

MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
MARCH 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

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

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 Commissioner Joiner, 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 Joiner moved, Commissioner Cornwell seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the March 24, 2025 City Commission Agenda.**

3. NATIONAL TARTAN DAY PROCLAMATION

Commissioner Joiner presented the proclamation to Bob Greene.

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4. CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PROCLAMATION

Commissioner Whitaker presented the proclamation to Celeste Martens.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. General Employees' Pension Board of Trustees Appointment
- b. CRA Advisory Board Appointments
- c. Special Function Permit: Sunrise Easter Worship Service
- d. Special Function Permit: Operation Reach 2025
- e. Special Function Permit: MSA's Neon Night
- f. Resolution 2025-04: Correcting a Scrivener's Error to the CRA Boundary
- g. City Legal Invoices

MOTION: **Commissioner Williams moved, Commissioner Joiner seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as presented by staff, with the removal of items 6b. and 6f.**

Item 6b. was removed by Commissioner Smith to discuss the proposed CRA appointments. He questioned how long Mr. Bessey has lived in Palmetto. Mr. Bessy answered that he has lived here since November 2015.

MOTION: **Commissioner Smith moved, Commissioner Williams seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve item 6b, as presented by staff.**

Item 6f. was removed by Commissioner Williams to ask for the addresses of the parcels. Mr. Freeman provided a handout with the parcels/addresses. This was included in the minutes.

Commissioner Smith asked which part of Lincoln Park we don't own. Mr. Freeman highlighted a triangular portion of the park that the County owned. He questioned if the County was going to give us our money back. Mr. Freeman answered that the Board voted to give that area to the County, as part of the new pool.

Commissioner Williams asked about the corner of US 41 and 17th Street and who owned it. It is owned by the County. The entrance to the park is in the referenced triangular area which the County owns.

MOTION: **Commissioner Williams moved, Commissioner Joiner seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve item 6f., as presented by staff.**

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7. 2ND PUBLIC HEARING- 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.

Mayor West opened the Public Hearing at 7:24 pm.

Mr. Freeman clarified that this was approved at the last meeting. The attachment at the last meeting was missing the actual Ordinance. In an abundance of precaution, we brought it back.

Mayor West closed the Public Hearing at 7:25 pm.

MOTION: Commissioner Joiner moved, Commissioner Whitaker seconded.

Commissioner Williams asked if there was anything that needed to be added here regarding the Wastewater Treatment Plant, WWTP, expansion. Mr. Freeman clarified that they purposely omitted water and sewer from this Ordinance. Those items will be brought back at a later date.

The motion carried 5-0 to adopt Ordinance 2025-02.

8. CHARTER REVIEW DISCUSSION (ATTORNEY)

Ms. Powers explained that this is our 10-year reminder of needing a charter review. The committee is made up of 7 members. This is comprised of two appointees by the Mayor and one by each commissioner. She went on to detail the rest of the process. Legal is suggesting they start this process for the 2026 election. They would like everyone to come back with their recommendations of committee review members by the April 21st meeting. They would like the committee to start meeting in the summer. There is a new committee every time the charter is reviewed. Commissioner Williams asked when it was dropped to 7 members. It used to be 12 members. Ms. Powers said she would look into it. Discussions continued regarding the history of the committee. The Commissioners wanted a detailed history of the charter review committee to be provided to them.

COMMENTS:

9. DEPARTMENT HEADS' COMMENTS

Ms. Young-Gopie passed out a handout for Freebee. The handout was included in the minutes.

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Mr. Rayan thanked the Commissioners for listening to the operators and engineers from the discussion at the Workshop with Wade Trim and Veolia. He plans to have small group meetings and focus on one area at a time. They are going to start by looking at the inflow, and smoke tests. He will continue to keep the Commissioners updated. He shared that the Ward 1 Phase III project started a few days ago.

Chief Tyler shared that they had the annual Bridging the Gap-Children's Fishing Tournament this past week, and they had 65 children attend. It was a wonderful event. He also noted that it is time for their reaccreditation cycle, which occurs every three years. The mock assessors are on site, making recommendations in preparation for the on-site review in July.

10. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor West shared that he went with Chief Tyler, Captain Waiters and several members of North River Fire Department to the Veterans and First Responders Ball. It was a wonderful event to be part of. He also went to Tallahassee last week and met with their lobbyist, Mike Moore, to discuss their five asks for our City.

Mayor West passed out an updated 2025 holiday schedule. He shared that this year, Christmas falls on Thursday. He is proposing to add the Friday after Christmas to have off as well. They are also hoping to better align the City's holiday schedule with Manatee County. Manatee County currently has 12 designated holidays, and 3 personal holidays. He is proposing for 2025 only, to add the day after Christmas, and give employees 2 personal holidays. Starting in 2026, we will add President's Day to our schedule of days off, and employees will be allowed to have 2 personal holidays, with the prior approval of their department head.

Commissioner Cornwell wanted to be careful with the language we are using. She wants to emphasize that the day after Christmas will be for "only" 2025. She also wanted to note that Department Head's need to have a system that will allow for only a designated number of employees to take off on one day.

Commissioner Williams asked about January 1, 2026, which is also on a Thursday. He wondered if they needed to discuss this, to plan for that Friday. Mr. Freeman said it wouldn't be a designated holiday, but it could be taken as a personal day, at the discretion of the Department Heads.

MOTION: **Commissioner Cornwell moved to accept the change in the 2025 Holiday Schedule with the addition of the word "only" in front of the year 2025, and with approval of personal holidays by the Department Heads with consideration of a limit to the number of staff members that may be absent at the same time. Commissioner Williams seconded. The motion carried 5-0.**

Commissioner Cornwell noted that she really liked Commissioner Williams' thoughts on the day after New Year's Day in 2026, but they can re-vamp that, if it is needed.

MOTION: **Commissioner Cornwell moved to accept the 2026 holiday schedule, as presented in the meeting by the Mayor, with the word "only" in front of 2026, and with approval of personal holidays by the Department Heads with consideration of a limit to the number of staff members that may be absent at the same time. Commissioner Joiner seconded, and the motion carried 5-0.**

11. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Smith asked Mr. Freeman about the high-water bills. He asked when they would have the bids for the waste contract. The current contract is up for renewal at the end of the year. They have submitted a request for extension. Commissioner Smith wants the 2-year extension wording. He opined that the water bill is too high.

Commissioner Whitaker thought the Workshop was very helpful. He still has a lot of questions. The more it is brought to them, the easier it is to understand. He has seen the Freebee vehicle around town and is excited to offer this service for those in need.

Commissioner Williams asked how much it costs to have additional Workshops. There is no additional cost associated with extra Workshops. He suggested having Workshops for the meetings with Mr. Rayan and Wade Trim/Veolia regarding the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Commissioner Williams also wants to make sure when an item is on the agenda, all the information is provided.

Commissioner Joiner asked when we would hear something about the 14th Avenue Park. Mr. Freeman answered that he can bring an update at an upcoming meeting. They are in the final stages of the schematic design.

Commissioner Cornwell wanted the holidays to be posted on the website, so the public is aware of when the City offices will be closed.

Ms. Powers noted that the changes to the Charter were approved in 2016 pursuant to Ordinance 2016-04, which was approved 3-1 by the Commission, it was then approved by the residents on the November 2016 ballot.

Mayor West adjourned the meeting at 8:18 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: APRIL 21, 2025

JAMES R. FREEMAN

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CITY CLERK