

**MINUTES**  
**CITY COMMISSION MEETING**  
**JANUARY 6, 2025**  
**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  
Brian Williams, Vice-Mayor, Commissioner Ward 3  
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2  
Sunshine Joiner, Commissioner Ward 2  
Harold Smith, Commissioner Ward 1  
Scott Whitaker, Commissioner-at-Large 1

**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  
Ed Johnson, CRA Independent Consultant  
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 Larry Collins from 11<sup>th</sup> Street Church of Christ, 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 January 6, 2025 City Commission Agenda.**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Penny Johnston spoke on sending out an email to all the Commissioners about the upcoming community meetings. She has already had several communities reach out that they would like to host a meeting. More details will be forthcoming.

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4. SELECTION OF VICE MAYOR

Commissioner Cornwell nominated Commissioner Joiner as Vice-Mayor.

Commissioner Smith nominated Commissioner Williams as Vice-Mayor.

**The Commission voted 4-1 to elect Commissioner Williams as Vice-Mayor. (Commissioner Cornwell voted nay.)**

5. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Minutes: 12/02/2024
- b. Appointment of Appointed Officials (Department Heads)
- c. Surplus Vehicles/Generator for Auction
- d. 2025 MPO Projects

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

6. 2ND PUBLIC HEARING: UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL FROM GRAY PROPERTIES FOR 320 10TH AVENUE WEST

*Mayor West opened the Public Hearing at 7:08 pm.*

Mr. Freeman gave an overview of the item. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Hearing on this item. The First Public Hearing was on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Mr. Freeman explained the process once action is taken. The purpose of tonight's Public Hearing is to get public input and to move forward. A future contract will be the final approval.

Nick Gray, Owner and Managing Principal of Gray Property Group, highlighted his proposal for developing 320 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue West through a PowerPoint, which was included in the Agenda.

Commissioner Cornwell asked Mr. Freeman how the City would sponsor the additional TIF monies for the extra 2 years after the CRA sunsets. The current TIF incentive says up to 15 years. Often the CRA can set up a runout payment within the last couple years of the CRA and as the CRA sunsets, the money would already be budgeted. That would be discussed further in a final contract. Commissioner Cornwell questioned the status of the parcel regarding the deed. Mr. Barnebey explained that they have not determined the final way forward for that item. He discussed a couple of options. The estimated amount of time for it to run through the court system would be 9-12 months. Litigation costs would come from the general fund of the City reserves.

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Mr. Rayan emphasized that we need to get this deed restriction resolved either way. Mr. Barnebey agreed.

Commissioner Smith talked to Mr. Freeman about the funding of the parking spaces. The proceeds from the sale of the property could be reinvested for the public parking requirement, the safe harbor lease agreement requires them to make financial contributions, and the remainder would be funded through the general fund reserves. Keep in mind, depending on when those monies are required, the City may receive funding from other vacant properties throughout the City. He believes it's more than doable without any borrowing/lending. We would still have adequate reserves. They continued to discuss the progress made and payouts throughout the process.

Commissioner Williams asked Ms. Young-Gopie about the TIF monies and where they come from. TIF money comes from the calculation when a property is put on the tax roll. They would seek advisement from financial departments as to their eligibility. It will be the tax amount/percentages. They estimate those numbers. Fee simple was questioned. They are planning to give the City an easement over those parking spaces. Mr. Barnebey thought they would have to pay taxes over those spaces. Mr. Barnebey noted that there are specific things that need to be put into the contract. He doesn't think it's appropriate to approve the LOI at this time. There may be adjustments to the final contract. Mr. Freeman noted that there may be some recommended changes when it comes back for a final contract in regard to the appraisal and further discussions. If they like what they see, they should move forward to allow staff to negotiate a final sale. There will still be a due diligence period, re-zoning, GDP, etc. Mr. Barnebey stated in general terms the staff is comfortable with moving forward.

Commissioner Whitaker would like to see the appraised price/offer negotiated. The Value should be close to the sale price. He thinks there are a lot of incentives on both sides.

Wesley Ford spoke in favor of this project except for his concern with the sewage problems. He wants to know what they're doing about these sewage issues.

Lynn Meier spoke on the sewage problems and emphasized that this project would add to it. The WWTP needs repairs. She provided a copy of her public comment, which was included in the Minutes.

Ann Kruse spoke via ZOOM. She thinks it is a great project, but the sewer system does need to be addressed. She also spoke about receiving permits.

*Mayor West closed the Public Hearing at 8:05 pm.*

Mr. Rayan spoke on the sewage issues. He is currently working with the engineers on this project. There will be a presentation from Wade Trim at the January 27<sup>th</sup> Workshop. They are anticipating having some measures in place by the time this project is complete. This is an important issue to Staff as well. The WWTP is sitting at about 83% of plant capacity.

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Mr. Gray appreciated the community feedback and wants to continue to have these open discussions.

Mr. Freeman wanted to discuss the statutory requirements and highlight the findings for the record. A detailed summary was submitted as part of the Minutes.

Commissioner Cornwell commented on Mr. Rayan's comments and asked what effect this project will have on the current WWTP. All these items are quantifiable. Mr. Rayan will bring back an estimate on the impact of this project.

Commissioner Williams asked for a copy of these facts in advance. Mr. Freeman will send it to them in advance next time.

Mr. Freeman read the motion listed in the agenda.

**MOTION: Commissioner Williams moved, Commissioner Joiner seconded.**

**Based upon comments made at the public hearing, I move to approve the Gray Property Group Unsolicited Proposal, which includes the sale of 320 10th Ave West; specifically determining that the Unsolicited Proposal is in the public interest because:**

- 1. It benefits the public;**
- 2. Of the financial structure of and the economic efficiencies achieved by the proposal;**
- 3. Of the qualifications and experience of the private entity that submitted the proposal and such entity's ability to perform the project;**
- 4. Of the project's compatibility with regional infrastructure plans; and**
- 5. Finding that the City Commission has discussed any public comments given during the second public hearing and as appropriate, provided a statement that explains why the proposal should proceed and addresses such comments during the second public hearing.**

**The City Commission further directs City Staff to publish in the Florida Administrative Register a report including all statutory required information and to direct staff to provide agreements for review and approval by this Board at a future meeting.**

**The motion carried 4-1. (Commissioner Smith voted nay.)**

*Mayor West recessed the City Commission Meeting to open the January 6, 2025 CRA Board Meeting at 8:22 pm.*

*Mayor West reconvened the City Commission Meeting at 9:52 pm.*

COMMENTS:

7. DEPARTMENT HEADS' COMMENTS

Mr. Barnebey thanked the Commission for reappointing them.

8. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor West wished everyone a Happy New Year!

9. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Smith asked Mr. Freeman for clarification on the \$10,000 Marriott Hotel incentive that was to be contributed to the multicultural event. Mr. Freeman read from the agreement with the Marriott. The City is working to create an invoice for them to collect this contribution.

Commissioner Cornwell wished everyone a Happy New Year!

Commissioner Whitaker asked Mr. Rayan for clarification on when they would be discussing the WWTP. Mr. Rayan answered that Wade Trim is scheduled to come to the Workshop on January 27<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Whitaker appreciated Mr. Rayan taking him on a tour of the whole WWTP area.

Commissioner Williams was glad all the Department Heads got reappointed. He noted that he forgot to question the sole source item on the CRA consent agenda for the Neighborly application. He asked if that would interfere with anything for IT. Ms. Young-Gopie answered that the CRA checked with IT and since it is a web-based software, it shouldn't affect our hardware. Todd Williams agreed.

Mayor West adjourned the meeting at 9:57 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: JANUARY 27, 2025

***JAMES R. FREEMAN***

JAMES R. FREEMAN  
CITY CLERK