

**MINUTES**  
**CITY COMMISSION MEETING**  
**DECEMBER 2, 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:**

Dan West, Mayor  
Tamara Cornwell, Vice- Mayor, Commissioner-at-Large 2  
Sunshine Joiner, Commissioner, Ward 2  
Harold Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1  
Scott Whitaker, Commissioner-at-Large 1  
Brian Williams, Commissioner, Ward 3

**STAFF PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:**

Jim Freeman, City Clerk  
Marisa Powers, City Attorney  
Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Director  
Scott Tyler, Chief of Police  
Rowena Young-Gopie, CRA Director (Present via ZOOM)  
Edward Johnson, CRA Independent Contractor  
Cassi Bailey, Assistant City Clerk  
Penny Johnston, Executive Assistant

**STAFF PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY:**

Todd Williams, Information Technology (IT) Consultant

1. Mayor West called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, and Pastor Jason Williams, 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 Williams seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the December 2, 2024 City Commission Agenda.**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Patricia Simmons spoke on handicap accessible vehicles and people parking in the space needed for handicap individuals to navigate in and out of their vehicles. She would like to see a joint PSA with other local municipalities, explaining the fines associated with parking in those spots illegally.

**MOTION: Commissioner Cornwell moved to allow her 2 more minutes for public comment, Commissioner Williams seconded and the motion carried 5-0.**

Ms. Simmons also discussed other more inclusive events the City could support for handicap individuals.

Tracey Washington, NAACP President, spoke on the multi-cultural event. She would like it to be a MLK Jr. day event.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Resolution 2024-25: FY2025 CIP
- b. Resolution 2024-26: FY2025 Half Cent
- c. Resolution 2024-36: FY2025 Purchase Order Carryforward
- d. Resolution 2024-37: FY2025 CRA Carryforward
- e. Special Function Permit- Beer Garden @ the 2025 River Regatta
- f. City Legal Invoices

**MOTION: Commissioner Cornwell moved, Commissioner Joiner seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as presented by staff.**

5. UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL FOR 320 10<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE WEST- GRAY PROPERTIES

Mr. Freeman gave a history of this item which has been previously discussed. This is for the property at the corner of 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue West and Riverside Drive West. Gray Properties is proposing a mixed-use development. Mr. Freeman discussed the lease with Safe Harbor Marina. If they want to move forward, they will need to assure they continue to uphold their lease agreement with SHM. Gray Property Group is asking for the City to contribute the funding for 100 parking spaces/50 of which would be dedicated to SHM. All they're asking for tonight is if the Commission wants to move forward with the unsolicited proposal process.

Nick Gray of Gray Property Group presented a revised proposal. The PowerPoint he discussed was made part of the Minutes.

Mayor West appreciated Mr. Gray meeting with them individually. The rendition he presented is beautiful.

Commissioner Joiner appreciated the updates and loved that he heard their input and took it into consideration.

## City Commission Meeting

December 2, 2024

Page 3 of 6

Commissioner Cornwell questioned him working in Orlando. She asked what he had built before. He answered, he has not worked in Orlando, but he has worked on a variety of townhome structures in New Hampshire. He has a lot of experience in renovating properties. She noted that according to her research she found \$30,000 per parking space was the average cost. She asked how he came up with the \$35,000 per space figure. Mr. Gray answered through a variety of different construction companies. They gave him figures between \$30-40,000. She also asked how they came up with the cost of the property. Through working with contractors and getting cost estimates with vendors. This is the preliminary pricing. Mr. Freeman noted that they have requested an appraisal of the parcel. They are hoping to have it within the next 3-4 weeks. He wanted to have that before a final decision was made. He also spoke on the cost of the parking spaces. Commissioner Cornwell questioned who would continue to make repairs on the parking spaces. The Gray company would be responsible for the entire property. The City would lease the parking spaces. She asked why they were looking at 100 spaces rather than 50. This amount was proposed after discussions with City staff. Commissioner Cornwell asked about water mitigation. Storage retention vaults are the plan. She also questioned super chargers for electric vehicles. Yes, they are including that in their price estimates/plans. Mr. Gray spoke on the price per parking space and their willingness to have further discussions.

Commissioner Whitaker really liked the concept. He would appreciate them looking at a way to lower the City contribution, as they take it out to bid. He questioned how the lease with Safe Harbor Marina, SHM, would play out. Mr. Freeman answered that they had reached out to SHM. They were waiting to hear back from them. Commissioner Whitaker had concerns about the Coastal High Hazard Area, CHHA, but he really liked the project.

Commissioner Williams spoke on the 50 versus 100 spaces and noted that he's not convinced we need to have that. Mr. Freeman stated that the lease with SHM is specific to that property. There are currently 79 spaces on that lot. There was a provision added by SHM, if that parcel were to be redeveloped, they would have to have a minimum of 150 spaces, 50 of which are dedicated to SHM. SHM contributes to those spaces. Commissioner Williams thought it would be helpful to have an accurate count of all parking spaces in the area. The CRA is about to begin a parking study in that area. Mr. Johnson stated that the CRA is engaged with a vendor to create a proposal for the scope of work. The anticipated completion time would be 2-3 months.

Mr. Freeman said they will work on getting that information, but it could go against our favor if we put it out for bid to establish the cost of the parking spaces. Mr. Freeman reiterated that these details will be brought forward at future public hearings. If they like the project as a whole, then they need to move forward. The CRA sunsets in 2042. Mr. Freeman explained the process with the tax incentive. They aren't eligible until the property comes on the tax roll. Mr. Gray stated he was aware of that. He said that could be part of further LOI discussions.

The fee simple title was explained by Mr. Freeman. We would sell the entire property, and the City would have a long-term lease, a parking easement, a deed restriction or a land-use agreement. Ms. Powers spoke on land-use agreements and the bond council discussions they've had. Commissioner Williams spoke on re-zoning both properties. The Commission has GDP approval/control. Mr. Gray stated that they are currently proposing an eight-story project. They will continue to discuss this through the planning process. Commissioner Williams liked the project.

**City Commission Meeting**

**December 2, 2024**

**Page 4 of 6**

Matt Morris, Morris Engineering, spoke on the CHHA. Mr. Rayan asked which order they would like to proceed with moving forward. Mr. Morris would like to ensure they have a path forward from the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council. Mr. Rayan agreed he would like to see that as well.

Patty Petruff, Attorney, spoke on the fee simple title structure/City lease for the parking spaces. She also spoke on Florida Statute requirements regarding CHHA.

**MOTION: Commissioner Williams moved, Commissioner Joiner seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve moving forward with the unsolicited proposal from Gray Property Group for 320 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue West and instruct staff to proceed in a manner consistent with the options provided under 255.065, Fla. Stat.**

*Mayor West recessed the City Commission Meeting to open the December 2, 2024 CRA Board Meeting at 8:15 pm.*

*Mayor West reconvened the City Commission Meeting at 9:04 pm.*

**MOTION: Commissioner Cornwell moved to add a discussion for the Multi-Cultural Festival/MLK Festival to conclude at 9:30 pm, Commissioner Smith seconded, and the motion carried 5-0.**

Commissioner Smith reiterated that his problem was that this didn't come to them like it should have. He thinks it was done wrong. Commissioner Smith suggested moving it to February and moving the location back to Lincoln Park.

Commissioner Williams spoke on the first multi-cultural festival that started in the 1990's at the Fairgrounds. He went on to discuss how the Commission decided to stop running the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and Multicultural events. Mr. Johnson reiterated Mr. Williams' point.

Mr. Freeman read from old minutes regarding funding these events. They allocated \$50,000 for both the multi-cultural event and the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event in the budget. Mr. Williams stated that they would need to vote if they wanted it to be a MLK event rather than a multi-cultural event.

Commissioner Smith thought there was supposed to be an additional \$10,000 donated from the Palmetto Marriott hotel for the multi-cultural festival. Mr. Freeman confirmed that it was part of their agreement, but he wasn't sure if it was specified that it would be for the multi-cultural event.

Commissioner Cornwell agreed with Commissioner Williams on the origin of the event. She also

## City Commission Meeting

December 2, 2024

Page 5 of 6

agreed that the hurricanes have caused this discussion to be delayed. She echoed Commissioner Smith's idea of moving the event to February and combining it with Black History Month. The other problem that needs to be addressed is the location, she opined. She wanted to hear from the community about the month and location they prefer. Discussions continued between Commissioner Smith, Commissioner Williams and Ms. Dixon regarding the event.

This item will continue to be discussed at the meetings on 12/16/24.

### COMMENTS:

#### 6. DEPARTMENT HEADS' COMMENTS

Mr. Rayan updated everyone on the debris removal from the hurricanes. The entire City has been cleaned up. Most of the C&D has been moved off site. He is hoping to have everything off the fairgrounds site and regraded by December 15<sup>th</sup> in time for the fair preparations. The Ward 1 Phase III project started about a week ago. They will bring a change order to meet the existing conditions. It was determined that the drainage would not work as it stands. The project is moving forward. Mr. Rayan also reported that they received the signed LAP agreement from the FDOT for the 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue Complete Street project. The FDOT is requesting an RFQ from the CCNA vendor. They are also going to be discussing the drainage problems around the Women's Club, and the ongoing drainage issues on 17<sup>th</sup> Street near the High School, in hopes of enhancing the area.

Ms. Young-Gopie spoke on the multi-cultural event/MLK event and suggested that they may want to put out an RFQ for these events in the future.

#### 7. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor West went to the fairgrounds for the FDOT meeting. He then met with residents of Sanctuary Cove regarding their concerns with one of the options that the FDOT proposed, which would bring a bridge access right through Sanctuary Cove.

Mayor West also shared that he helped unload Christmas trees at the Boys & Girls Club and helped with the "Mayor's Feed the Hungry" event before Thanksgiving.

He went on to thank Mr. Deruso for the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Palmetto Christmas Tree Lighting at the Marriott. The European Holiday Market will run from December 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> at the Convention Center.

#### 8. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Williams shared that the food bank he helps with gave away 283 meals last Tuesday before Thanksgiving.

**City Commission Meeting**

**December 2, 2024**

**Page 6 of 6**

Commissioner Whitaker opined that it was refreshing to hear Commissioner Smith discuss how everyone should celebrate together at the multi-cultural event. He wants all citizens to come together. He went on to thank Mr. Rayan & Chief Tyler for all the work they did with the hurricanes.

Commissioner Cornwell thanked everyone for the work they did with the hurricanes. She questioned if the City was purchasing new holiday decorations. Mr. Freeman noted they budgeted for them, but they have not ordered them. They will get them purchased for next year. Commissioner Cornwell wants them to come before the Commission.

She went on to state that they need to look at all of our systems to ensure they can keep up with the new developments in the City. She requested that they have discussions at the next meeting regarding contracts that are coming to an end. She wanted to have an organized timeline of these contracts.

Mr. Rayan wanted to note that he had a discussion with Waste Management about their contract that ends in a year. He does want to have further discussions with staff when meeting with them again.

Commissioner Cornwell reiterated that she wants a clear timeline of contracts.

Commissioner Smith hopes for a better year for everyone. It was a tough year with all the storms.

Mayor Bryant adjourned the meeting at 9:45 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: JANUARY 6, 2025

***JAMES R. FREEMAN***

JAMES R. FREEMAN

CITY CLERK