

**MINUTES**  
**CITY COMMISSION MEETING**  
**FEBRUARY 24, 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 (Left the meeting at 7:20 pm and returned at 7:22 pm)

**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  
Cassi Bailey, Assistant City Clerk  
Penny Johnston, Executive Assistant

**STAFF PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY:**

Todd Williams, Information Technology (IT) Consultant

**\*\* THE AGENDA WAS AMENDED ON 2/21/25 TO REMOVE ITEM #9 \*\***

1. Mayor West called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, and Tad Mathews from the Church on the Rock, gave the prayer for tonight's meeting.

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

Commissioner Joiner presented a Proclamation to Pastor Tad Mathews in honor of his retirement.

2. CITY COMMISSION AGENDA APPROVAL

**MOTION:**                      **Commissioner Williams moved, Commissioner Cornwell seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the February 24, 2025 City Commission Agenda.**

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3. FLOOD AWARENESS PROCLAMATION

Commissioner Williams presented the proclamation. Steve Spangler, Building Official, accepted the proclamation.

4. NATIONAL FFA WEEK PROCLAMATION

Mayor West presented the proclamation to the Palmetto FFA.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Betty Sailes Rhodes appreciated the proclamation that was read at Clara Dunbar's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Minutes: 01/27/2025

b. Public Resource Advisory Group-Financial Advisory Services

c. 2025/2026 WCIND Derelict Boat Removal Funding Request

d. Resolution 2025:02: FDOT/LAP Agreement for 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Riverside Drive to 17<sup>th</sup> Street West

e. Special Function Permit- PDMS Saturday Sundown Concert Series

f. Special Function Permit- Desoto Children's Parade and Party in the Park

g. Special Function Permit- Half Marathon

h. Special Function Permit- Palmetto's Historical Festival

i. Special Function Permit- Palmetto Historical- Remake Learning Event

j. Special Function Permit- Palmetto Historical- Christmas in the Park

k. Special Function Permit- Manatee Bridging the Gap Children's Fishing Tournament

**MOTION:**

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

7. 1<sup>ST</sup> PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE 2025-02 IMPACT FEES

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.

*Mayor West opened the Public Hearing at 7:20 pm.*

Mr. Freeman gave a brief history of this item. This item was discussed at the February 10<sup>th</sup> Workshop and there was a First Reading at the February 10<sup>th</sup> City Commission meeting. This is the first of two public hearings to update the City's impact fees for the roads, parks, general government, and police. This effects new construction only. The second public hearing will be on March 10, 2025.

*Mayor West closed the Public Hearing at 7:22 pm*

**This is the first of two public hearings. The second public hearing will be held on Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup>.**

8. FIRST READING ORDINANCE 2025-01: AMENDMENT TO TERMS OF CRA ADVISORY BOARD

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.

Ms. Young-Gopie reiterated that this was discussed at the 4:30 Workshop.

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

Mr. Smith clarified that the Board would be going to 5 people. There are currently 2 members. At this time, we would add 3 more. The current 2 have terms that end in December. The members' background will be supplied to them.

**The motion carried 5-0 to approve the First Reading of Ordinance 2025-01 and authorize staff to notice this for the appropriate public hearings before the City Commission.**

9. REMOVED-GRAY PROPERTY GROUP, LLC- CONTRACT FOR SALE OF 320 10<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE WEST

10. JANUARY 2025 CHECK REGISTER (INFORMATIONAL ONLY)

*Mayor West recessed the City Commission meeting to open the February 24, 2025 Special CRA Board Meeting at 7:26 pm.*

*Mayor West reconvened the City Commission meeting at 7:49 pm.*

COMMENTS:

11. DEPARTMENT HEADS' COMMENTS

Chief Tyler reported on Manatee County changing their enforcement hours for school zones. They are now only advocating for one hour in the morning when school starts, and one hour during dismissal. He has spoken to Red Speed. These are expensive endeavors for the vendors to do. He asked the Commission for their feedback on hours of enforcement.

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Commissioner Smith agreed with the one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon. He doesn't agree with doing it all day.

Commissioner Joiner asked Chief what his opinion was on the subject. Chief answered that it is about revenue but it is more so about the safety of the students. It is a resource we need to take advantage of. If it were his decision, he thinks he would lean towards enforcing the hour in the morning and the hour in the afternoon.

Commissioner Whitaker opined that once people start receiving tickets, they tend to slow down in the future. The safety of the students is the main priority. He would support the hour in the morning and the hour in the afternoon.

Commissioner Cornwell wants consistency throughout all of the school zones. She wants there to be clear signs showing the beginning and end of school zones. She also wants the speed to be the same in all school zones. Chief Tyler responded that Florida Statutes are clear on how speeds are set. He can't change those speeds. If school is not in session, and the speed limit is over 30, the speed limit during school would be 20 mph. If the speed limit is less than 30 mph, the school speed limit would be 15 mph. Mr. Rayan clarified that they lost the flashing lights after the hurricanes. They are working to get them correctly posted. Commissioner Cornwell wants Chief to ask the State for an exception.

Commissioner Williams thinks the one hour before and after are appropriate. He doesn't think we have enough signage and crossing guards in those areas. The money they receive from the tickets could go towards extra signage/lights.

Commissioner Joiner asked for a reminder at what speed do people get tickets. They will start getting tickets at 10mph over. Commissioner Whitaker agreed with moving forward with one hour before and after.

Commissioner Cornwell wants Chief to send her the statute that details these rules.

Mr. Freeman stated that they should have a purchase and sale agreement with Gray Properties at the next meeting. Nick Gray has offered to meet with each Commissioner individually before the next meeting. Mr. Freeman went on to say that in this year's budget they allocated money to help with marketing/branding for the City. They put out a RFQ and received a good response. Currently the City doesn't have a social media page. They are hoping to create one to increase communications with the public. He also noted that we are waiting on updated equipment for the Chambers.

Mr. Freeman recognized that Mr. Brad Baker was present. His item was originally slated for the 4:30 pm Workshop. The Commission was in agreeance to let him provide an update to the project on 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Brad Baker, representing the property on 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue stated that everything is moving forward nicely. They are in their due diligence period. They would like to buy the corner of the property that is currently a ditch/dry pond. He would use it for parking/vaulting. Mr. Freeman wants to sell it for \$189,000. Mr. Baker suggests splitting it. In their contract, the 2<sup>nd</sup> deposit of \$100,000 was made

today. In the contract there are conflicting due diligence periods of 180 days or 120 days. There's also no date in the contract to negotiate the TIF by, as referenced in section 12.15.

Commissioner Whitaker asked if parking would be for residential use only or retail too. Mr. Baker was open to ideas, but he was mainly thinking for residents. He is still working on the location of a restaurant and the possibility of adding townhouses on the property.

The due diligence period was further discussed.

Commissioner Williams asked why Mr. Barnebey wanted the 120-day due diligence period. Ms. Powers answered that usually when you're the seller, you want a shorter due diligence period. It was noted that both deposits have been made by Mr. Baker.

Commissioner Cornwell opined that it was our mistake to not have consistency in the contract, so we need to change it to 180 days.

**MOTION: Commissioner Cornwell moved to correct the contract and make it 180 days for the due diligence period, Commissioner Joiner seconded, and the motion carried 5-0.**

Ms. Powers stated that they will do an amendment to reflect the actual terms.

Mr. Rayan questioned the signs Commissioner Williams was referring to that were missing. He believed Charter schools don't have as many signs. Chief clarified FDOT won't authorize school zones on US 301. National FDOT standards dictate requirements for school zone signage.

Mr. Rayan gave an update on Ward 1 Phase III which is progressing. All piping is on site. They will start on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and progress West. The LAP agreement/CCNA RFQ are forthcoming. They are also continuing to work on adding turn lanes at 10<sup>th</sup> Street and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Ms. Young-Gopie shared that they are continuing to work with ReEnvision and are hoping to have contracts at beginning of April. The Women's Club is moving along. They will provide an update/video hopefully at the March CRA meeting. She also noted that the Community meetings have been well received by the residents.

Ms. Powers emphasized that the contract for SVN expires on Friday. She wants to ask the CRA Board to extend their current contract until the next CRA meeting.

Commissioner Cornwell asked if the Mayor could extend the contract. Ms. Young-Gopie answered that the past Mayor previously extended the contract, as is. So, yes, Mayor West can.

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12. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor West reported that the meeting with Manatee County will be on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. A copy of the agenda was provided. This was made part of the minutes.

The Multi-Cultural Festival was a fantastic event. The venue and weather were perfect.

The past weekend he attended the Regatta and the opening day for little league baseball.

13. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Smith said the Multi-Cultural Festival was a great event and he was glad all the Commissioners were there and some of the Department Heads were there. The music was great.

Commissioner Whitaker agreed that the Multi-Cultural Festival was phenomenal.

Commissioner Williams asked that they put signs up on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue to not block intersections. He asked if we could put signs up on US 301 to watch for kids. Chief Tyler reiterated that it is not our roadway, it is the FDOT's. Commissioner Williams asked what the school was doing to stop parents from dropping their students off on US 301. It was answered that they remind the kids and parents not to cross there.

Commissioner Williams also wanted them to fix the lights at Connor Park before vandalism becomes a problem. He asked where we stand with the wall on Haben Blvd at the roundabout. Mr. Rayan answered that it would cost \$180,000. Commissioner Williams wants the City to send Riviera Dunes a letter.

Commissioner Williams asked Ms. Young-Gopie for reassurance that they did not include the property behind the CRA office with ReEnvision's proposal. No, they did not.

Commissioner Joiner opined that great things are happening in Palmetto.

Commissioner Cornwell asked why the Police Department can't ticket people for stopping to drop kids off on US 301. Chief responded that they cannot ticket people because it is not against the law. She wants to bring this up at the County Commission meeting. She wants to change the law. She also wants them to discuss the wall on Haben Blvd further at a future Workshop.

Commissioner Williams thanked Penny for everything. She has been a pleasure to work with.

Mayor West adjourned the meeting at 8:51 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: MARCH 10, 2025

***JAMES R. FREEMAN***

JAMES R. FREEMAN  
CITY CLERK