

**MINUTES**  
**CITY COMMISSION/CRA WORKSHOP MEETING**  
**MARCH 20, 2023**  
**4:30 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  
Sheldon Jones, Vice-Mayor, Commissioner-at-Large 1  
Tamara Cornwell, Commissioner-at-Large 2  
Sunshine Mathews, Commissioner, Ward 2  
Harold Smith, Commissioner, Ward 1  
Brian Williams, Commissioner, Ward 3 (Joined the meeting at 4:50 pm)

**STAFF PRESENT IN CHAMBERS:**

Mark Barnebey, City Attorney (Joined the meeting at 4:36 pm)  
Jim Freeman, City Clerk  
Edward Johnson, Interim CRA Director  
Mohammed Rayan, Public Works Director  
Lorenzo Waiters, Police Captain  
Cassi Bailey, Assistant City Clerk  
Penny Johnston, Executive Assistant

**STAFF PRESENT ELECTRONICALLY:**

Todd Williams, Information Technology (IT) Consultant

Mayor Bryant opened the meeting at 4:30 pm.

1. **CONVENTION CENTER HOTEL UPDATE**

Tony DeRusso, Developer, made a presentation and provided an update on the progress of the Marriott Hotel being built next to the Convention Center in Palmetto. The PowerPoint and photos he shared were made part of the minutes. They are still on schedule to open in January 2024.

Commissioner Smith questioned the size of the ballroom. Mr. DeRusso stated the ballroom is 8,000 square feet up to 10,000 square feet. They can fit 540 banquet style seats. The roof top restaurant will have the capacity for 64 traditional seats. There will also be drink rails and soft seating which will increase the total combined seating to approximately 94.

Commissioner Williams expressed his interest in touring the property.

Mr. Barnebey highlighted the Marriott Palmetto Resort and Spa name. Marriott Palmetto is the current name. They are in pursuit of making it a resort and spa.

Mr. DeRusso emphasized his hope to make Palmetto a desired destination. He would like to work with Manatee County to add stops in Palmetto for their water taxi system that is being worked on.

Commissioner Jones questioned parking at a proposed dock for the water taxi. Mr. DeRusso said there is already significant parking in the area. He also mentioned a possible parking garage that may be part of his future plans.

Mayor Bryant mentioned the Desoto Bridge repair that is the County's responsibility. There may be dredging that will need to take place. This will be a topic that will be expanded on in the future.

Discussions continued with the Commissioners and Mr. DeRusso about possible plans for a future water taxi dock and parking.

**2. ORDINANCE 2023-04 DISCUSSION (B.CORNELIUS/M.BARNEBEY)**

This topic was brought back for discussion at the request of Commissioner Williams. The First Reading for this Ordinance was done on February 27, 2023. Mr. Brad Cornelius, Contracted Planner with Wade Trim, gave a synopsis of the Ordinance. This Ordinance amends text portions of the Comprehensive Plan involving calculation of intensity and density. This will keep current densities in place and provide for a straighter forward document. Ordinance 2023-04 is scheduled to go before the Planning and Zoning Board, P&Z, on March 30<sup>th</sup> and for First Public Hearing at the Commission meeting on April 10<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Williams questioned Mr. Barnebey's opinion on the different categories that need to be rolled into one. Mr. Barnebey responded that this is for the Comprehensive Plan and he doesn't recommend rolling them into one. Future Land Use categories were explained by Mr. Barnebey. A Downtown Design Code Ordinance will be coming forward soon.

Mr. Freeman explained the timeline of this Ordinance. They have had the First Reading already; it will be going before P&Z on March 30<sup>th</sup> and on April 10<sup>th</sup> there will be a Public Hearing at the City Commission meeting. At that time, it will be transmitted to the State. Once they receive feedback from the state, there will be a 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Hearing scheduled.

Commissioner Williams questioned res-14 language in the chart in the document, which was part of the Agenda. Mr. Cornelius and Mr. Barnebey will clean up that language.

Mr. Barnebey reiterated that there will be 2 public hearings on this matter.

Mayor Bryant adjourned the meeting at 5:28 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED: APRIL 10, 2023

***JAMES R. FREEMAN***

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CITY CLERK