

CALL TO ORDER - A Special Call Meeting of the City Council of Marathon, Florida was held on March 31, 2025, in the Marathon Council Chambers, 9805 Overseas Hwy., Marathon, Florida, Mayor Landry called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL - There were present:

Councilmember Del Gaizo

Councilmember Matlock

Councilmember Still

Vice Mayor Smith

Mayor Landry, comprising a quorum.

Also, in attendance were:

City Manager, George Garrett

City Clerk, Diane Clavier

City Attorney, Steve Williams

Deputy City Manager, Brian Bradley

MCSO Captain Derek Paul

Approval Of Agenda and Consent Agenda

MOTION: Smith moved to approve the agenda.

SECOND: Still

With no objection from the members of the Council, Mayor Landry declared the agenda approved by unanimous consent.

Discussion regarding whether the City should continue in its part of the adopted Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU) known as the “Middle Keys Health Care Municipal Services Taxing Unit” (City Code of Ordinances, Chapter 28, Article 1)

Drew Grossman, CEO for Baptist Hospital spoke about the services the hospital offered and spoke about the difficulties in recruitment and retaining specialty health services.

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Pattie Bolland presented financial information and explained there were 12,865 patient cases since 2020 at a cost of 14.2 million and the hospital was reimbursed 13.5 million and \$728,409 is still on the books as accounts receivable. There is 1.5 million left to get to the maximum. For the income, Bolland reported that as of FY2017, operations were at 25.4 million, 13.4 million for the hospital and 38.9 million from operations, lost 12.3 million and capital investments at 59 million for a net total not recouped 31 million net investment.

The Mayor Called for speakers.

Richard Moretti – spoke for the MSTU

Janice Roehl Anderson – spoke for the MSTU

Mary Stella – spoke against the MSTU, she was previously for it, but we have met our goals.

Mike Leonard spoke for the MSTU and stated the hospital was an ethical organization.

Jim Rifkin spoke for the MSTU and explained that 60 million cannot be funded through the MSTU and will have to be bonded.

Alexander Palma – spoke against the MSTU, as it was supposed to be annually reviewed.

Pat Biagi questioned that the hospital was still not profitable and how long before they are paid off. Biagi commented that we do not have doctors, and a lot are traveling doctors and nurses, and the costs for testing are awful.

Diane Scott spoke against the tax and asked the Council to choose option 1.

Andrew George – spoke against the additional tax and commented that we do not have a general practitioner on staff, in 2019 Fisherman's promised to be a full-service hospital; there are no pediatric or woman's care offered. George commented his girlfriend had to go to Key West Hospital by ambulance and they put her on the one not covered by her insurance.

George Neugent spoke in support of the hospital, saying it was an asset and costs households less than \$100 a year for services.

Dion Watson – commented that they were initially in support of the hospital, however they cannot do tests there or have a doctor there, they send everyone to Miami. In Marathon it costs \$3,500 for an MRI and in Homestead, it is less than \$1,000. We have a MASH unit, the second you walk through the door, they want payment.

Jane Packard spoke in support of the hospital and thanked the Council and the Hospital and stated it was about honoring a commitment.

Debra Struyf – spoke against the tax and commented that the hospital also has a commitment to the community to have doctors.

Matlock commented that the hospital was not meeting their end of the deal and wished his experience were better. Matlock commented that no one would speak with him about his issues until he was on the Council. Matlock commented that the hospital was far in the black and he hears horror stories, and we are building more and staffing less. We were to review this every year to see if we wanted to continue.

Stil commented that there were some very valid points made but at the end of the day we are still in the middle of the agreement. It would be wonderful to be fully staffed.

Del Gaizo thanked the hospital and the community for stepping up to the plate, it is the principal and the community has spoken.

Smith commented that he spoke with many community members, and they recognize the value in having a hospital. Baptist accelerated the timeline and built the hospital; we have to honor our commitment, but he was not in favor of overfunding and Key Colony made the same recommendation in continuing the MSTU to satisfy but not exceed the remaining commitment.

Landry commented that we did not go to a hospital to see a doctor since he could remember. Landry explained his mother-in-law has been battling a disease for twenty years and the hospital stabilized her, and trauma star took her to Jackson which saved her life, we are very lucky to have our hospital. Landry commented that both he and Matlock campaigned on either side of this, and we were both elected.

Matlock explained Fisherman's is a critical care hospital, not a full-service hospital and we are spending other people's money. Matlock also mentioned that we were promised a full-service hospital, and he has had five phone calls, three text messages and 18 email messages that were all against the tax and not one for the tax.

Landry commented that he has had to search people out and someone who has four different types of cancer wants the hospital.

Matlock explained the hospital will not go away; they will be here regardless of the MSTU tax.

DelGaizo questioned why we do not have care for women? Drew Grossman responded that they could not find anyone to hire that wanted to live in the Keys.

Option 1. Resolution 2025-32, A Resolution Of The City Council Of The City Of Marathon, Florida Directing Staff To Draft And Advertise An Ordinance Withdrawing From And The Abandoning Its Inclusion In The Middle Keys Health Care Municipal Taxing Unit (Chapter 28, Article 1, Section 28-3 Of The City's Code Of Ordinances) For Review At The Next Possible City Council Meeting; And Providing For An Effective Date

Option 2. Resolution 2035-33, A Resolution Of The City Council Of The City Of Marathon, Florida Indicating To The Monroe County Board Of County Commissioners (BOCC) Its Intent To Continue Participation In The Middle Keys Health Care Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU) ONLY If The Current Millage Rate Is Reset By The BOCC At A Level That Will Generate The Necessary Revenue To Satisfy, But Not Exceed, The Remaining Financial Commitment Under The MSTU Agreement (\$15 Million); And Providing That The Final Millage Rate Shall Be Determined Based On The Assessed Property Values Provided By The Property Appraiser's Office In July 2025; And Providing For The Transmittal Of This Resolution To Appropriate Members Of Monroe County Staff, And Providing For An Effective Date.

MOTION: Smith moved to approve Resolution 2025-33

SECOND: Still

Vote of the Motion:

Yes: Smith, Still, Landry
No: Matlock, DelGaizo
Absent: None
Abstain: None

Vote on the Motion: 3 Yes, 2 No, 0 Absent, 0 Abstain

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Landry adjourned the meeting at 6:24 pm with unanimous consent.

I certify the above represents an accurate summary of the Special Call City Council meeting of March 31, 2025.

Diane Clavier
Diane Clavier, City Clerk

5-14-25
Date