

MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
DECEMBER 16, 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:

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney
Jim Freeman, City Clerk
Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Director
Scott Tyler, Chief of Police
Rowena Young-Gopie, CRA Director
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 Ralph Hoehne from The Source 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 Joiner seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the December 16, 2024 City Commission Agenda.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Betty Sailes Rhodes spoke on second chance employment opportunities. Mayor West said he plans to bring something back in the future. He met with Ms. Washington recently about this. Ms. Sailes Rhodes also spoke on the Multi-Cultural event. She really liked the presentation Ms. Bailey shared at the Workshop.

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Tracey Washington questioned why our City Commission meetings aren't televised. She also spoke on the death of her son, Breonte Johnson-Davis. She thanked Chief Tyler for working on getting a mental health program in the City of Palmetto.

Commissioner Cornwell questioned the public comment wording on the Agenda: agenda items, public hearing comments and non-agenda items. She would like it to be clearer on the Agenda. Mr. Barnebey clarified the difference between the items.

Karon Dixon, PDMS, spoke on the multi-cultural event.

Charles Newsome spoke on the multi-cultural event and the desire to have the event at Lincoln Park.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Minutes: 11/18/2024
- b. Reappointments to Outside Organizations
- c. Board Appointments
- d. Special Function Permit- 2025 Desoto Parade
- e. Temporary Use Permit-Portable Restrooms Cirque Italia

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

5. 1ST PUBLIC HEARING: UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL FROM GRAY PROPERTIES FOR 320 10TH AVENUE WEST

Mr. Freeman introduced Mr. Gray and noted that he has been before the Commission several times to discuss his unsolicited proposal.

Mayor West opened the Public Hearing at 7:17 pm.

Mr. Nick Gray presented a PowerPoint, which was included in the Minutes. He submitted an unsolicited proposal to purchase the property at 320 10th Avenue West and develop it together with 336 10th Avenue West, which he is already under contract with, to create a mixed-use development. This is a preliminary design that will evolve throughout the process.

Commissioner Williams asked if we had received the appraisal on the property yet. Mr. Freeman answered no, not yet. He will follow up. Commissioner Williams asked Mr. Barnebey if he had a problem with them moving forward without an appraisal. Mr. Barnebey didn't have an issue with them moving forward for now. He suggested having an appraisal before a contract is made. Commissioner Williams asked Ms. Young-Gopie about the TIF rebate. That would be determined once the property is closed on, and they are on the tax roll. They

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would have a better understanding as it got closer. Commissioner Williams asked if it was better to prorate the additional time after the CRA sunsets. He then asked how many stories the apartment building would be. Mr. Gray is proposing 8 stories in the preliminary drawings. Height restrictions, the deed restriction, and the cost to clear the title were discussed. Mr. Barnebey noted that they had originally got a clean title a few months ago, but that has since been rescinded. He thinks it would make sense for the City to get rid of this issue. He will bring back the estimated cost to do so.

Commissioner Smith asked Mr. Freeman how the City would pay \$3.5 million to Gray Properties. That would come from the City. Right now, they are thinking of reinvesting the amount they receive from the price of the property. Safe Harbor Marina would contribute around \$400,000 for parking spaces. The other \$2 million would most likely come from our reserves. They may also look at other sources. There may be some impact fees they could combine in there. They are also still discussing the number of parking spaces that will be needed. Also, they are in contract with the Altier group for the parcel south of the new police department. The profit that might come from that parcel could be used to pay for the parking spaces as a way of reinvesting the funds. Commissioner Williams asked Mr. Gray if he thought he could get this project done. He answered yes, absolutely.

Commissioner Cornwell reiterated that they may have some leeway with financial obligations after the CRA sunsets. She said if it is Gray Properties that holds up the process, it would be on them to miss out on the TIF monies for the difference of the years once the CRA sunsets. Mr. Barnebey said that is something they should look at when developing the contract. She asked for clarification on the litigation Mr. Barnebey spoke of. The title company has withdrawn their position of eliminating this restriction. They changed their mind. She reiterated that she brought up these hesitations before. She questioned the maintenance of the parking spaces. Mr. Gray went on to explain the methodology for the cost of the parking spaces.

Commissioner Williams questioned prorating the taxes and the tax assessment for the parking spaces. Mr. Gray said it will be better understood when they submit their LOI.

Commissioner Whitaker questioned the \$0 NNN. Taxes on those spaces were discussed.

Mr. Barnebey noted that they're still looking at the deed restriction issues. Mr. Gray has suggested the City submit a comprehensive plan amendment for the coastal high hazard area, which is allowed by the State.

Mr. Freeman reminded the Mayor to make sure none of the public had any comment.

Mayor West closed the Public Hearing at 8:06 pm.

This is the first of two public hearings that are required by F.S. Section 255.065(3)(c). A second public hearing will be held later on January 6, 2025 for a final decision on the unsolicited proposal in accordance with Florida Statute.

6. MULTI-CULTURAL EVENT

This item was discussed at the 4:30pm Workshop. They have come to a consensus that they would like to have the in February at Lincoln Park. If they couldn't do it there, they would do it at Sutton Park.

Commissioner Smith said Ms. Bailey came up with a pretty good idea and she had specific dates with the County, parking figured out, stage, sponsors, etc. Ms. Dixon had good ideas too. He would go with Ms. Bailey's plan.

Commissioner Cornwell questioned the funding for this event, and what amount the City was going to contribute. The City budgeted \$50,000 for the event. The same as they budgeted for the 4th of July event. Depending on what they decide, they provided a funding agreement in the agenda similar to the 4th of July event. This was all inclusive. Everything was invoiced through the City. They reported at the end how the money was allocated. She asked what we paid the organizer of the 4th of July event. It was answered \$7,500. That was inclusive of the \$50,000 budget. She asked if Ms. Bailey and Ms. Dixon would be willing to work together and if there would be some incentive for vendors to increase funds. Ms. Dixon and Ms. Bailey came up to the dais. Ms. Bailey, Aapex, spoke on her history with organizing events. Ms. Dixon, Palmetto Downtown Mainstreet, PDMS, spoke on PDMS being not for profit and sponsorships. Commissioner Cornwell reiterated that the City needed to get their ducks in a row for future events.

Commissioner Smith spoke on wanting to have the event on February 15th. Ms. Bailey already has her sponsors. Plus, she knows all the community. He asked Mr. Freeman about the \$10,000 contribution from the Marriott hotel. Mr. Freeman hasn't spoken to them yet. He will follow up on that before the next meeting. Ms. Bailey spoke on a community advisory board and putting volunteers in place. Ms. Dixon thinks they should just let Ms. Bailey organize the event. The PDMS is fine to work on their other events.

Commissioner Williams spoke and stated that he was fine with Ms. Bailey's proposal.

MOTION: Commissioner Williams moved to have Aapex provide and organize the multi-cultural event on February 15, 2025 and authorize the Mayor to sign an agreement with input from the attorney not to exceed \$50,000 inclusive of the \$7,500 to organize the event. Commissioner Smith seconded.

Mr. Barnebey noted that they need to have an agreement with them. They currently have a draft agreement.

Commissioner Joiner thanked both of them for their time and effort in presenting their ideas. She just wanted to make sure they stayed within their \$50,000 budget.

The motion carried 5-0.

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7. NOVEMBER 2024 CHECK REGISTER (INFORMATIONAL ONLY)

COMMENTS:

8. DEPARTMENT HEADS' COMMENTS

Mr. Rayan gave an update on the fairground's property restoration and getting it ready for the fair next month. Hydroseeding should take place within the next week. Mr. Rayan shared that the Ward 1 phase III project contractor completed the utility locations. They will remobilize after the first of the year. They are moving forward with CIP projects. A first meeting has been scheduled with FDOT tomorrow with Mr. Freeman and himself regarding the intersection of 10th St. and 8th Ave. and adding turn lanes to help with traffic congestion. They are waiting for final plans for the storage building at Public Works. They are also working on spatial drawings for City Hall, the CRA, and the Public Works Administration building.

Mr. Freeman shared that the 14th Ave. Park is moving forward with the work assignment to move towards the next step of construction drawings so they can put it out for bid. They were very successful in their collaboration with the lobbyist last year. They met with him about a week ago and submitted an initial list which focused on resiliency and hurricane efforts. The list currently is comprised of 5 or 6 projects, which will probably be narrowed down to 2. Utilities shut offs and normal practices will resume after January 1st. He hoped everyone had a great holiday. There are a lot of projects to continue to work on in the new year.

Chief Tyler has been working with Centerstone and USF to create a mental health response team in Palmetto. In July Centerstone along with USF submitted the application for a grant. The proposal was for Centerstone to employ, recruit, and work with the Police Department to develop protocols for their team. The team would be exclusive to the City of Palmetto. USF and Centerstone got the grant for \$285,000, which is a 3-year grant. Chief Tyler has drafted some initial protocols.

Mr. Barnebey reminded the Commission of the 4 hours of Sunshine Law and Ethics training that needs to be done before the end of the year. Cyber security training for the City also needs to be completed. Financial reporting is still under Form 1. It did change last year as to what they must provide. He also shared that they did file foreclosure documents for the masonic lodge. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone.

Commissioner Cornwell asked if she filled out Form 6 instead of Form 1 last year, was that sufficient. Mr. Barnebey answered yes. The forms are due July 1st for 2024.

9. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor West shared that his office received a letter in appreciation of the Palmetto Police Department's help during the hurricanes from the City of Longboat Key.

10. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Williams questioned Mr. Barnebey's comment on the comprehensive plan vs. the waterfront plan and the coastal high hazard area, CHHA. Mr. Barnebey further explained the waterfront plan, comprehensive plan and the CHHA. Commissioner Williams questioned 7 stories being the maximum. Mr. Barnebey continued to clarify the waterfront plan. It has been 20 years since the waterfront plan was developed. He wants to bring it back for further discussion.

Commissioner Cornwell questioned the coastal regulations. We need to consider what is safest for the community. That needs to be included in the recommendations that come forward. The safety of the community needs to be the most important factor. Mr. Barnebey suggested they consider their options and not base them specifically on the parcel at 320 10th Ave W. The state put a cap on not raising the density of certain areas, however, densities across the state range vastly.

Commissioner Williams questioned the building that collapsed in Miami. He asked what is required for inspections. Mr. Barnebey and Mr. Rayan explained that it is now a state law that dictates these inspections, which is based off age and height of the building.

Commissioner Williams asked what the status of the VFW was. Ms. Young-Gopie explained that they are playing catch up after the hurricanes with the windows on the building. They are considering creating a redevelopment plan for it. They are unsure what they want to do with the building at this time.

Commissioner Williams wants to set up an appointment with Mr. Rayan to discuss the WWTP expansion and capacity concerns. Mr. Rayan shared that the engineers are set up to come in January to present to the Commission. They're going to secure a whole workshop to discuss this issue. He wished everyone happy holidays.

Commissioner Whitaker opined that it was nice for the Commission to work out the details on the multi-cultural event. Ms. Bailey is spectacular, and he thought that it was first class for Ms. Dixon to step aside and allow Ms. Bailey to organize the event. It was very professional. He also noted that he appreciated Chief working with Centerstone and USF to bring this program to the community.

Commissioner Cornwell asked if Ms. Bailey could send them a copy of the new calendar dates for the Commission meetings and holidays. Ms. Bailey previously emailed it to the Commission but will send out another copy. Commissioner Cornwell asked if there was an update to any contract deadlines. Mr. Freeman will work on that. She noted that Friday was the last day of school before the holiday break. She would love to see some community events in the future during school breaks with the Police Department. She also suggested having another backpack giveaway as backpacks tend to wear out halfway through the school year.

Chief Tyler shared that they took 25 kids shopping last Tuesday, as part of their annual Christmas community event. They each had \$100 to spend.

Commissioner Cornwell hoped this upcoming year isn't as eventful weather wise. Happy holidays.

Commissioner Smith opined that the Mayor is doing a good job. He will come to see him this week.

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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone.

Commissioner Joiner shared that they participated in the Honor the Badge event last Tuesday. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone.

Mayor West also wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Mayor West adjourned the meeting at 8:57 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: JANUARY 27, 2025

JAMES R. FREEMAN

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CITY CLERK