

**SPECIAL
CITY OF PALMETTO
CITY COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING
November 13, 2019
6:30 PM**

ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

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

ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT:

Brian Williams, Commissioner Ward 3

STAFF PRESENT:

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney
Jim Freeman, City Clerk
Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Deputy Director
Allen Tusing, Public Works Director
Amber LaRowe, Assistant City Clerk

Mayor Bryant called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Bryant asked for a moment of silence Nicholas Panipinto, a resident of Manatee County who recently passed in combat training in Korea. He was an infantry member of the United States Army and his body will be passing through the City of Palmetto between 8 and 8:30 p.m. on his way to his final resting place.

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE WATER/SEWER PROJECTS

Mr. Tusing introduced the topic of tonight's meeting and turned over the presentation to Mr. Rayan.

2. PRESENTATION/POWER POINT ON UPGRADES TO WATER/SEWER SYSTEM

Mr. Rayan gave a presentation regarding upgrades to the water and sewer system in the City of Palmetto. A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.

He discussed sanitary sewer overflows (SSO) and commented that a total of 702 thousand gallons were spilled in 2019. The main causes for SSO are inflow and infiltration (I&I), buildup of debris, fats oils and grease, sand and dirt, flushable vs. non-flushable items.

Mr. Rayan displayed a video of the lining of pipes, the smoke testing and aerials of the progression of the construction of the equalization basin (EQ Tank).

At the conclusion of his presentation, Mr. Rayan asked for questions and answers.

3. Q&A SESSION WITH PUBLIC AND STAFF

Some members of the audience came to the microphone to speak and introduced themselves, other members asked questions from their seats.

Question: In regards to the Untreated Domestic Wastewater Spill Report distributed to her via a public records request in August, Lynn wanted to know:

- Why it was submitted the day after the Commission meeting whereby the residents came to discuss the recent flooding,
- Answers on the sheet related to 8, 10 and 12 are not correct, will they be corrected,
- And there is no name and title nor date and time submitted for FDEP, Manatee County Health Department and Sara Title III, was information submitted to them and who and when?

Answer: Public Works Department Staff indicated that the correct information was provided to the agencies during and after the spill event.

Question: With all the flooding, why is the City allowing new developments to be built in the City?

Answer: Mr. Tusing stated that the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) can keep up with the growth in the City of Palmetto. He indicated that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will not authorize more growth beyond the capacity of the WWTP.

It was indicated by staff that the only areas affected are 20th to 26th Avenue West.

Mayor Bryant left the meeting at 7:29 p.m. and Vice Mayor Cornwell presided over the remainder of the meeting.

Question: Who owns the canals between 20th and 26th Avenue West and who is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance?

Answer: Attorney Barnebey will conduct research to provide an accurate answer.

Question: Ellen Wile, resident, asked if there are warranties on the lining of the infrastructure and if there is money budgeted if they fail.

Answer: Mr. Tusing stated yes there is a warranty and no failures since the first lining in 2005.

Ellen Wile followed up with a statement to encourage more information about flushable vs. non-flushable items and the fats, oils and grease. Mr. Tusing and Mr. Freeman agreed that more information can be distributed and will work on placing information on the City's website and the utility billings.

Question: Julie Bennett, resident, asked what the percentage is done for relining the pipes and what percent is left to be completed and what is the timeline for completion. She also wanted more information regarding the laterals and relining of those.

Answer: Mr. Tusing stated that some laterals have been lined/replaced in System 2 in 2005 along with the main lines. Mr. Rayan stated that in 2019 approximately 3 miles of pipes have been relined. Mr. Tusing estimated that 30-45 percent of the City's pipes have been relined. In regards to how long the City has been relining the main pipes, Mr. Tusing stated that the City has been diligently working on this for the last 5-years. The Public Works Department will do research and provide accurate information regarding Ms. Bennett's questions of percent done vs. percent needed to go to be complete.

Question: Sheldon Jones, resident, asked what projects the increase in the utility bills fund.

Answer: Mr. Tusing stated that the revenue generated from the payment of utility bills funds capital projects for the water, sewer, stormwater, and the reuse system. Mr. Freeman stated that there was a four percent increase in water/sewer this fiscal year with a two percent increase in the following fiscal years. In regards to the projected amount to be collected, Mr. Freeman estimates

\$800 thousand but would like to review the utility rate study and get back to the Commission and public.

Question: David Potter, resident, questioned if the problem with the backup in this area could be contributed by a “quicker flowing line” rushing into the system and backing it up into this system that is slower moving. He commented about the line(s) located east of 8th Avenue.

Answer: Mr. Tusing gave an explanation on the Systems in the City with System 1 being the line that goes directly to the WWTP and located near 20th to 26th Avenues. He then stated that System 6 is the one located by Jet Mobile Home Park where the lift station pumps across 8th Avenue and ends up near 20th Avenue to be pumped into System 1. He explained this used to cause heavy backups in several locations but now “everything is getting to System 1 faster than it ever has”. He stated that Public Works needs to work on reducing the flows from other areas now.

Question: Mr. Potter questioned why the residents contribute to the West Coast Inland Navigation Fund (WCIND) but he does not see any results in the City for that contribution. He would like to see funds from WCIND be used for dredging the canals.

Answer: Mr. Tusing stated that his understanding of the use of WCIND funds for dredging are to be for the main areas of the waterways. *Someone from the audience announced that they had information that WCIND federal funds were reduced to only \$4M to assist the counties in this area so, in their opinion, there wouldn't be money there to be helpful or allotted for dredging.*

Question: Someone from the audience asked if the EQ Basin will be covered or open.

Answer: Mr. Tusing stated that the basin will be partially covered because to make it fully covered the City would need a stormwater pond for the runoff of the covered area. Yes, some rainwater will go in.

Commissioner Davis stated that the Commission and staff can talk to the County about obtaining WCIND funds for dredging canals.

Question: Creighton Beddow, resident, asked why the homeowner should be responsible for the damage of the canals done by the City. He would like to know how many homes the WWTP can handle. Also, in regards to the laterals and lining, he questioned if the laterals are owned by the residents, then why the City would be lining them. Can the City get a permanent dredging permit?

Answer: Mr. Tusing stated that he will get information regarding the capacity of the WWTP. In regards to laterals, the City is responsible from the right-of-way to the main line and the resident is responsible from the right-of-way to the home. Mr. Tusing stated that the City can do a certain amount of maintenance dredging in front of pipes that can be reached from the shore. If a barge is necessary, then the City has to at least go through the short version steps to get the permit.

Question: Commissioner Varnadore wanted to know:

- Any other lift stations pump to System 2.
- More information about the pumps east of 8th Avenue “coming in fast” and what other pumps do that also
- Do any of these flows have anything to do with the problem on 20th Avenue
- What would be the cost for lining the pipes over a three year period for completion, a five year period, etc.
- What else can the City do to prevent this

Answer: Mr. Tusing stated that the lift station in System 3 flows to System 2 which is located on 20th Avenue. He indicated that the lift station in System 5, near Public Works, is also contributing to the back up in System 2. He indicated more research needs to be done on why System 5 pumps more than the others. [System 5 includes most of the area east of 8th Avenue including Riviera Dunes]. System 5 is approximately 50 percent of the flow into the WWTP right now. Mr. Tusing agreed that more attention needs to be placed on System 5.

Brett Taylor, WWTP Manager, explained the upgrades to the lift stations stating that the lift station number one on 28th Avenue at the WWTP has only two of the pumps running instead of all three because if all three operated then the WWTP would be out of compliance. When the EQ basin is completed, then staff can go into the lift station and upgrade and change the schematics on all three pumps in the lift station. This will push the water quicker and efficiently into the EQ basin to not allow it the opportunity to back up. The EQ basin along with the upgrades to the lift station will minimize the SSO that have occurred; he cannot guarantee they will never happen due to this area being the lowest point in the City.

Charles Smith, resident, asked for diligent and consistent work on taking care of the infrastructure for the City. He encouraged a follow up meeting to answer questions posed from tonight. He encouraged the Commission and residents to reach out to Senator Galvano regarding the concerns as mentioned tonight.

Vice Mayor Cornwell indicated that a follow up meeting can be scheduled and in the interim a copy of the questions and answers can be posted on the website as they are answered.

Question: Lisa Potter, resident, asked if the City will consider raising the streets.

Question: Barbara (*no last name*), resident, asked if the pumps in the lift station will be completed with the basin.

Answer: Mr. Taylor stated that they will be.

A follow up meeting was scheduled for January 8, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. in these Chambers.

As the answers are obtained to the questions that remain unanswered, a separate question and answer sheet will be attached to the minutes.

Vice Mayor Cornwell adjourned the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED: December 16, 2019

Jim Freeman

JAMES R. FREEMAN
CITY CLERK