

**MINUTES**  
**CITY COMMISSION MEETING**  
**APRIL 7, 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 (Present via ZOOM)  
Cassi Bailey, Assistant City Clerk  
Jake Bibler, City Planner  
Edward Johnson, CRA Consultant

**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 Shane Brockett from the new Bayside Community Church campus in Palmetto, 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 Whitaker seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the April 7, 2025 City Commission Agenda.**

3. SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS PROCLAMATION

Commissioner Scott Whitaker presented the proclamation to representatives from Centerstone.

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### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment at the meeting.

Mr. Freeman noted that a public comment was received prior to the meeting from Susan Dionian regarding the lift station, fence and generator. A copy of her public comment was given to each of the Commissioners and a copy was made part of the minutes.

### 5. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Minutes: 3/10/25

b. Midblock Crossing-4449041 Parcel 105 donation

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

### 6. PUBLIC HEARING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 2024-06

*Mayor West opened the public hearing at 7:09 pm.*

Mr. Bibler gave an overview of the item. The applicant is requesting a pool hall, which will serve beer and wine within 200 feet of residential property. The site is on the NE corner of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue West and 10<sup>th</sup> Street West. Mr. Bibler went through a PowerPoint presentation, which was made part of the minutes. The Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval at their March 20<sup>th</sup> meeting with a vote of 3-1. The applicant has agreed to limit their hours of operation from Noon until 10:00 pm daily. The pros, cons, and mitigating factors were detailed in the agenda packet.

Staff proposes the following stipulations:

- On-site sales and consumption of alcohol will be limited to beer and wine.
- No outside events will be permitted in relation to the proposed uses in this application.
- Patron parking will not be permitted in the alleyway or to the north of the subject building.
- The hours of daily operation shall be limited from noon until 10:00pm.

Chief Tyler echoed Mr. Bibler's concerns. He has serious concerns with the location of residential properties, the close proximity to CRA properties that are going to be redeveloped and the impact the noise will have to those residents. He is also concerned with the parking constraints. He questioned whether there will be enough parking, because the hours will overlap the existing businesses there.

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Commissioner Smith asked what the other businesses are on that parcel. There is an accounting service, which is the owner of the property, a retail smoke shop, barber shop, massage parlor, mini market, retail phone store, and dog grooming. The property adjacent is an event hall. They are just trying to use one unit in that complex, which is approx. 1,000 sq ft.

The applicants, Jaqueline Gutierrez and Ricardo Alvarez spoke. They have not spoken to any other business owners or residents, but they put signs out and sent letters out to neighboring businesses and residences.

Commissioner Williams noted the tight business area and the concerns with parking. Commissioner Williams asked what their plan is for parking. They don't think they will be too busy during other units' business hours. They also believe some people will walk to the pool hall. She also noted the public parking areas nearby. Commissioner Williams was also concerned with parking in the back. They will have security on site. No one will be allowed in through the back. They will be following fire code: no one will be allowed access, but it won't be locked. They will have at least three security guards on site at night.

Commissioner Whitaker echoed concern with the fire code and the potential for the back door to be opened. The door will be unlocked. The music won't be loud, they want to respect their neighbors.

Commissioner Smith asked what their hours will be, Noon to 10:00 pm. He asked how many pool tables they will have. It was answered 2-3, most likely.

Commissioner Joiner asked if they have another location. Yes, they have a restaurant inside Oneco Farmer's Market. They are also planning to open another restaurant in Bradenton. Commissioner Joiner asked what made them want to come to Palmetto. They answered that people don't have many activities in Palmetto. So, they wanted to bring that to the area.

Commissioner Smith talked about the sale of beer and wine. His only concern was them not speaking to the neighbors. He also questioned food. They do plan on selling cold food items.

Commissioner Whitaker asked how sure they are about security. They confirmed they will have 3 security guards.

Mary Kimbrough spoke of her concern that it sounds like this is going to be a bar. She lives on the other side of the alleyway. She was also concerned with trash.

Commissioner Smith said the applicants don't have anything to do with the current trash. He hates stopping someone from starting a business. He's glad they will have security. Chief Tyler stated that he already voiced his concerns. He appreciates the applicant having security and making sure that the back door isn't constantly opened and shut. He also appreciated them limiting the hours. Commissioner Smith said he lives in the Hispanic community. They always clean up. He can't vote against them.

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Commissioner Williams asked what the occupancy for that unit was. Mr. Bibler wasn't sure, it is set by the fire code. They discussed the required handicapped spaces and noted that our code mirrors the state code. There are currently 21 spaces and 1 handicap space, which he believes is 1 short for the handicapped requirement. Commissioner Williams also said he can't vote against it, so, if the applicants understand these concerns, he was fine with it.

*Mayor West closed the public hearing at 7:50 pm.*

Commissioner Whitaker recapped his concerns: keep the noise down, keep the doors closed, take into consideration that it is at the intersection of two main roads. He doesn't think parking will be an issue with the small size of the unit. They do need to have constant security, and they should keep trash to a minimum.

Commissioner Joiner agreed, she wants to be a business-friendly City and she believes the applicants are aware of their concerns.

CU 2024-06 was submitted in October.

**MOTION:**

**Commissioner Williams moved, Commissioner Smith seconded and the motion carried 4-1 based on the information and testimony provided, finding the requested conditional use permit for recreation and amusement services with on-site alcohol consumption of beer and wine in an existing commercial plaza, to be compliant with Section 4.2, Zoning Code, and consistent with the standards for a conditional use under Article XV, Zoning Code. I hereby move to approve Conditional Use Permit 2024-06 with special exception to Section 6-22(2) and with the stipulations provided by staff. (Commissioner Cornwell voted nay.)**

7. PUBLIC HEARING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 2024-08

*Mayor West opened the public hearing at 7:58 pm.*

Mr. Bibler explained why this conditional use was withdrawn. The property is not owned by HCA Palmetto. They decided to withdraw.

*Mayor West closed the public hearing at 7:59 pm.*

Applicant has withdrawn the application. No further action needed.

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### 8. ALTIER GROUP PROJECT UPDATE

Abigail Altier from the Altier Group was present to provide a project update. Everything is going according to plan for their project on the corner of 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 7<sup>th</sup> Street. They would like to obtain the small portion that is currently being used as a dry pond. They are requesting the Commission to meet them halfway with the assessed value, \$185,000. Mr. Freeman recapped the discussions from the last meeting regarding questions they had regarding what the parking would be used for. The assessed value can be very different than the market value. When we initially put it out for bid, that portion was not included. He also asked if they are far enough along to know if they need that area for parking. He thinks there is a procedural question regarding surplus that parcel. If the Commission wanted to do that, they need to have a better legal understanding of what that looks like. He thinks there are still questions that need answered before action can be taken.

Ms. Altier answered that the parking would be for public use. It would also help with acquiring retail and restaurant use. She asked if the City is doing a parking/traffic study. Yes, we are currently doing one. It is at least a month away from completion. They need to figure out how they can work with the current parking requirements. Mr. Freeman noted that they already granted them 1.6 spaces vs. our code requirement of 2 spaces. They want the same courtesy of the ratio for restaurants as Gray Property received.

Commissioner Smith asked if they approved them a year and a half ago. Yes, but they are now interested in the dry pond area.

Commissioner Williams asked about the dry pond and the design of the new Police Department. He asked what the purpose of the dry pond was. Mr. Freeman answered that it was always part of the overall design of the Police Department for water retention.

Commissioner Whitaker opined that with a vault it would still meet those requirements. He would be willing to work with the price if there was more public parking available. If it is for the living side only, he wouldn't be as inclined to negotiate the price.

*Mayor West recessed the City Commission Meeting to open the April 7, 2025 CRA Board Meeting at 8:10 pm.*

*Mayor West reconvened the City Commission Meeting at 8:20 pm.*

### COMMENTS:

### 9. DEPARTMENT HEADS' COMMENTS

Mr. Rayan provided updates on Ward 1 Phase III. The project started a couple of weeks ago. Vortex started today, lining contractor, who were doing the CCTV prior to the lining operation.

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He sent an email to the Commissioners about their upcoming trip to visit the Wastewater Treatment Plant, WWTP, in Folley, Alabama. If they wish to attend, please let him know. It will be April 23<sup>rd</sup>-April 24<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Freeman noted that there are still CDBG Residential Rehab opportunities available. This is for City wide, low to moderate incomes. He asked that anyone interested, please get in touch with him or City Hall. He also noted that during their joint meeting with the County, they requested up to \$25 million through the County to assist with our WWTP.

Ms. Powers spoke about the Charter Review Committee. There will be a Resolution on the next meeting agenda and she would like the Commissioners to have their recommendations ready. She reviewed the previous questions the Commissioners asked and recapped the last committee appointments in 2015. She also noted that the Minutes stated Mr. Smith recommended Eva Daniels to the committee. Ms. Powers continued to recap the history of events.

### 10. MAYOR'S REPORT

Nothing additional to report.

### 11. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Cornwell questioned recent appointments and the ability for one person to serve on two boards. Ms. Powers explained they are allowed to do this as the CRAAB is solely an advising board. The P&Z does have some authority and makes recommendations. She has an AGO to back their stance. There is no conflict of interest. Commissioner Cornwell reiterated that she wants that in writing. She opined that she wants there to be a large representation of their population on these boards. She doesn't think they should have one person serving on two boards. Also, she wants to know who the other applicants were for the CRAAB.

Commissioner Williams asked if they could speak to the CRAAB members but can't to the P&Z members. Ms. Powers doesn't think so, but she will investigate it. She doesn't recommend they talk about agenda items to anyone. Commissioner Williams went on to share that he hates the City's new phone system. He wanted to know how we can get rid of it. Mr. Freeman and Mr. Rayan explained the phone system and his ability to hit 4 to be directed to a live person immediately.

Commissioner Whitaker thanked the police for their constant patrolling of the City. He commended the Chief and his officers for their hard work.

Commissioner Smith spoke about workshopping the city charter, so everyone knows what the city charter means. He doesn't like the Mayor being undermined. He also said Mr. Freeman was supposed to get them a copy of the original waste management agreement. Mr. Rayan noted that he sent it out. Commissioner Smith said we need to workshop it. The garbage isn't being picked up on a consistent basis. Mr. Rayan emphasized that he did forward a copy of the current agreement, which was their original contract. Mr. Smith said he didn't get it, nor can he get emails. He believed the last

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Mayor stopped him from getting emails because he is black. He said he doesn't have to sign anything. His only job as a Commissioner is to sit at the meetings and vote on items.

Mayor West adjourned the meeting at 8:42 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: MAY 5, 2025

***JAMES R. FREEMAN***

JAMES R. FREEMAN

CITY CLERK