

MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
FEBRUARY 10, 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
Penny Johnston, Executive Assistant
Candace Muckefuse, Executive Assistant

STAFF PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY:

Todd Williams, Information Technology (IT) Consultant

**THE AGENDA WAS AMENDED ON 2/7/25 TO UPDATE THE ATTACHMENTS FOR CONSENT
AGENDA ITEM A, ITEM #6, AND THE REMOVAL OF ITEM #8**

AMENDED ITEMS:

- Consent Agenda a.) 4th of July Event-The Big Idea Strategic Events This item's attachment was updated.
- Item #6: First Reading Ordinance 2025-01: CRAAB Board Members This item's attachment was updated.
- Item #8: 320 10th Avenue West-Purchase & Sale of Contract with Gray Property This item was removed from the Agenda. It will be brought forward at a later date.

1. Mayor West called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, and 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 Williams moved, Commissioner Joiner seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the February 10, 2025 City Commission Agenda.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. 4th of July Event- The Big Idea Strategic Events
- b. Waiving of Permit Fees for Hurricane Helene/Milton Damage

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

5. FIRST READING-ORDINANCE 2025-02: IMPACT FEES (J.FREEMAN)

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALMETTO, FLORIDA, PROVIDING A STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND INTENT; PROVIDING FINDINGS; AMENDING THE CITY OF PALMETTO IMPACT FEE REGULATIONS AND AMOUNTS; AMENDING AND RESTATING ARTICLE IV OF CHAPTER 7 OF THE CODE RELATING TO IMPACT FEES; PROVIDING FOR APPLICABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR STATUTORY NOTICE REQUIREMENTS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Commissioner Cornwell questioned how far behind we are on the impact fees and the reason for not increasing them since 2006. Mr. Freeman reiterated that staff will address this more frequently moving forward. The fees have to be justified based on the studies. Mr. Barnebey explained that the statute caps it at 50%, the study is capped at 47%. We are at 100% of what we can charge.

MOTION: Commissioner Cornwell moved, Commissioner Joiner seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the First Reading of Ordinance 2025-02 and authorize staff to notice this for the appropriate public hearings before the City Commission.

6. FIRST READING- ORDINANCE 2025-01: CRAAB BOARD MEMBERS (R.YOUNG-GOPIE)

Ms. Young-Gopie explained the reason for wanting to expand the Board at this point.

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AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION FOR THE CITY OF PALMETTO, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE PALMETTO CODE OF ORDINANCES; AMENDING REGULATIONS RELATED TO THE MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF OFFICE FOR THE PALMETTO COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY ADVISORY BOARD; AMENDING PURPOSE AND DUTIES OF THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY ADVISORY BOARD; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Commissioner Cornwell expressed concern with labeling the individuals that could be members. She was worried that there were other individuals that would want to be on there. She thinks it's too narrow of a scope. She suggested extending the qualifications and making a provision if there aren't any persons that fit those categories, they could expand. Ms. Young-Gopie explained that the Board has the ability to appoint a member outside of these conditions. Mr. Barnebey reminded them of the next sentence in the Ordinance, these conditions may be waived.....etc. Commissioner Cornwell said that was perfect.

Commissioner Smith questioned Mr. Barnebey on conflict of interest. If they do, they will have to recuse themselves. He thought it needs to be broadened. It was stated that the current members are Lynn Daniel and David Washington.

Commissioner Williams' concern was the same as Commissioner Cornwell and Commissioner Smith. The current code states they have to live or own a business in the area. Commissioner Williams thinks they need to live in the community. Mr. Barnebey explained that ultimately the Board appoints these individuals. He thinks there's enough flexibility in this ordinance to appoint/not appoint who they want to. Ms. Young-Gopie explained the current composition of the CRAAB. One lives in the CRA, one doesn't.

Commissioner Smith said he has a problem with that. The Mayor appoints and the Board confirms. The Economic Development Council, EDC, shouldn't appoint. Commissioner Smith doesn't think we should change the code. Mr. Barnebey explained that Ms. Young-Gopie wants a diverse group of people that are able to recommend appropriate actions to the Board.

Commissioner Joiner questioned what the CRAAB's main function is. Ms. Young-Gopie explained that they are to understand the projects being presented to the CRA Board and make appropriate recommendations. They are also liaisons between the community and Board. Commissioner Joiner agrees that they want Palmetto well represented, but she also likes the idea of diversity on the Board.

Commissioner Whitaker agreed with Commissioner Joiner. A diverse group is needed for the appropriate recommendations. He hopes that because the Mayor would be appointing them, the individual could recuse themselves if there was a conflict.

Commissioner Cornwell stated that the issue she has with it is that the majority could live outside of the City of Palmetto. She agreed with diversification, but she wants them to live in Palmetto. She suggested putting that the majority of the members should live in Palmetto. She is not in favor of the way it is written now.

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Commissioner Smith thinks they should all live or have a business in Palmetto. Mr. Freeman clarified that they're saying a lot of the same things. He suggested that they either must live or work in palmetto and then apply those stipulations to the other categories. Commissioner Williams reiterated that someone on the Board needs to have skin in the game. Mr. Barnebey thinks it already says that, but they can tighten up the language. He wants to make sure the Board wants them to be a resident of the City or own property or has a business within the City. Commissioner Cornwell asked what the language says now.

Commissioner Smith questioned how 10 people have already applied. Penny Johnston explained that there have currently been 3 advisory members. One of the members has resigned. This is an ideal time to expand, 5 members would be appropriate based off the City's size. They have collected applicants over the years from people interested in serving the community. There hasn't been room before. We have 10 people because they've expressed interest in the past. Mr. Barnebey explained that they are an advisory board. They are just giving recommendations. Commissioner Whitaker reiterated that he does like having someone that resides in palmetto or has a business in palmetto, but he thinks that having qualified people is equally important.

Commissioner Williams asked that they consider removing "or performing a service". He thinks that it is too broad.

Commissioner Smith thought everything was pretty good before. We weren't having problems before; he doesn't want there to be conflicts of interest. Mr. Barnebey said we can't totally control conflicts of interest.

Commissioner Cornwell said if we took out #1-5 and just added 5 members, she would be for that. She doesn't have a problem with having 5 board members, but she does have a problem with the restrictions of #1-5. Mayor West agreed that he wants Palmetto residents to serve on this board. The consensus was to take out #1-5 and tighten up the language. Commissioner Cornwell wants to postpone this item and bring it back with the revisions.

7. WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT EXPANSION-AUTHORIZATION FOR WORK ASSIGNMENT (M.RAYAN)

Mr. Rayan read from his point paper, which was included in the Agenda. This item was presented at the Workshop on 1/27/25. Commissioner Williams stated that his issue with this is that they haven't heard from the operator of the plant if there is an issue/what the issue is, etc. He doesn't think it is appropriate to move forward with this until they have more information on the functionality of the current system. Mr. Rayan stated that they are at capacity. They know what the problems are. They have to have a plan to move forward. They don't necessarily have to go with the manufacturing that has been presented, but they have to have a plan. The problems are the same. They are working on the I&I every day. Commissioner Williams asked if they fixed the I&I would they have the issues they have now. Mr. Rayan reiterated that we are at 85% capacity. If the Commission wants him to do another engineering study, he will, but they have been working on this for the last

2 years. The operator has been here every time they've discussed these plans.

Commissioner Cornwell clarified that they would be making the motion to move forward with the planning process. They are not approving the actual construction or a particular manufacturing model. Any phasing would have to come back to Commission for approval. This motion just allows them to move forward with the planning. Mr. Rayan stated that the I&I is completely independent.

Mayor West reiterated that this preempts the state from taking over our system. They are trying to avoid doing that. This is the road map to get to the point to expand.

Commissioner Whitaker asked what percentage of the I&I that has been updated. Mr. Rayan said they are constantly doing I&I work. He doesn't have that number off hand, but he can get it for him. They have that data. This is only fixing the lines on the City side of properties. There are still issues with the home/business owners' side of the lines.

Commissioner Williams asked why he hasn't brought in the operator to answer questions. Mr. Rayan reiterated that they have been here in the meetings if they had any questions.

Commissioner Smith asked Mr. Rayan to bring the operators (Devin/Veolia) to the next meeting to report to the Commission. Veolia and Wade Trim have been in communication. They're CCNA. They will prepare the work assignment.

Lynn Meier spoke on the situation on 20th Avenue. The plant improvements will help with that.

MOTION: **Commissioner Cornwell moved, Commissioner Joiner seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to authorize the Mayor to sign a work assignment for Wade Trim to begin the design of the implementation phasing of alternate III of the Master Facility Plan as presented on January 27, 2025, Commission Workshop.**

8. REMOVED-320 10TH AVENUE WEST-PURCHASE & SALE CONTRACT WITH GRAY PROPERTY (J.FREEMAN)

Mayor West recessed the City Commission Meeting to open the February 10, 2025 CRA Board Meeting at 8:20 pm.

Mayor West reconvened the City Commission Meeting at 8:47 pm.

COMMENTS:

9. DEPARTMENT HEADS' COMMENTS

Mr. Rayan discussed the Ward 1, Phase III project. The contractor mobilized some equipment to the project site today. He is working with Mr. Freeman and the engineers to add turning lanes on 10th Avenue, both North and South bound. This will help traffic and increase mobility during evacuations. They are waiting for FDOT to approve permitting. They are also nearing completion for the permitting application for the well.

Mr. Freeman shared that the City has submitted their five appropriation requests to Mike Moore, Lobbyist. They are hoping to bring back a sale and purchase agreement with Gray Properties at the next meeting. Based off the Workshop discussion today, they will work on surplusing the old Police Department site at an upcoming meeting and bring back a purchase and sale agreement for that property.

Chief Tyler shared that the 40 AED's will be deployed soon into each police vehicle.

Mr. Barnebey reminded them that we are still in litigation with Epoch. They are still in the discovery phase.

10. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor West reported that Mr. Freeman and himself will be meeting with Xtavia Bailey tomorrow. She wants all the Commissioners to be at the Multi-Cultural Event at 10:45 am on Saturday.

They have started their process of meeting with various mobile home parks and neighborhoods in the City. There will be several more to come.

11. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Cornwell questioned the repair of the lights on the Green Bridge. It is Mr. Rayan's understanding that they will be repaired sometime within the next couple of months. There is a statewide contract to fix these repairs from the Hurricane.

Commissioner Cornwell noted the "students working against tobacco" came to her middle school today asked her to speak on the subject at the Commission meeting. They wanted her to encourage the

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Commission to speak to students about the dangers of vaping.

Commissioner Cornwell also shared that the Jet Mobile Home Park visit was wonderful and well received.

Commissioner Joiner asked about the boil water notice. She had a lot of residents reach out to her feeling like there was a lack of communication on this. Mr. Rayan noted that sometimes they are planned, and this particular event was not. It was an emergency situation. The process is to send a boil notice, generally it is sent through the code red system, and placed on our website. Commissioner Joiner wants to discuss how to reach more people and how to reach more specific residents. Mr. Rayan said he was open to suggestions. Mayor West also noted that they have been brainstorming on this. They are working on implementing a social media account.

Commissioner Williams noted that code red is only designed for those that sign up for those alerts. He suggested sending out notices of events going on/ positive items, so more people will want to sign up for this notification system. Mr. Freeman said that we encourage residents to sign up through their newsletter and on our website. He suggested the Commissioners encourage residents to sign up for these notifications. We are working to get a social media page. Commissioner Joiner asked if they can re-send that text every day there is a boil notice. Then send an all clear message.

Commissioner Cornwell asked if there will be an organized drop-off for hurricane debris/paint and household hazardous waste. She stated they used to have a site at the fairgrounds. She also suggested putting messaging on the gateway sign/civic center for boil water notices. Mayor West will check on hazardous waste pickup.

Commissioner Williams noted that there are a lot of streetlights out/flashing. Mr. Rayan responded that they do a monthly survey of these lights then report to FDOT. Commissioner Williams also felt like there are a lot of potholes around the City and street signs are down/missing. They're trying to do their best in repairing these signs. Public Works has an interview scheduled for tomorrow with a sign technician. Mr. Rayan said to feel free to let them know when they see these issues. Chief Tyler also reports these items to Mr. Rayan.

Commissioner Whitaker would like the percentage completed versus the percentage needing to be completed data for I&I.

Commissioner Smith thanked Mr. Rayan and said he's doing a great job.

Mayor West adjourned the meeting at 9:13 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: MARCH 10, 2025

JAMES R. FREEMAN

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CITY CLERK