

DRAFT
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
AUGUST 3, 2026
6:15 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:

Jim Freeman, City Clerk
Marisa Powers, City Attorney
Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Director
Scott Tyler, Chief of Police
Rowena Young, CRA Director
Cassi Bailey, Deputy City Clerk
Amanda Beaver, Administrative Assistant
Jake Bibler, CRA Assistant Director
Jeff Bowman, City Planner
Todd Williams, Information Technology (IT) Consultant

1. Mayor West called the meeting to order at 6:16 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 Williams moved, Commissioner Joiner seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to approve the August 3, 2026 City Commission Agenda.**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

City Commission Meeting

August 3, 2026

Page 2 of 6

4. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Minutes: 06/01/2026

b. Special Function Permit- A Joyful Noise (Previously Approved-New Date Only)

c. Special Function Permit- Bradenton Riverwalk Half Marathon

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

5. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING ORDINANCE 2026-11 GDP PALMETTO PLACE (PLANNING)

This was continued from 7/20/2026.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALMETTO, FLORIDA APPROVING A GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR A DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING A MAXIMUM OF 178 MULTIFAMILY UNITS, 15,000 SQUARE FEET OF RETAIL/OFFICE/RESTAURANT, AND 6,700 SQUARE FEET OF AMENITY SPACE WITH CONDITIONS AND SPECIFIC APPROVALS LOCATED ON APPROXIMATELY 4.5+/- ACRES OF PROPERTY GENERALLY LOCATED AT 702 10TH AVENUE WEST, PALMETTO, FLORIDA, AND AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN THIS ORDINANCE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (PALMETTO PLACE, LLC)

MOTION: **Commissioner Williams moved, Commissioner Joiner seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to continue the Public Hearing to August 17, 2026.**

6. FY 2027 PROPOSED AGGREGATE MILLAGE AND DATES FOR TENTATIVE AND FINAL BUDGET HEARING (J.FREEMAN)

Mr. Freeman reminded everyone that this was discussed at the 4:30 pm Workshop.

MOTION: **Commissioner Whitaker moved, Commissioner Cornwell seconded, and the motion carried 4-1 to approve a proposed aggregate millage rate of \$5.8445 for FY 2027 and to schedule the tentative budget hearing for September 14, 2026 at 6:15 pm. or as soon thereafter as same can be heard in these Chambers and a final budget hearing on September 28, 2026 at 6:15 pm. or as soon thereafter as same can be heard in these Chambers. (Commissioner Williams voted nay.)**

7. WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT (WWTP)- RENEWAL (M.RAYAN)

Mr. Rayan reminded everyone that this was discussed at the 4:30 pm Workshop.

MOTION:

Commissioner Cornwell moved, Commissioner Smith seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 to deny the Veolia Water North America Operating Services, LLC(VWNAOS) Third Amendment to the Wastewater Privatization Contract for Wastewater Services for the City of Palmetto (dated April 21, 2026), and instruct staff to initiate the procurement process for the operations and maintenance of the Wastewater Treatment plant in accordance with City ordinances and/or Florida Statutes as applicable.

8. DATA CENTERS DISCUSSION (LEGAL)

Ms. Powers shared that in May 2026, Governor DeSantis signed SB 484, legislation imposing new regulations on data centers, including new water-use permitting requirements for “large-scale data centers” that became effective July 1, 2026. She explained that IT equipment used in data centers generates significant heat during operation, which must be managed through various cooling technologies, some of which directly consume substantial amounts of water. Because data centers may place increased demands on municipal water supplies, several local municipalities have enacted temporary moratoriums to allow time to evaluate their existing regulations and determine whether additional measures are needed. Many of these moratoriums are for one year, while some extend to 18 months, and they may be renewed as appropriate. Ms. Powers emphasized the importance of actively reviewing the City’s comprehensive plan and development regulations in light of these changes. She also noted that SB 180 prohibits the City from proposing or adopting policies that are more restrictive than those permitted under state law.

Commissioner Cornwell questioned whether water is the only method used to cool data centers. Ms. Powers noted that, based on her understanding, there are other cooling technologies available; however, water-based cooling is currently the most commonly used method. Commissioner Cornwell also questioned whether data centers are typically developed as part of larger hubs or according to a master plan. Ms. Powers did not know if there was a masterplan for AI data centers at this time. She will do further research.

It was clarified that the purpose of a moratorium is to temporarily pause development activity while the City researches the issue, evaluates its existing regulations, and determines whether any changes may be necessary. A moratorium is not intended to permanently prevent or prohibit a particular type of development.

Commissioner Whitaker appreciated bringing the issue forward for discussion. He noted that data centers can create significant demands on the electrical grid and may involve substantial water usage. He emphasized the importance of gaining a better understanding of the potential impacts that data center development could have on the community before determining whether additional regulations or other measures may be appropriate.

Commissioner Williams suggested that the City identify areas within Palmetto that may be suitable for data center development. He also recommended involving Todd from the IT Department in the discussion, given his area of expertise. Commissioner Cornwell raised the potential use of desalination as an alternative source of water for data center cooling.

Ms. Powers recommended a one-year moratorium if the Commission determines that a moratorium is appropriate. She stated that she would bring back examples of moratoriums adopted by other municipalities for the Commission’s consideration at an upcoming workshop, tentatively scheduled for September 14.

City Commission Meeting

August 3, 2026

Page 4 of 6

Mayor West recessed the City Commission Meeting to open the August 3, 2026 CRA Board Meeting at 6:45 pm.

Mayor West reconvened the City Commission Meeting at 7:22 pm.

PUBLIC HEARING ORDINANCE 2026-09 RE-ZONE – GAR-RETT & PARTNERS LLC- 1004 12TH AVE W
(PLANNING)

7:00 PM or After

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALMETTO, FLORIDA REZONING APPROXIMATELY 0.19+/- ACRES OF PROPERTY GENERALLY LOCATED AT 1004 12th AVENUE WEST, PALMETTO, FLORIDA, FROM CITY ZONING RS-4 (SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL) TO CITY ZONING CN (NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL), AND AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN THIS ORDINANCE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (GAR-RETT AND PARTNERS, LLC)

Mayor West opened the Public Hearing at 7:22 pm.

Mr. Bowman explained that the applicant is seeking to expand his coffee shop, Banyan Coffee, and is requesting a rezoning to Neighborhood Commercial (CN) to allow for the proposed expansion. Staff recommends approval of the rezoning request and finds that the proposed CN, Commercial Neighborhood, zoning designation is consistent with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval on June 18, 2026.

Commissioner Cornwell questioned what other types of businesses could operate at the property if the applicant decided to sell. Mr. Bowman explained that the Neighborhood Commercial (CN) zoning designation would allow for a variety of uses, including offices and retail businesses, but would not allow industrial uses.

Commissioner Williams questioned the amount of parking available at the property. Mr. Bowman explained that the applicant is proposing to add additional parking as part of the expansion. Commissioner Williams also questioned the Affidavit of Ownership included in the agenda packet, noting that the document appeared to be blank. Mr. Bowman stated that a completed Affidavit of Ownership had been provided to staff and that the completed document was inadvertently omitted from the agenda packet.

Jason Coates of Shroyer Drapala Engineering explained the proposed plans for the expansion of Banyan Coffee, which include additional parking and the addition of a drive-through.

Mr. Rayan noted that the applicant will need to address water runoff along 10th Street. Mr. Coates acknowledged that the issue would be addressed as part of the project.

Mayor West closed the Public Hearing at 7:46 pm.

MOTION:

Commissioner Cornwell moved, Commissioner Whitaker seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 based on the information and testimony provided, I find the request to rezone the subject parcel from RS-4 (Single-family residential) to CN (Commercial Neighborhood) to be consistent with the policies and intent of the Comprehensive Plan. I hereby move to approve Rezone RZ-2026-02 / Ordinance 2026-09.

COMMENTS:

9. DEPARTMENT HEADS' COMMENTS

Mr. Rayan thanked the Commission for providing direction to move forward with the 10th Avenue Complete Street project. He reported that the proposed turning lanes at 10th Street and 8th Avenue are also moving forward, and the required documents have been submitted to CVS. Regarding the 14th Avenue project (Patriot Park), Mr. Rayan stated that progress has been limited while staff awaits the required permits from the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). Security fencing has been installed at the project site, and additional activity is anticipated within the next few weeks.

Mr. Freeman provided an update on the Gray property, stating that the matter remains with the City Attorney's Office while they work to resolve and clear a deed restriction. Regarding the CSX parcel, Mr. Freeman reported that the property is under contract and that the Phase I environmental assessment has been completed. A Phase II environmental assessment was recommended and has been initiated, with an anticipated completion time of approximately 30 days. He expects to bring the results back to the Commission in late August or early September. Mr. Freeman also noted that a survey is required as part of the closing process; however, staff has deferred completing the survey until the results of the Phase II environmental assessment are received.

Commissioner Whitaker questioned whether the City could line up a surveyor in advance so that the survey could proceed immediately upon receipt of the Phase II environmental assessment results.

Mr. Freeman also shared that he received his FRA certification this last week.

Chief Tyler announced that the Citizen's Academy will begin this Thursday.

10. MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor reported that school is scheduled to begin on Monday, August 10. He noted that a video will be posted on social media reminding the community to be mindful of students and crossing guards as the new school year begins.

11. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Cornwell questioned whether the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) regulations along 8th Avenue include the sidewalks and associated rights-of-way. Chief Tyler stated that the majority of the sidewalks are within FDOT rights-of-way. Commissioner Cornwell requested that staff confirm the ownership and applicable regulations, and staff agreed to research the matter. Commissioner Cornwell also questioned how difficult it would be to make changes to the plans, including modifications related to trees and other site features. Staff indicated that such changes could be difficult. Commissioner Cornwell questioned whether the City could establish a moratorium on vape shops. Ms. Powers stated that she would research the matter and provide information regarding whether a moratorium would be permissible.

Commissioner Whitaker complimented staff and the presenters on the evening's presentations, noting the 10th Avenue Complete Street project presentation was excellent.

Commissioner Joiner also complimented the presenters on the evening's presentations and expressed enthusiasm about the projects moving forward.

Commissioner Williams questioned when the boundaries of the CRA could be modified. It was noted that information regarding a proper restructuring of the CRA boundaries would be forthcoming. Commissioner Williams also requested that the Mayor ensure staff and presenters provide paper copies of presentations at future meetings.

Commissioner Smith commended Mr. Rayan for the work completed as part of the Ward 1 Phase III project. Mr. Rayan noted that the CRA participated in the addition of lighting as part of the project. Commissioner Smith then questioned how the CRA boundaries had been expanded in the past. Commissioner Williams clarified that he was asking whether the CRA could be expanded without removing Riviera Dunes from the existing boundaries. He directed the question to Mr. Freeman, who provided an explanation regarding the matter and confirmed they have expanded in the past. Commissioner Smith questioned if Ms. Young knew the difference between Ward 1 and the CRA and funding that could be used throughout.

Ms. Young shared that the Palmetto Downtown Mainstreet went to Cocoa Beach and received two awards.

Commissioner Williams questioned whether the City had received funding from the County. Ms. Young explained that the County had approved \$25,000 related to the property formerly occupied by Slick's. She stated that the property is being considered for use as a pop-up park. PDMS will bring a presentation to the CRA Board/City Commission for consideration and approval of the proposed pop-up park.

Mayor West adjourned the meeting at 8:09 pm.