

**CITY COMMISSION MEETING**  
**SEPTEMBER 12, 2022**  
**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 to respect the social distancing guidelines.

**ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:**

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor  
Tambra Varnadore, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, Ward 2  
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2  
Sheldon Jones, Commissioner-at-Large 1  
Harold Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1 (Not Present)  
Brian Williams, Commissioner, Ward 3

**STAFF PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:**

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney  
Xavier Colon, Interim CRA Director  
Jim Freeman, City Clerk  
Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Director  
Scott Tyler, Chief of Police  
Cheryl Miller, Finance Director  
Cassi Bailey, Assistant City Clerk  
Penny Johnston, Executive Assistant

**STAFF PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY:**

Todd Williams, Information Technology (IT) Consultant

1. Mayor Bryant called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, and Penny Johnston 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 Cornwell moved, Commissioner Varnadore seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 to approve the September 12, 2022 City Commission Agenda.**

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

The following individuals spoke against the sale of the property North of the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP):

- Dennis Vitton

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- James Gorton
- James Kelly
- George Settoss

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- Minutes: 08/22/2022
- Special Function Permit- Multi Cultural Festival
- Special Function Permit – Palmetto Market (REVISED)

**MOTION:**                    **Commissioner Williams moved, Commissioner Jones seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as presented by staff with the omission of 4c for discussion.**

Commissioner Jones questioned the January date of the Palmetto Market and the Multi-Cultural Festival overlapping. Discussions ensued between the Commissioners, Mr. Colon, and the applicant Melissa Burns, who was present via zoom. It was decided that changing the time of the January 14<sup>th</sup> event to 9:00 am-12:30 pm was acceptable to all parties.

**MOTION:**                    **Commissioner Jones moved, Commissioner Williams seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 to approve item 4c. with the amendment to alter the time on January 14<sup>th</sup> to 9:00 am – 12:30 pm.**

5. PUBLIC HEARING-TENTATIVE MILLAGE AND TENTATIVE FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET (J.FREEMAN)

*THE PUBLIC HEARING TO DISCUSS THE TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATE AND TENTATIVE FY 2023 BUDGET WAS OPENED AT 7:23 pm.*

There were no public comments.

*THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS CLOSED at 7:24 pm.*

Mayor Bryant discussed an overview document which was incorporated into the record. It included:

- The rolled-back rate
- % Increase over rolled-back rate
- Millage rate to be levied
- Reasons why ad Valorem tax revenues are increasing

a) RESOLUTION 2022-18 FY 2023 TENTATIVE MILLAGE

Mrs. Bailey read the Resolution in its entirety into the record.

Commissioner Cornwell asked for clarification on the order in which they were voting.

**MOTION: Commissioner Cornwell moved, Commissioner Williams seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 to adopt Resolution 2022-18.**

b.) RESOLUTION 2022-19 FY 2023 TENTATIVE BUDGET

Mrs. Bailey read the Resolution in its entirety into the record.

Commissioner Cornwell questioned the salary of the Commissioners and the Mayor. She doesn't believe there should be an additional increase for them. She would like them to receive the same 8% COLA as the General Employees.

Commissioner Jones spoke on his opinion for the need of an additional increase for the Commissioners and the Mayor.

**MOTION: Commissioner Williams moved, Commissioner Jones seconded, and the motion carried 3-1 to adopt Resolution 2022-19. (Commissioner Cornwell voted nay)**

6. FIRST READING ORDINANCE 2022-12 COLA FOR POLICE EMPLOYEE RETIREES

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALMETTO, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 22, PERSONNEL, ARTICLE V, POLICE OFFICERS' RETIREMENT PLAN, OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF PALMETTO; AMENDING SECTION 22-176, BENEFIT AMOUNTS AND ELIGIBILITY; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY OF PROVISIONS; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

**MOTION: Commissioner Cornwell moved, Commissioner Williams seconded, and the motion carried 4-0 to approve the First Reading of Ordinance No. 2022-12 and authorize staff to advertise the appropriate public hearings.**

7. AUGUST 2022 CHECK REGISTER (Informational Only)

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The City Commission Meeting was recessed to Open the September 12, 2022 CRA Board Meeting at 7:45 pm.

Mayor Bryant reconvened the City Commission Meeting at 8:53 pm.

**STANDING AGENDA ITEMS:**

8. Traffic Update

Mayor Bryant shared that she would be joining the FDOT and MPO for a speed session the next day at the Emergency Center on State Road 64.

**COMMENTS:**

9. DEPARTMENT HEADS' COMMENTS

Mr. Freeman reminded the Commission of the September 26<sup>th</sup> Final Budget Hearing. The following meeting will be on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. With consensus, the Agendas will begin being published 10 days prior to the meeting, starting with the October 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. CIP will be on the next workshop for discussion. Mr. Freeman informed the Commission that the 7<sup>th</sup> Street Extension is out for bid. It is currently in the Invitation to Bid (ITB) process with a deadline at the beginning of October. The CDBG Housing Grant committee has scheduled a site visit, which is a good sign for potential approval.

Mr. Rayan reported on an incident from that morning. There was a sanitary sewer overflow on 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue. It was confined to one area with a spill of approximately 25,000 gallons. They have come a long way from previous spills that were much more extensive. He believes that expanding on the pond, near the WWTP, would have helped prevent that spillage. Mr. Rayan also gave an update on the new Police Department. The interior walls are up, plumbing, electrical, windows, drywall, etc. are being worked on.

Commissioner Varnadore questioned the sewage spill. The EQ tank was discussed. Mr. Rayan responded that everything was at capacity. He also noted that while their goal is to have zero spills, this is a great improvement from past years.

Commissioner Cornwell opined about the terrible rains from the previous night and the overflow it causes our systems. She also asked if we could be mindful if there is available space that Tropic Isles could use on the proposed property. Mr. Rayan said his priority is the Public Health and Safety of the community.

Commissioner Williams questioned lift station 2. Mr. Rayan answered with an explanation of how they handled the spill from that morning. Lake Rowlett was also discussed.

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Commissioner Jones questioned Mr. Freeman on how much was in the budget for the tank. Mr. Freeman clarified that the purchase of the land is \$600,000. The equalization tank cost was around \$6.4 million which was finished about a year ago. Commissioner Jones shared the same sentiments of hoping they can get down to zero sewage spills.

Mayor Bryant noted that she appreciated Mr. Rayan's staff on their work at the end of 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets, near the water.

Mr. Barnebey reminded the Commission to make a similar motion as the one from the CRA Board Meeting. He opined on the possible complications of not defining a temporary parking deadline. He also stated that the reason we have an issue on the two parking lots in question is because we have noticed there is a safety issue. A known safety issue is different than an unknown safety issue. That is why those two properties are being brought forward for immediate action.

Mr. Barnebey also thanked the Commission for the two Commissioners who volunteered for the upcoming Riviera Dunes Special Magistrate litigation. He read the responsibilities of the Special Magistrate. Commissioner Williams and Commissioner Jones both volunteered as our representatives for the City. Commissioner Jones yielded his volunteered position to Commissioner Williams. This will take place on October 20<sup>th</sup>.

#### 10. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Bryant shared that on Sunday, September 11<sup>th</sup> she attended a ceremony commemorating the 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of 9/11/01. Awards were given to Mayor Gene Brown and Councilwoman Marianne Barnebey.

Some of the Mayors of the island have reached out to Mayor Bryant regarding a push for Charter Government. There will be a meeting on the island on September 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss this matter.

Mayor Bryant has been in contact with Mike Cuff from Tropic Isles. She gave him contact information for Manatee County and he is working on obtaining guidance as to other properties they could possibly utilize for their boat parking. She opined that it is always unfortunate when these decisions affect part of the community, but the main priority must be the health and safety for all of Palmetto's citizens.

#### 11. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Williams questioned if Tropic Isles could extend their lease on that property.

Commissioner Varnadore echoed the same question. She opined that if we have an intended use, they should share with the community the plans for that property.

**Motion:**            **Commissioner Varnadore moved, Commissioner Jones seconded, and the motion carried 3-1 to allow city staff to make all properties safe and allow them to regrade and make temporary parking at 440 10<sup>th</sup> Ave W and 834 Riverside Dr. W until the properties are sold. (Commissioner Williams voted nay.)**

Commissioner Varnadore expressed her hope for the Commission to continue going with I & I upgrades in the future.

Commissioner Cornwell thanked the Department Heads for their staff's hard work.

Commissioner Jones asked Mr. Rayan for an update on the restroom at MLK. Mr. Rayan responded that the restroom is ready to go but they are still waiting on the lift station to move forward.

Mayor Bryant adjourned the meeting at 9:39 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: SEPTEMBER 26, 2022

***JAMES R. FREEMAN***

JAMES R. FREEMAN  
CITY CLERK