

MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
MARCH 9, 2026
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
Sunshine Joiner, Vice-Mayor, Commissioner, Ward 2
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2
Harold Smith, Commissioner Ward 1
Scott Whitaker, Commissioner-at-Large 1
Brian Williams, Commissioner Ward 3

STAFF PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney
Jim Freeman, City Clerk
Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Director
Scott Tyler, Chief of Police
Rowena Young, CRA Director
Cassi Bailey, Deputy City Clerk
Amanda Beaver, Administrative Assistant
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 Ryan Aikers 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 March 9, 2026 City Commission Agenda.**

3. SWEARING IN OF NEW POLICE OFFICER

Danielle Pruner was sworn in as a new officer.

4. YOUTH OF THE YEAR PRESENTATION

Jerrel Robles, Club Director of Palmetto's Boys and Girls Club introduced Miss. Shaylynn Johnson who received the Youth of the Year Award.

City Commission Meeting

March 9, 2026

Page 2 of 7

5. PROCLAMATION: IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE

6. PROCLAMATION: FLOOD AWARENESS WEEK

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jordan Chancey spoke on behalf of the Palmetto Historical Society in hopes of building a shade structure.

Frank Brunner spoke against proposed term limits.

Rachel Kendzior and John Sidor spoke as members of the Charter Review Committee on their review process.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Minutes: 12/15/2025

b. Surplus City Hall Equipment

c. Watershed Grant Mitigation Program

d. Pavilion at Historical Park

e. Special Function Permit: Unity in the Community 2

MOTION:

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

9. FIRST READING ORDINANCE 2026-02 PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT: BOUNDARY MAP (M.BARNEBEY)

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALMETTO, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE CITY CHARTER TO THE VOTERS AT THE NOVEMBER, 2026 GENERAL ELECTION PROVIDING FOR AMENDMENT TO PROVIDE A BOUNDARY MAP OF THE CITY; PROVIDING FOR APPROVAL OF A BALLOT QUESTION; PROVIDING FOR APPROVAL OF BALLOT QUESTION TITLE; PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION; PROVIDING FOR COORDINATION WITH SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS; PROVIDING FOR ELECTION DATE; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mr. Barnebey explained this would be to add a boundary map for the City limits. Commissioner Williams asked why we should do this. Mr. Barnebey explained that it is beneficial to have a boundary map of our City and an updated map would be available in the City Clerk's office.

MOTION: **Commissioner Joiner moved, Commissioner Whitaker seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the First Reading of Ordinance 2026-02 and direct staff to advertise for the appropriate Public Hearings.**

10. FIRST READING ORDINANCE 2026-03 PROPOSED CHARTER AMENDMENT: TERM LIMITS (M. BARNEBEY)

MOTION: **Commissioner Cornwell moved, Commissioner Williams seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to move Ordinance 2026-03 to the Workshop on March 23, 2026.**

11. FIRST READING ORDINANCE 2026-05 RE-ZONE 605 15TH AVENUE DRIVE EAST- RENAISSANCE ARTS AND EDUCATION (J.BIBLER)

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALMETTO, FLORIDA REZONING APPROXIMATELY 0.44+/- ACRES OF PROPERTY GENERALLY LOCATED AT 605 15TH AVENUE DRIVE EAST, PALMETTO, FLORIDA, FROM CITY ZONING RS-2 (SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL) TO CITY ZONING PDMU (PLANNED DEVELOPMENT MIXED-USE), AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN THIS ORDINANCE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (Renaissance Arts and Education, Inc.)

MOTION: **Commissioner Joiner moved, Commissioner Whitaker seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the First Reading of Ordinance 2026-05 and direct staff to advertise for the appropriate Public Hearings.**

12. FIRST READING ORDINANCE 2026-06 -SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATION OF AN APPROVED GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR MANATEE SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS (J.BIBLER)

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALMETTO, FLORIDA APPROVING A SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATION TO AN APPROVED GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR APPROXIMATELY 33 +/- ACRES OF PROPERTY GENERALLY LOCATED AT 700 HABEN BOULEVARD, PALMETTO, FLORIDA TO INCREASE THE GROSS FLOOR AREA OF A MIXED-USE EDUCATION FACILITY TO A MAXIMUM OF 384,550 SQUARE FEET AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN THIS ORDINANCE; APPROVING SPECIFIC APPROVAL FOR LIMITED ON-SITE ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION; PROVIDING FOR CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (Renaissance Arts and Education, Inc.)

Commissioner Cornwell raised concerns about allowing alcohol to be served on school property, to which Mr. Barnebey responded that there are provisions addressing such issues and that he, Mr. Bibler, and the Chief are continuing to work through them.

City Commission Meeting

March 9, 2026

Page 4 of 7

The Chief explained that the proposal involves renting out a portion of the campus as an event hall during nights and weekends.

Commissioner Cornwell noted that the details were not included on the agenda and emphasized the need for more detailed information before moving forward. Mr. Barnebey clarified that the matter is quasi-judicial and must be addressed in a public hearing.

Mr. Bibler suggested that staff could provide additional information at first readings in the future, while Mr. Barnebey reiterated that the issue will return in full at a public hearing with the applicant present.

Commissioner Smith questioned why the item was placed on the agenda, and Mr. Barnebey explained that state statute requires it to move forward, though approval is not required at the hearing.

Commissioner Williams expressed concern about not having all relevant documents in advance and asked about holding a workshop. Mr. Barnebey advised that a workshop is not appropriate for a quasi-judicial matter and that discussion must occur in a public hearing setting. Commissioner Williams instead requested individual briefings.

Commissioner Smith asked whether a building expansion was intended to facilitate alcohol sales, and it was clarified that the two issues are believed to be separate. The Chief noted that the applicant should ultimately address that question.

MOTION: Commissioner Whitaker moved, Commissioner Williams seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the First Reading of Ordinance 2026-06 and direct staff to advertise for the appropriate Public Hearings.

13. FIRST READING ORDINANCE 2026-08 REZONE-1607 3RD AVE W (J.BIBLER)

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALMETTO, FLORIDA REZONING APPROXIMATELY 0.225 +/- ACRES OF PROPERTY GENERALLY LOCATED AT 1607 3rd AVENUE WEST, PALMETTO, FLORIDA, FROM CITY ZONING RM-6 (MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL) TO CITY ZONING RM-5 (DUPLEX AND SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL), AND AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN THIS ORDINANCE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (Bachtle)

MOTION: Commissioner Joiner moved, Commissioner Whitaker seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the First Reading of Ordinance 2026-08 and direct staff to advertise for the appropriate Public Hearings.

14. CONDITIONAL USE PUBLIC HEARING 2025-03 MANGO TREE GROUP (J.BIBLER)

Mr. Bibler noted the Planning & Zoning Board did not have a quorum at the last meeting.

City Commission Meeting

March 9, 2026

Page 5 of 7

Mayor West opened the public hearing at 7:54 pm.

MOTION: Commissioner Joiner moved, Commissioner Williams seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to continue this item to the April 6th City Commission meeting.

15. FEBRUARY 2026 CHECK REGISTER (Informational Only)

Mayor West recessed the City Commission Meeting to open the March 9, 2026 CRA Board Meeting at 7:55 pm.

Mayor West reconvened the City Commission Meeting at 8:44 pm.

COMMENTS:

16. DEPARTMENT HEADS' COMMENTS

Mr. Rayan provided updates on several infrastructure projects, noting that Ward 1 Phase III is in its final stretch, with paving having started today following milling and proper re-paving of the roadway. A punch list is currently being addressed with the contractor, with substantial completion anticipated by the end of April. The lift station will remain operational throughout, with no service interruptions. He also mentioned plans to incorporate solar lighting in the area as a future enhancement. Regarding the 10th Avenue Complete Street project, negotiations are being finalized, with the item expected to appear on an upcoming agenda in late March or early April. Additionally, work is ongoing with FDOT on turn lanes at 10th Street and 8th Avenue, with a LAP agreement expected to be brought back by the end of June. Mr. Rayan also noted coordination efforts with CVS to secure the necessary right-of-way.

Mr. Freeman reported that they are continuing in the due diligence phase for the building next door and have received comments back from the city attorney regarding the CSX property, which they hope to place on an upcoming agenda soon. He also noted that the 14th Avenue Park project has been put out to bid, with submissions due by the end of March, though there may be a short extension of 5–7 days. Additionally, efforts are underway to install fencing along the northern edge of the cemetery. Mr. Freeman stated that the Gray Property Group operating lease will be discussed at an upcoming workshop and the following meeting, with the only remaining issue being related to the title. He further shared that a branding study has officially begun, including an initial kickoff call. The commissioners will be contacted individually and retain final decision-making authority. Lastly, preparations for the 4th of July event are in progress. In coordination with the City of Palmetto, Manatee County, the City of Bradenton, and the TDC, plans are to enhance the fireworks show through a shared funding approach among the four entities.

City Commission Meeting

March 9, 2026

Page 6 of 7

Chief Tyler reported a busy week involving two separate shooting incidents. One occurred in the western area at Heritage Bay, where no property or individuals were struck. The second took place off 17th Street, where a young man was injured. He noted that investigators have made progress on the cases.

Mr. Barnebey reported that the old police department site has been officially sold and is no longer part of the city's inventory. He also shared that the Commissioners are able to start filing their Form 1s now, which are due by July 1st.

17. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor reported ongoing collaboration with the City of Bradenton on a "United on the Manatee River" logo in recognition of the 250th anniversary, which will be featured on 4th of July shirts and other promotional materials. He also gave kudos to Mayor Brown for the flag displayed on the Green Bridge. Plans are underway with Zambelli for the 4th of July fireworks show.

Discussions continue with the Palmetto Historical Society regarding their need for a storage facility.

The Mayor also mentioned his attendance at the First Responders Ball alongside Chief Tyler, Assistant Chief Waiters, and Fire Chief Sicking. Lastly, the Mayor noted that the entrances to the City are in need of improvements and beautification.

18. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Cornwell noted that school will be out next week and requested coordination with law enforcement. The Chief shared about their upcoming annual Bridging the Gap fishing tournament.

Commissioner Whitaker asked about the process for developing a site plan for the building next door and the CSX property to ensure adequate space; staff indicated this would be addressed. It was confirmed that Public Works would remain at its current location.

Commissioner Williams asked whether quasi-judicial items could be clearly labeled as such and was advised that they can be. He also inquired about a post office address change and the status of mobile home community meetings, with staff noting that scheduling is underway. He thanked the Charter Review Committee and mentioned he will be out of the country from April 16–23.

Commissioner Smith raised concerns about trash pickup in Ward 1, stating that Waste Management is not collecting bulk items like furniture unless residents request special pickup. Mr. Rayan confirmed changes in collection trucks and said staff are working on a solution, noting residents can request one free annual bulk pickup and that a monthly pickup option is being explored, along with a planned bulk collection event at the fairgrounds on March 23rd.

Commissioner Smith asked about the waste management contract timeline, and staff explained it originated in 2015 for 10 years with an approved three-year extension in October 2025.

City Commission Meeting

March 9, 2026

Page 7 of 7

Mayor West adjourned the meeting at 9:16 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: MAY 18, 2026

JAMES R. FREEMAN

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CITY CLERK