing with the contractors and requested consistency across the board.

Bettye Chaplyn provided a history of permitting in Marathon and commented the City is over staffed.

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Armand Messina stated there is a lack of communication and accountability amongst the City Staff and commented that overall the permits are getting processed quickly but wants Staff to understand time is money in the construction industry. He stressed the importance of effective communication and returning calls and emails within a reasonable amount of time. He thanked Garrett and Roussin for taking time each week to meet with him individually and thanked the community and members of the Contractors Association for showing up to the workshop.

Still commented that she wants staff to work towards improvements and focus on being productive moving forward.

Matlock commended the City of Key West for their turn-around time and stressed the importance of consequences for not fulfilling their obligations to meet the 48-hour response time.

Gonzalez thanked everyone for attending the workshop and thanked Armand Messina for bringing the issues forward to be addressed. He commented that he supports the 48-hour response time.

Matlock spoke on his personal past experiences with delayed response times within the City's Building Department.

Armand Messina asked staff how many permits are issued on a weekly basis.

Roussin stated he would need to get back with him to provide accurate information.

Matlock requested to make the City Inspector's phone number public and Roussin agreed. Matlock also spoke on the turn around time for a failed inspection and Roussin confirmed the contractor, or owner/builders can call in a re-inspection up until 3:30pm the same day of failed inspection.

Landry thanked everyone for participating in the workshop and their support. He stated that he is looking forward to resolving the issues moving forward.

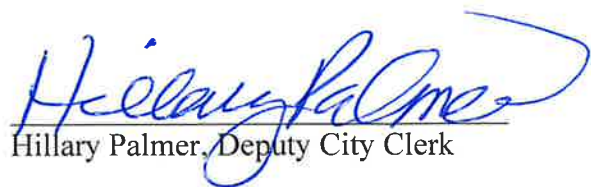
Smith thanked the public for their support and input and stated he is looking forward to improving the permitting process. He spoke in favor of cross training within the City and thanked the public for bringing solutions to the table. He also thanked Armand Messina for being the liaison between the City and the Contractors Association.

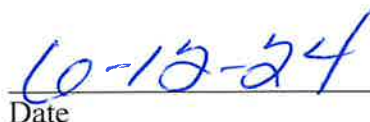
Still emphasized the importance of communication, consequences and consistency amongst staff. She stated that she is looking forward to moving forward to resolve the permitting issues and positive staff improvements.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Still adjourned the meeting at 6:41pm by unanimous consent.

I certify the above represents an accurate summary of the regular Council meeting of May 28, 2024.


Hillary Palmer, Deputy City Clerk


Date