



Martin County

Port Salerno

Neighborhood Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Port Salerno Civic Center
4950 Anchor Avenue, Port Salerno, Florida

Thursday, February 12, 2026

PRESENT

Position	Name	Term Expiration
Chairperson	Jaime Rolle Taylor	February 20, 2029
Vice Chair	Edward Olsen Jr.	September 10, 2029
Members	Karen Warden	January 28, 2027
	Leonard Lee	September 10, 2028
	Ellen Asselin	January 28, 2027
	George Gottuso	February 20, 2029

ABSENT

Position	Name	Term Expiration
Members	Jim Peck	September 10, 2028
	Casey Cass	February 20, 2029
	Edward Olsen Jr.	September 10, 2029

STAFF PRESENT

Position	Name
CRA Director	Susan Kores
CRA Program Manager	Joy Puerta
CRA Specialist	Dianne Racek
Assistant County Attorney	Frank Moehrle
County Commissioner District #5	Edward Ciampi
Commission Aide - District 4	Sarah Phillion

* Indicates a motion

** Indicates a vote

*** For the record comment

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 6-00 PM.

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Agenda Item- 26-0558 Draft Meeting Minutes –December 11, 2025

MOTION

* L. Lee motioned to approve the proposed December 11, 2025; meeting minutes as presented

**G. Gottuso seconded, and the motion carried UNANIMOUSLY

COMMENTS

G. Ehrler –Are the meeting minutes supposed to include the sign in sheets?

COMMENTS

1. PUBLIC

G. Ehrler – Mr. Ehrler summarized the State of the County address, highlighting Port Salerno's financial status, including assets, liabilities, and expenditures. He requested additional information regarding septic-to-sewer grant funding for Port Salerno.

PRESENTATIONS

Agenda Item- 26-0559, PORT SALERNO - CODE ENFORCEMENT OVERVIEW

John Colando, Rachel Spradley, and Maria Espaillat of the Code Enforcement Division presented an overview of the department's procedures for education, voluntary compliance, and enforcement of County ordinances.

COMMENTS

E. Asselin- Where does the budget for demolitions come from?

R. Spradley- Demolition costs are paid through the Building Department budget under the Florida Building Code.

J. Colando- Demolition expenses are hard costs and are not subject to fine reduction. These costs must be repaid to the County.

G. Gottuso- If the lien exceeds the cost, does the County absorb the loss?

R. Spradley- The lien amount includes demolition costs, recording fees, and processing fees, and is attached to the property.

G. Gottuso- What happens if the lien exceeds the property's value?

R. Spradley- The lien remains on the property until satisfied through sale or payment.

G. Gottuso- Does the County foreclose on the property?

R. Spradley- The County does not foreclose on code enforcement liens.

E. Asselin- Is there a specific timeframe for achieving compliance?

J. Colando- Florida Statute 162 provides for a "reasonable time," which varies depending on the violation.

E. Asselin- Is identifying information required when reporting a violation?

J. Colando- Yes. Sufficient identifying information is required to verify the property consistent with the Property Appraiser's records.

L. Lee- Are residents responsible for reporting violations in their neighborhoods?

J. Colando- Code Enforcement conducts proactive neighborhood sweeps in addition to responding to citizen complaints. Some observed violations may already be active cases pending hearing or subject to recorded liens. Liens remain on properties for up to 20 years or until satisfied.

L. Lee- Is there a code requirement addressing sidewalk visibility and tree trimming?

J. Colando- Trimming live trees and sidewalk visibility falls under Public Works. Code Enforcement addresses dead trees only. Public Works and Growth Management each have designated code officers.

J. Rolle Taylor- If a resident contacts the wrong department, will they be referred appropriately?

J. Colando- Yes.

G. Gottuso- If a property presents a public safety or health concern, do you have authority to cut grass or weeds?

J. Colando- No agency in Martin County mows grass on private property. Nuisance abatement may occur if a structure is deteriorating.

R. Spradley- In certain cases, special authorization has been obtained to clear property to access a structure. The abatement ordinance also allows covering swimming pools on vacant properties or where required barriers are not present.

Commissioner Ciampi- Residents may contact my office to bring concerns to my attention; however, this is not intended to bypass the non-anonymous complaint requirement.

J. Colando- Providing contact information assists in investigations and helps address false complaints.

G. Ehrler- Does enforcement of unfinished properties fall under Growth Management?

J. Colando- It depends on the specific violation.

J. Rolle Taylor- May residents request neighborhood sweeps?

J. Colando- Residents requesting action must provide identifying information, which may be associated with the case.

M. Espaillat- I am currently managing approximately 100 active cases in this area, with additional cases assigned weekly. Each case requires detailed review and processing.

G. Ehrler- What is Growth Management's timeline for enforcement?

R. Spradley- The matter is scheduled for review on the March 18 docket.

NEW BUSINESS

Agenda Item- 26-0560, PORT SALERNO - FY2027 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The FY2027 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Port Salerno was presented, including planned projects, funding allocations, and grant programs.

COMMENTS

G. Gottuso- What is the status of the Trust Fund for Port Salerno?

S. Kores- The figures on the left reflect current commitments and expenditures.

G. Gottuso- The Trust Fund currently stands at approximately \$8.5 million.

S. Kores- Fiscal Year 2027 begins October 1. Estimates from the Property Appraiser guide recommendations. The total includes the \$1,715,500 estimated TIF for capital projects available in FY 2027.

G. Gottuso- Can you explain the CRA Investment Program?

S. Kores- The CRA Investment Program is a grant program. The CRA funds 80 percent and the business owner 20 percent. Each project may be up to \$10,000 or \$20,000.

E. Asselin- Regarding the park, are you referring to the north side?

G. Ehrler- The \$400,000 is partially allocated to privately owned property, mostly wetlands, with limited usable space. Caution is advised since the County does not own all the property and Public Works has not maintained the area.

J. Puerta- The conceptual design shows the project on the north side of the canal. The project has been part of the Port Salerno Community Redevelopment Plan since 2002. The \$400,000 allocation is for Salerno Creek Park within the canal right-of-way, not on privately owned property, between the basin on the west side and SE Railway Avenue on the east side.

S. Kores- The project would address neglected assets, clean the area, and allow the County to pursue available grant funding. Funds can be reallocated if the project is not viable.

C. Harvey- Emergency vehicles have difficulty accessing Flounder Ave due to the unpaved road. Residents would need to contribute \$500,000 before the County will maintain it.

S. Kores- That is a privately owned road.

G. Ehrler- The \$400,000 should be directed toward unpaved roads.

J. Rolle Taylor- The park project can proceed; however unpaved roads need to be addressed.

Further discussion occurred among NAC members and staff regarding budget allocations, unpaved roads, grant attainment, project costs, maintenance concerns, right-of-way issues, and CRA projects. It was noted that the CRA does not maintain projects once completed; maintenance responsibility is transferred to the appropriate County department.

MOTION

* L. Lee motioned to approve the FY2027 Capital Improvement Plan with an amendment to reduce Salerno Creek Park funding to \$200,000 and reallocate \$200,000 to unpaved roads. The motion failed for lack of a second.

* G. Gottuso motioned to approve the FY2027 Capital Improvement Plan with an amendment to reduce Salerno Creek Park funding to \$100,000 and reallocate \$300,000 to unpaved roads.

**E. Asselin seconded, and the motion carried UNANIMOUSLY

Agenda Item- 26-0561, PORT SALERNO - STAFF UPDATES

Joy Puerta, Program Manager, provided updates on ongoing projects, including contract timelines and the Port Salerno septic-to-sewer program.

COMMENTS

L. Lee- How long do you wait for all required contract documents?

J. Puerta- Purchasing is responsible for obtaining all required items to complete the contract, including insurance.

G. Gottuso- How long does the bid remain valid?

J. Puerta- Timelines may vary by project, I will check the specific contract.

K. Worden- What is the status of the New Monrovia septic and sewer project?

J. Puerta- It is part of the Port Salerno septic-to-sewer program. Homeowners will be notified when underground work commences.

J. Rolle Taylor- Commissioner Ciampi, please monitor the costs and timeline for the septic and sewer projects.

Commissioner Ciampi- Port Salerno's project is progressing ahead of Palm City. Other bids came back lower than expected, with increased contractor participation and easing supply

chain costs. The project remains on track to connect 10,000 homes over ten years. Sewer provides a long-term solution that requires community support.

C. Smith- Are the drainage and sewer projects being combined?

J. Puerta- Yes, the three projects—sewer, Capital Projects neighborhood restoration, and CRA neighborhood improvements—will be bid together and completed as a single project.

C. Smith- Will homeowners be assessed \$20,000 each?

J. Puerta- The other projects funded by the CRA are not part of the homeowner assessment.

C. Smith- What is the total grant funding?

F. Moehrle- \$12.5 million.

J. Puerta- The County is contributing \$4 million.

J. Rolle Taylor- The CRA is contributing an equal amount.

G. Ehrler- The grant may need to be returned if the project is not completed on time. After 2030, no new septic permits will be issued. Homeowners would like estimated costs over 20 years.

S. Kores- Exact costs cannot be provided at this time. Utilities will issue bids and provide cost estimates.

A brief discussion took place among the NAC, members of the public, and staff regarding homeowner financial assessments, procedures for individual septic system failures prior to sewer connection, and traffic-related concerns. Staff indicated that traffic personnel will review conditions in the Port Salerno area.

ADJOURN – Meeting adjourned at 7:57 PM.

Recorded and prepared by-

Dianne Racek, CRA Specialist

Date

Jaime Rolle Taylor, Chair

Date

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