

**CITY OF PALMETTO  
CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING  
November 16, 2015  
4:30 p.m.**

Elected Officials Present:

Shirley Groover Bryant, Mayor  
Brian Williams, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, Ward 3  
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-At-Large 2  
Jonathan Davis, Commissioner-At-Large 1  
Harold Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1  
Tambra Varnadore, Commissioner, Ward 2

Staff Present:

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney  
Jeff Burton, CRA Director  
Jim Freeman, City Clerk  
Allen Tusing, Public Works Director  
Scott Tyler, Chief of Police  
Deanna Roberts, Administrative Assistant

Mayor Bryant called the November 16, 2015 City Commission workshop meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

City Clerk Jim Freeman presented Geoff Seger with a Certificate of Recognition for being honored by the Manatee County Veterans Council as Citizen of the Year. He was recognized for all the years he has helped organize and set up for the Veterans Day Parades.

1. OPIOID OVERDOSE PREVENTION PRESENTATION

Jessica Spencer, Project Director Manatee County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, discussed the Your Life Matters card that was developed with a local firefighter. EMS, fire departments and law enforcement give them out to people who have overdosed. One side says Your Life Matters, and the other side lists places people can go for assistance. She also showed cards that list prescription drug disposal locations. Ms. Spencer said while heroin has been on the rise, we still have a prescription drug problem.

She reported the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition has worked with the medical society to provide education to physicians to help stop the opioid epidemic. They are also working to increase access to treatment.

Mayor Bryant mentioned the Commission's annual visits to the CDDs and mobile home parks. She said they talk about proper drug disposal and distribute the drop-off location cards.

Mayor Bryant said the Coalition is co-sponsoring fair bags for the fair. One side will have a picture of the City, and the other will use the Coalition's logo: Drug Free Manatee.

Ms. Spencer stated the Coalition has been working with local emergency rooms on discharge protocols. A goal is to have follow up by a community representative to help individuals find treatment.

Ms. Spencer said the Prescription Drug Monitoring Plan is the number one deterrent to doctor shopping and the over-prescribing of opioids. The Coalition is trying to get more doctors registered for the program.

2. LIVING SEAWALL CONCEPT (J. Burton)

Mr. Burton informed Commission that the living seawall shoreline is part of the multimodal project coming in 2016. The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) has applied for grants to help with the project, which includes the parks on Riverside Drive, Riverside Drive between 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenues, and replacing the existing seawall with a living seawall shoreline. This is a new concept which makes the project

unique. This includes a cooperative funding grant from Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD).

Mr. Burton referred the Commission to the document included in the agenda that the CRA wrote explaining the living seawall shoreline project. He said the CRA is proposing a sole source purchase contract for the seawall project, and they have followed the ordinance carefully. He introduced Todd Barber, Chairman of the Reef Ball Foundation, a public non-profit organization that builds reef habitats around the world, and Reef Innovations, the contractor.

Mr. Barber said that environmentalists today encourage a living shoreline instead of a seawall, but Palmetto has a bridge to protect, so that requires a seawall so that erosion does not occur. Seawalls reflect the waves from boats and storms and often times the wall will fall in. This design slows down the reflections and creates a habitat. The reef balls are put in front of the wall to reflect the waves. Native plants will be planted in them using the SWFWMD grant. Holes and portals allow fish to swim through. Mr. Barber exhibited a 3-D model of the living seawall. He said it will have reef balls like they have used in over seventy countries to create fishery habitats.

As a public non-profit organization, their goal is to create oceanic habitat; that is their mission statement. This project is something in between a seawall and a living shoreline. They hope the technology will spread throughout the Gulf Coast.

Mr. Barber said the Reef Ball Foundation partnered with Sarasota Bay Watch and Selby Gardens and entered the Gulf Coast Challenge to create new ideas for seawalls, and that is where the living seawall shoreline concept was born.

Commissioner Varnadore said this was exciting, and she was looking forward to seeing it implemented. She asked if Palmetto would have the rip-rap wave attenuation barrier. Mr. Burton said no. He was interested in creating something more aesthetically pleasing that would draw people to the waterfront. She was pleased that Palmetto is the pilot program.

Commissioner Williams said he thinks this is a great idea, but he has reservations with sole source. He commented this product has been used by Tampa Bay Watch, so what makes this the first of its kind. Mr. Barber said it is patented, and they have an international copyright. Tampa Bay Watch gets its reef balls from them. The Reef Ball Foundation uses its copyrights and patents for quality control.

Mr. Barber commented this is a unique project, and it is custom designed for Palmetto's wall. It incorporates coloring of the concrete, lighting, textures, a natural look, etc. He explained that part of the grant requires them to put in native plants. They are doing a similar project in Sarasota and can use the same molds, so they will be able to split the cost between the two cities.

Mayor Bryant said she is excited about the project. It gives the aesthetics we want and the environmental impact. This design allows the City to be selective about the plants so that we can control the view.

Mr. Burton reminded Commission the CRA Plan is continued to the next meeting. Once the decision to deem this project as a sole source purchase is approved, the CRA Plan will be approved, and then the contract for the seawall will come forward for approval. Mayor Bryant clarified that Commission can go ahead and approve the sole source purchase and contract negotiations can come later. He commented the CRA has funding through a Bank of America loan, and that will be spent on the seawall.

### 3. COMMENT FOR CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mr. Barnebey informed Commission that the Charter Review Committee had its organizational meeting and elected Alan Zirkelbach as Chair. He asked Commission if they had any issues they wanted the Committee to address.

Commissioner Cornwell asked that the Committee look at the residency requirements for ward Commissioners and align the times within that section.

Commissioner Varnadore asked for a review of Section 14, the Mayor's veto. She asked if the Mayor vetoed something, would she still be able to speak to each Commissioner and lobby, or would there be a Sunshine violation. Mr. Barnebey said he believes the City is covered, but he will have the Committee take a look at it.

Commissioner Williams asked for clarification of Section 20: Elections, regarding unpaid leave for City employees running for office. Mr. Barnebey stated an employee running for office is on unpaid leave during that time, but he/she may use vacation time and will have to resign if elected. Commissioner Williams pointed out that the Charter does not say that. Mr. Barnebey said that is spelled out in state law. Mr. Williams asked if that could be added to the Charter. Currently, the Charter states that an employee running unopposed can return to work on the day following the last day to qualify for the office, but he opined you are automatically elected if you are unopposed; you have to abide by Sunshine Laws, etc. Mr. Barnebey said the employee can work until they take the Oath of Office, but he will take a look at that section.

#### 4. RIVERSIDE PARK WEST SEAHORSE (J. Burton)

Mr. Burton explained this is a revised plan based on Commission's comments. Following conceptual approval, the next step will be the construction plans. He informed Commission that he has been in touch with the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP), and they have no problem with the fact that in 1982 this property was purchased for \$80,000 by the City, and the structure located there was built, and the City reimbursed itself with FRDAP money. The property will remain a public use; it is just being improved. When this plan is conceptually approved, he will send it to FRDAP for review.

Jon Moore of Moore 2 Design presented the current rendering of the Seahorse building. He explained the Seahorse will point northeast toward the intersection (Riverside Drive and US 41). He noted Commission had asked for more restrooms, so the number of restrooms was doubled from two to four.

The final drawing from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) was not what was initially envisioned. The change pushed the building more toward the river and opened up what became a plaza in front of the entry. Before there were minor steps on the side of the building, but this plan adds steps coming up to the building.

Commissioner Williams asked Mr. Burton if the sidewalk along US 41 will move down by the seawall. Mr. Burton said that was requested and FDOT will look into it. Commissioner Williams said if it was moved, it could add parking. He would like the City to push that.

Commissioner Varnadore commented that she loved the location and design. She asked Mr. Moore to explain how the building is ADA compliant, and how individuals with walkers and wheel chairs would access the building.

Mr. Moore explained that the building is in the flood plain. The building has to be built above the flood plain, and there is a 5 ft. differential. It will take 150 ft. of ramp in order to transition the 5 ft. differential. Commissioner Varnadore asked to look at other options besides an elevator. The way it is now, there is too much walking distance, and that could be problematic.

Commissioner Varnadore asked what the building will look like. Mr. Burton said it will have a metal roof and the front porch is redbrick with columns like Sutton Park. The wood decking is actually a concrete fiber base molded to last forever. It will show the same color all the way through. Mr. Moore said the main deck is a fiber glass grating that has 60% transparency, which allows light to enter the areas below the decking. It looks like the product used at the boat ramp. The front steps will be concrete. Mr. Burton

said the project design will be consistent with other projects throughout the City already approved by Commission.

Mrs. Varnadore stated she would like to do a living roof sometime in the future; it is an up and coming thing. She is not sure if this is the project for that, but she would like to have it considered in the future. Mr. Burton opined that SWFWMD would cooperatively fund a project like that.

Commissioner Williams asked if the ramp could begin at another location so that it could be shortened. Mr. Moore said he will look into that.

Mr. Barnebey advised Commission that he is adding an agenda item to the 7:00 p.m. meeting tonight. It is a contract for an approximately 0.11 acre parcel located at the northeast corner of the intersection of US 301 and the CSX railroad.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Minutes approved: January 4, 2016

*James R. Freeman*

---

James R. Freeman, City Clerk