

MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
MARCH 18, 2024
7:00 P.M.

This Commission Meeting was conducted utilizing Communications Media Technology. Some Staff members were present in the Commission Chambers while others were present via the Zoom application.

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor
Tamara Cornwell, Vice- Mayor, Commissioner-at-Large 2
Sunshine Joiner, Commissioner, Ward 2
Sheldon Jones, Commissioner-at-Large 1
Harold Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1
Brian Williams, Commissioner, Ward 3 (Not Present)

STAFF PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:

Jim Freeman, City Clerk
Edward Johnson, Interim CRA Director (Not Present)
Marisa Powers, City Attorney
Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Director
Scott Tyler, Chief of Police
Cassi Bailey, Assistant City Clerk
Jake Bibler, City Planner
Penny Johnston, Executive Assistant

STAFF PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY:

Todd Williams, Information Technology (IT) Consultant

1. Mayor Bryant called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, and Pastor Tom Winter from Palm View Baptist Church, gave the prayer for tonight's meeting.

All persons intending to address the City Commission were duly sworn.

2. CITY COMMISSION AGENDA APPROVAL

MOTION: **Commissioner Cornwell moved, Commissioner Jones seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 to approve the March 18, 2024 City Commission Agenda**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Betty Sailes Rhodes spoke on matters that were discussed during the protest on Saturday. She also spoke on the multi-cultural festival.

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Franklin Perez tried to speak via ZOOM but could not be heard.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Minutes: 02/05/24 & 02/26/24

b. Minor Modification to an approved GDP- Marriott Hotel

c. Minor Modification to Bel Mare Condominium at Riviera Dunes GDP for Palmetto Marriott Beach Club

d. Special Function Permit- Easter Morning Service

MOTION: **Commissioner Cornwell moved, Commissioner Smith seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as presented by staff with the removal of items 4b. and 4c. for discussion.**

Item 4b. Minor Modification to an approved GDP-Marriott Hotel was pulled to ask for clarification on what the minor modification was. Jake Bibler highlighted a PowerPoint, which was included in the Minutes. His presentation provided clarification that the minor modification being asked for was regarding the size of the signs on the building.

MOTION: **Commissioner Cornwell moved to approve item 4b. Minor Modification to an approved GDP-Marriott Hotel, Commissioner Smith seconded, and the motion carried 4-0.**

Item 4c. Minor Modification to Bel Mare Condominium at Riviera Dunes GDP for Palmetto Marriott Beach Club was pulled for discussion. Brad Cornelius, contracted City Planner from Wade Trim, gave an overview of the item. He discussed the details from the agenda packet. This is a private recreational area; residents of Bel Mare and guests of Palmetto Marriott would be the only ones allowed to use it. Transportation from the hotel would be by a street legal shuttle/golf cart, and they are hoping to have future pedestrian pathways, etc. Staff didn't believe this would have any negative effects on the area. They do recommend approval.

Commissioner Cornwell asked who would manage this property. Mr. Tony Deruso, Developer, discussed the project and their collaboration with Bel Mare's HOA. He mentioned why this beach club is important for the designation as a Resort and Spa through Marriott. He noted that out of Bel Mare's 124 residents, 121 voted yes, 1 voted no, and 2 didn't respond. They will have a long-term lease with Bel Mare and the Hotel will be responsible for maintenance, upkeep, operations, etc.

MOTION: **Commissioner Cornwell moved to approve item 4c. Minor Modification to Bel Mare Condominium at Riviera Dunes GDP for Palmetto Marriott Beach Club, Commissioner Joiner seconded, and the motion carried 4-0.**

5. FEBRUARY 2024 CHECK REGISTER (Informational Only)

STANDING AGENDA ITEMS:

6. Traffic Update

There was no traffic update provided.

COMMENTS:

7. DEPARTMENT HEADS' COMMENTS

Mr. Freeman reminded everyone of the next meeting on April 1st. At the 4:30 pm Workshop there will be a presentation from the one proposal they received for the parcel South of the new Police Department. Elliott Falcone from the Bradenton Area Convention Center will also be at the Workshop. There will be a CRA Board Meeting that night as well. The Women's Club proposals will be on the Agenda. Mr. Freeman mentioned that he may ask the Commission if they would be open to moving the September 23rd meeting to one week later. He will bring it back for further discussion.

Franklin Perez tried to speak again via Zoom but could not be heard.

8. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor reported that she was invited and attended the 11th Street Church's anniversary service. She also went to St. Andrews Ame Church this past weekend for a 94th Birthday celebration.

The Mayor also responded to comments made by Ms. Rhodes during public comment. She stated that she has no authority to give anyone money. All monies go through the Finance department with the appropriate approvals.

9. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Jones spoke on the following items:

- He questioned if the WWTP can be made to look better/neater. Mr. Rayan clarified that he is talking about the Old Nursery and noted that they are working on it.
- He asked about the Hydrant Park restrooms and drinking fountains needing to be repaired. Hydrant parks doesn't have restrooms and the water fountains are being installed. Commissioner Jones corrected himself, he meant Hidden Lakes Park. Mr. Rayan stated that he would look into it.
- The old Soccer Field on 14th Avenue is looking bad. It was discussed that this property has

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been approved to be redeveloped as a future park, and more information and detailed conceptualls will be brought back to the Commission for approval.

- MLK Park looked pretty good.
- Commissioner Jones addressed Ms. Rhodes and reported that he met with Mr. Bellamy at the Palmetto Youth Center to discuss having the youth center manage the Multi-Cultural Festival in the future, as they're moving away from the CRA and City running the event. He opined that it would make it more affordable. Mayor Bryant asked for a consensus to set up a meeting with Commissioner Jones and Mr. Bellamy to discuss this event and bring back ideas to the Commission. Commissioners Jones, Joiner, and Cornwell agreed. Commissioner Smith stated that he was not ok with it.
- Commissioner Jones continued to express that he believed it would be easier for the community to attend the event if it was at the Palmetto Youth Center and it can be centered around MLK. He also said he wanted to bring the community together and they can't wait until the last minute to plan the event.

Commissioner Smith emphasized that he did not agree with moving the multi-cultural event. He wanted the event at Lincoln Park on the football field, in Ward 1. He didn't want there to be any problems on the roadways. He thought it was safer to have it at Lincoln Park.

Mayor Bryant noted that it didn't necessarily have to be at the youth center if they were managing it. Mayor Bryant reiterated the plan to set up a meeting with Mr. Bellamy and Commissioner Jones.

Commissioner Smith opined that the black community was having issues with the Palmetto Youth Center. He believed the community wouldn't want the event to be at the youth center but stated that he didn't care if she met with Mr. Bellamy.

Commissioner Jones asked that all the Commissioners be recognized at events that they attend. He gave the example of the Palmetto Heritage Festival.

Commissioner Cornwell mentioned at the last meeting she discussed bringing charging stations to the area. She wanted to propose a baby step of reaching out to gas stations that were being built or remodeled and see if they would be interested in adding stations to their facilities. Mr. Rayan responded that Mr. DeRuso stated that he had that in mind for the retail space area of the Marriott Hotel and the Convention Center and they were looking into it as well. She asked if the Commission would be amenable to facilitate new or remodeled stations by adding charging stations.

Commissioner Smith asked the Chief if he would send out briefings of incidents that happen in the community. Chief Tyler responded that he sent one out this afternoon to them about the shooting that happened the same day as the boat regatta. Commissioner Smith requested more patrol units to be in that area.

Commissioner Smith went on to question why the Bradenton Police Department still has the case open regarding Breonte Johnson-Davis. Chief Tyler responded that he doesn't know what they're investigating. He stated that they are probably investigating their officer, but they haven't spoken to him as it's an open investigation on their part. The Chief noted that he will brief them when he hears. The Mayor clarified that their investigation has no bearing on the City of Palmetto's case. The FDLE and State Attorney's offices have all concluded their investigations.

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Commissioner Joiner asked Mr. Rayan about a storm drain grate that rusted away on 13th Street. The resident who brought it to her attention said he reported it in April 2023. Other drains have the grate, and this one doesn't. Mr. Rayan will look into it.

Mayor Bryant adjourned the meeting at 7:50 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: APRIL 15, 2024

JAMES R. FREEMAN

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CITY CLERK