

**MINUTES**  
**Workshop on**  
**Neighborhood Services Districts**  
**August 26, 2024**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Government Center**  
**6601 Main Street**  
**Miami Lakes, Florida 33014**

**1. Call to Order:**

The meeting began at 7:07 p.m.

The following Elected Officials were present: Bryan Morera, Marilyn Ruano, and Vice Mayor Tony Fernandez. Councilmember Luis E. Collazo was present via Zoom and Councilmember Josh Dieguez joined via Zoom at 9:06 p.m. Mayor Cid was absent.

The following Town Staff members were present: Deputy Town Clerk Victoria Martinez and Special Projects Manager John Yanes.

**2. Public Comments:**

*(Phonetically spelling of each speaker's name will be used throughout the minutes unless correct spelling is known)*

The Deputy Town Clerk, Victoria Martinez, read the public comment instructions.

Mr. Harry Bollinger came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He expressed his concerns regarding the Neighborhood Service Districts. He stated that he is in support of dissolving the Neighborhood Service District Advisory Boards.

Mr. Boris Foster came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He explained that he is not in support of the additional taxes applied to the Neighborhood Service Districts.

Ms. Esperanza Reynolds came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. She stated the importance of good communication and explained that many residents of the Neighborhood Service Districts were not aware of this meeting- that she rode her bicycle around Lake Cynthia and Lake Sandra, letting the residents know about the Workshop on NSD's and she also informed many residents that drove by her home, so that they all were informed about the NSD workshop meeting. She further explained that the Town needs to improve their communication for meetings regarding the Neighborhood Service District Advisory Boards, and that some in the Town needs to instruct and train anyone in any committee to let them know that they are there as representatives of a community that is supposed to inform the Town Council the community issues and that they should not use that opportunity to talk about their own reflection. She answered some questions that were posed by the Town Council and on this matter, she stated that many residents

saw the signs at the entrance of the community, but did not know what it was about, that although the signs were greatly placed, perhaps they need to use heavy markers for the residents to be able to read the signs better. She also mentioned that the in the Town Website, under the Town NSD Listing, the name that appears as the president of Lake Sandra HOA is incorrect. She stated that the person has been on the NSD Board but not Lake Sandra HOA. The Town Council asked Town Staff to reach out to the HOA and ask who their president is, in order for the Town Website List to be corrected.

Ms. Claudia Luces came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. She explained that residents of Miami Lakes Section 1 are being additionally taxed because of LPR's and she is very concerned. She stated that the LPR's were politized and she stated that she is in support of dissolving the Neighborhood Service District Advisory Boards.

Ms. Eileen Gutierrez came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. She explained her concerns regarding the Royal Oaks East Guard Gate. She stated that she is in support of dissolving the Neighborhood Service District Advisory Boards.

Mr. Homero Cruz came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that he is the HOA President of Royal Oaks and that he fought for the creation of a Special Taxing District. He stated that when the County was in control of the Special Taxing District, nothing was done and no accountability. He stated that the NSD is only a buffer between the community and the Town Council, and he stated that the NSD only advises the Town Council and as a board, they exist basically for the 4 guardhouses. He mentioned that if residents want to put Christmas lights- that should be the HOA-not the NSD. He expressed his concerns regarding the Neighborhood Service Districts. He stated that he is not in support of dissolving the Neighborhood Service Districts Advisory Boards.

Mr. George Arena came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that he is currently the Vice Chair of the NSD of Royal Oaks East and that he welcomed the workshop format meetings where the public is allowed to speak in a more informal way. He explained that residents of the Neighborhood Service Districts should be able to vote on whether to dissolve the NSD Advisory Boards or not, and if a resident wants to keep the NSD Advisory Boards, and he stated that he would like to know what changes they propose to the NSD's. He further stated that he thinks most of the residents in East and West Royal Oaks would like to maintain the NSD Advisory Boards for the guardhouses- that they provide value. He stated he would like to maintain the Neighborhood Service District Advisory Boards.

Mr. Jose Soberon came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He thanked the Town Council for their effort regarding the Neighborhood Service Districts. He stated that he is part of Lake Hilda and that he feels for these residents, and he thinks that going to Miami Dade County is the wrong thing. He stated that this Town has the right people and right management. He thinks the best way to handle things is via sunshine meetings. He advised to account for the money and spend it wisely. He stated that in Lake Hilda, many residents got together and funded the

cleaning of the lake and that with the handling of Miami-Dade County, it was a waste of time. He stated that he would like to continue under the services of the Town of Miami Lakes.

Ms. Gisela Soberon came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. She explained that she has been part of the Lake Hilda and Lake Patricia NSD since the beginning and she is very happy with the results. She stated that the condition of Lake Hilda has drastically improved since the NSD's. She stated that the Town should not involve the district with issues concerning the NSD's and the NSD Advisory Boards. She stated that in her opinion, people, neighbors, are happy with their (lakes) NSD Advisory Boards. She wished they had more participation.

Ms. Miriam Klein came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. She expressed her concerns regarding wood posts on 167th Street.

Mr. Benard Amaro came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that he is the HOA president of Lake Carol and the Chair of NSD Section 1. He thanked Town Staff (JP Yanes) for an amazing job and that he stated that he has been a very communicative person. He explained his concerns regarding the Security Guard Gates. He stated that the LPR's are working well. He stated that whatever happens in their meetings is communicated to the HOA's and that their meetings are all livestreamed, so residents can participate and see everything. He further explained issues regarding NSD board member attendance. He stated that he is not in support of dissolving the Neighborhood Service District Advisory Boards but that he respects whatever decision the Town Council decides.

Mr. Robert Sosa came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that he is part of the NSD for Royal Oaks. He explained his concerns regarding the Neighborhood Service Districts. He stated that he is not in support of dissolving the Neighborhood Service District Advisory Boards.

Mr. Abel Fernandez participated in Public Comments via Zoom. He stated that JP Yanes has been an excellent addition to Town Staff. He expressed his concerns regarding the costs of the LPR cameras located at the Security Guard Gates. He thinks it's unfair for the NSD's to be paying for them. He stated that some minutes of the NSD's were not found and for him that is concerning. He explained that the ordinances regarding the Guard Gates are outdated and should reflect modern times regarding the guard houses, and perhaps having the communities vote on this issue. He also mentioned that privatization is the way to go regarding the management of the NSD's. He stated that the Town should not manage the business of the guardhouses, and perhaps this should be put out to bid. He thanked the volunteers, but he stated that it is not a friendly environment- that you can't participate in these meetings via zoom.

Ms. Hilda Fernandez participated in Public Comments via Zoom. She thanked all the NSD Advisory Board members present at Council Chambers, and she stated that it is not an easy job to sit on volunteer boards, where you are being tasked to work with the Town Council representing us. She explained that the Town needs to improve their communication for meetings regarding the

Neighborhood Service District Advisory Boards. She stated that the NSD meetings are open to everyone, but you can't participate via zoom. She stated that if you really want to have a representative government, you should have participation via zoom available for these meetings. She also mentioned how does the Town Council know when the NSD's bring forth recommendations, if they are really recommendations of community input or just the product of a subgroup of residents. She stated that in other municipalities, the minutes of these meetings get posted in the agenda that goes out to the Town Council, so the Town Council can read them. She also explained her concerns regarding the costs of the LPR cameras located at the Security Guard Gates. She stated that members of one community should not pay for a service that benefits the entire community. She stated that for the NSD Advisory Boards to function, they need to be getting the entire community input and allow input via zoom and more transparency.

Ms. Susana Herrera participated in Public Comments via Zoom. She explained that the Town needs to improve their communication for meetings regarding the NSD Advisory Boards. She further explained that the ordinances regarding the Guard Gates are outdated. She explained that residents of the Neighborhood Service Districts should be able to vote on whether to dissolve the NSD Advisory Boards. She stated that the true participation of the people must be validated. She thanked everyone who has been involved as a volunteer but to look for the best, it can't happen without ownership participation.

Mr. Alex Ariano came before the Town Council to participate in Public Comments. He stated that dissolving the Neighborhood Service District Advisory Boards is a good idea and he stated that putting out a petition asking people if they want something is good plan.

Deputy Town Clerk Martinez stated for the record that Ms. Helen Costa submitted a written Public Comment via email, and she read the written public comment into the record as requested by Councilmember Morera.

The written public comment addressed that Ms. Costa is in support of maintaining the Neighborhood Service Districts Advisory Boards.

### **3. Item Discussed:**

#### **Sunshine Meeting/Workshop on Neighborhood Services Districts**

Councilmember Garcia explained that transparency regarding the NSD's should be a priority. He also explained that residents of the Neighborhood Service Districts should be able to vote on whether to dissolve the NSD Advisory Boards. He stated that he is not in favor of dissolving the NSD's and the NSD's advisory boards.

Councilmember Ruano stated that she is in support of dissolving the NSD Advisory Boards. She explained that the NSD's have lost sight of the purpose they were originally meant for. She further explained that dissolving the NSD Advisory Boards would make for a more streamlined and efficient process.

Councilmember Fernandez stated that he is in favor of maintaining the NSD Advisory Boards. He explained that the Advisory Boards provide valuable input from residents that the Council can utilize to make decisions. He proposed the idea of having quarterly NSD meetings to provide residents of the NSD's with a forum to voice their concerns.

Councilmember Collazo explained the importance of the input from NSD's Advisory Board Members. He stated that the original NSD ordinances should be amended.

Councilmember Dieguez explained that the NSD's have lost sight of the original purpose of their Advisory Boards. He further explained that all residents of the NSD should have the right to vote on NSD related matters. He stated that the Council should assist the HOA's in communicating with one another.

Mr. Patrick Kunkel, President of the Loch Lomond HOA Board explained that all Loch Lomond NSD Advisory Board Members have served on the HOA. He also explained that there are yearly elections for the HOA Board.

Councilmember Morera explained that he will be bringing an item forward at the September Council Meeting to dissolve the Miami Lakes Section 1, Royal Oaks Section 1, and Royal Oaks East NSD Advisory Boards. He further explained that these specific NSD's Advisory Boards have lost sight of their original purpose. He stated that these Advisory Boards are doing more harm than good for the residents. He further explained that the Loch Lomond and Lake Maintenance NSD Advisory Boards would be maintained. He stated that at the Budget Workshop on August 27th he will be discussing methods to reimburse the NSD's for the LPR's. He further explained that he would like to reestablish a contingency reserve, quarterly NSD workshops with the Council, and a dedicated Budget Workshop specifically for the NSD's. Councilmember Morera read his proposed amendments to the NSD Ordinances.

Ms. Esperanza Reynolds explained that only residents with a Homestead exception are allowed to vote or sign petitions.

Councilmember Morera clarified that only homeowners are allowed to vote or sign petitions and Councilmember Ruano stated that renters should not be allowed to vote on long term issues.

Mr. George Arena stated that the decisions of whether to dissolve the NSD Advisory Boards should be made by the residents living in the NSD's.

Councilmember Ruano clarified that the purpose of the proposed quarterly NSD meetings is for Residents to voice their concerns directly to the Town Council.

Councilmember Fernandez stated that the NSD Advisory Boards should be a conduit between the residents and the Town Council.

Councilmember Garcia explained that he is in favor of more communication between the Town Council and the NSD Advisory Boards. He stated that the NSD Advisory Boards should be a conduit between the residents and the Town Council.

Councilmember Morera explained that the duty of an NSD Advisory Board Member is not to express their specific concerns but the concerns of the residents of the NSD as a whole.

Councilmember Ruano explained that the NSD board members have not properly performed their duty of relaying the concerns of all residents from the NSD's to the Council.

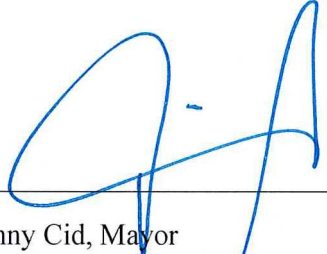
Mr. Boris Foster stated that the taxes within the Neighborhood Service Districts should not be changing every year.

Ms. Esperanza Reynolds explained that 141 ballots were sent out to a specific NSD regarding the decisions of whether to dissolve the NSD Advisory Boards.

**4. Adjournment:**

This meeting was adjourned at 10:14 p.m.

Approved this 10th day September 2024.



---

Manny Cid, Mayor

Attest:



---

Gina M. Inguanzo, Town Clerk