MINUTES
SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING – BALLFIELDS REFERENDUM
OF THE STUART CITY COMMISSION
AUGUST 3, 2026
AT 3:30 PM
COMMISSION CHAMBERS
121 SW FLAGLER AVE.
STUART, FLORIDA 34994

CITY COMMISSION

Mayor Sean Reed
Vice Mayor Vacant
Commissioner Eula R. Clarke
Commissioner Laura Giobbi
Commissioner Campbell Rich

ADMINISTRATIVE

City Manager, Michael Giardino
City Attorney, Lee J. Baggett
City Clerk, Mary R. Kindel

ROLL CALL

3:31 PM

PRESENT: Mayor Reed, Commissioner Clarke, Commissioner Giobbi, and Commissioner Rich

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COMMENTS BY CITY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Giobbi

- Thanked everyone for their attendance.
- Explained the purpose of the meeting and clarified that the referendum gives City residents the opportunity to decide the future of the ballfields through a public vote.

Commissioner Clarke

- Commented that she had family in town, and they enjoyed visiting the City of Stuart. Thanked the Commission for their participation in keeping it a beautiful slice of paradise.

Vice Mayor Reed

- Echoed Commissioner Giobbi's comment to clarify the ballfield referendum and stated

that the language is the most important in this referendum.

COMMENTS BY CITY MANAGER

None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3:35 PM MOTION: Approve.
MOVED BY: Eula Clarke
SECONDED BY: Laura Giobbi
Motion approved unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (Non-Agenda Related) (3 Minutes Max.)

None.

ORDINANCE FIRST READING

1. BALLFIELDS REFERENDUM (RC):

ORDINANCE No. 2553-2026; AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA APPROVING BALLOT LANGUAGE AND DIRECTING THE SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, TO PLACE A REFERENDUM ON THE NOVEMBER 3, 2026 GENERAL ELECTION SEEKING VOTER APPROVAL ON A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CITY CHARTER PERTAINING TO THE SALE OR LEASE OF CITY-OWNED PROPERTY CONTAINING RECREATIONAL BALLFIELDS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Lee Baggett, City Attorney, read the Ordinance title into the record and reviewed the proposed referendum ballot language:

STUART CITY CHARTER AMENDMENT
SALE OR LEASE OF CITY PROPERTY CONTAINING RECREATIONAL BALLFIELDS MUST BE APPROVED BY REFERENDUM VOTE
Shall the City Charter of the City of Stuart, Florida be amended to add the following provision: The City Commission shall not sell, convey or lease for more than one (1) year, including any renewal options, any City-owned real property containing recreational ballfields, unless first approved by the voters through a public referendum held under Charter Section 9.04 Procedures for vacating public streets or abandoning right-of-way.
_____ Yes for Approval
_____ No for Rejection

Commissioner Clarke made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Giobbi.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Derreck Ogden - Stuart; Commented on Stuart's character and encouraged this to be worked out and the language to be agreed upon tonight.
2. Will Laughlin - Stuart; Commented on Senate Bill 180, and the effect it has on the ballfields, hoped the Commission recognizes the risk.

3. Frank McChrystal - Stuart; Commented on his own proposed language, "All green space and recreational land shall be protected by referendum."

Commissioner Clarke communicated with the City Attorney about the title language to add the word "ballot" after General Election, use the words "long-term lease" to replace "lease" in the ballot language currently referenced, and the word "public's" needs a grammar correction (4th Whereas Clause). Further commented on the cost-benefit analysis and the impact to preserve and make sure the public lands are controlled for the future by referendum. Asked the Attorney to review Sec. 9.04 of the Charter for the sake of the public.

City Attorney Baggett reviewed the Charter Section 9.05 Long term lease or conveyance of waterfront property; subject to approval at referendum. He explained it was initiated by the public, and he used similar language to a past referendum as the best option. The waterfront property restrictions include "leasing for more than ten (10) years" and the Commission was in favor to remove the long-term lease and change it to more than one (1) year and user agreements would be used in place of a lease agreement. This is to add language to the Charter so that to sell, convey, or lease for more than one (1) year, it would have to go out to referendum.

Commissioner Rich commented on Page 9, noting the reflection of the original language and not the amended language. City Attorney Baggett confirmed that it will be corrected before the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Derreck Ogden - Stuart; Stated that if all language is perfect on this motion, we should be clear to vote yes at the Second Reading.
2. Frank McChrystal - Stuart; Questioned why we are only protecting the ballfields and not all recreational spaces.

City Attorney Baggett commented in response to the public comment, per the Mayor's request, on the reasons other recreational lands are not included in this.

3:37 PM MOTION: Move that proposed Ordinance No. 2553-2026 be approved for Second Reading.
4:07 PM AMENDED MOTION: Adding the word "ballot" after general election on line 5 (6) and adding the word "and" before other purposes. Move forward to Second Reading.
MOVED BY: Eula Clarke
SECONDED BY: Laura Giobbi
Motion approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

4:22 PM

Mary R. Kindel, City Clerk

Sean Reed, Mayor

Minutes to be approved at the Regular Commission Meeting this 10th day of August, 2026.