

VERNON MYERS
MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

MARY LAWSON BROWN
VICE MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

ALLEGRA KITCHENS
COMMISSIONER

PHIL LEARY
COMMISSIONER

JAMES NORWOOD, JR.
COMMISSIONER



MICHAEL J. CZYMBOR
CITY MANAGER

BETSY JORDAN DRIGGERS
CITY CLERK

MATTHEW D. REYNOLDS
FINANCE DIRECTOR

GARY S. GETCHELL
CHIEF OF POLICE

MICHAEL LAMBERT
CHIEF FIRE DEPT.

DONALD E. HOLMES
CITY ATTORNEY

Regular meeting 2nd and 4th Thursdays each month at 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES
CITY OF PALATKA
June 26, 2014

Proceedings of a regular meeting of the City Commission of the City of Palatka, Florida, held on the 26TH day of June, 2014.

PRESENT: Mayor Vernon Myers
Commissioner Mary Lawson Brown
Commissioner Allegra Kitchens
Commissioner Phil Leary

ABSENT: Commissioner James Norwood, Jr.

Also Present: City Manager Michael J. Czymbor; City Attorney Donald E. Holmes; City Clerk Betsy Jordan Driggers; Finance Director Matt Reynolds; Police Chief Gary Getchell; Fire Chief Mike Lambert; Main Street Manager Charles Rudd

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Myers called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

INVOCATION – The Reverend Eddie Stith, Associate Pastor; First Assembly of God

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Chief Gary Getchell

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 06/12/14 Regular Meeting – Commissioner Kitchens moved to adopt the minutes as read. Commissioner Leary seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

1. PUBLIC RECOGNITION/PRESENTATIONS:

PROCLAMATION honoring Jim Melfi, Retiring Executive Director, Putnam Habitat for Humanity – Jim Melfi, his wife Molly, and Michael Woodward, Esquire, President, Habitat for Humanity were present for the reading of the proclamation, which was read and presented by Mayor Myers, who said he has known Jim since he was with United Way. He personifies Christian principals, hard work and dedication to Palatka. It was his initiative to switch from building homes to working with programs like USDA to repair homes, and over 300 homes have been repaired. Over 30 handicapped ramps have been installed. He thanked Mr. Melfi for all his hard work. Mr. Melfi said they changed course and have become the top user of 504 funds from USDA because Mayor Myers suggested they change their focus from building to repairing homes. He will still be working with the homes repair program and they will continue to do business as usual. It has been his blessing to serve the community.

Mr. Woodward said in working with Jim he has learned that he is a man of compassion who knows how to get results.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Askew Vickers, 207 N. 18th Street, showed the Commission two bottles of water, and stated the water came out of his tap today. He stated his water has contained visible rust for the past five days; you can't drink it or cook with it. The other day he noticed pipes being installed at the golf course. The golf course is for wealthy people. The City won't repair the pipes or infrastructure for the poor. His commercial water bill and the City's garbage rates are too high. The City's rates are higher than the County's rates.

Mr. Czymbor said the lines being installed at the golf course are for reuse water; that is wastewater, not drinking water. SJRWMD grant funds paid for those lines. It has nothing to do with the water system. The City's water system dates back to 1886 and contains over 120 miles of pipe, 31% of which is over 50 years old. They have a dated system. The City doesn't have the resources to replace water lines unless they increase rates. They will be addressing replacing stretches of water main during budget talks beginning next Tuesday. There is no easy fix. When his water shows rust he should call utilities and someone will come out and flush the lines. Mr. Vickers said even if they flush the lines of the rust, you can't see it but it is still there.

3. CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. **Adopt Resolution No. 2014-10-88** amending the FY 2013-14 Budget through 5/31/2014
- b. **Adopt Resolution No. 2014-10-89** authorizing the execution of the renewal of FDOT maintenance Contract #BDU19 for maintenance of right of way along SR 15 (US 17), SR 20 and SR 100 effective July 30, 2014
- c. **Adopt Resolution No. 2014-10-90** authorizing the execution of a Fireworks Display contract in the amount of \$18,000 with Fireworks by Santore for the 4th of July Fireworks Display
- d. **Appoint Col Andrew M. Kiley (Ret.)** to the Palatka Code Enforcement Board as Representative with Real Estate Experience for the remainder of a 3-year term to expire September, 2016
- e. **Reappoint Lynda Little Crabill as Member with Real Estate Experience and Laura Schoenberger as Alternate** to the Palatka Historic Preservation Board for three-year terms to expire June, 2017
- f. **Amend Special Events Permit #14-28, Palatka Main Street 4th Saturday Street Party**, to allow closure of 900 Block throughout duration of event

Commissioner Leary moved to approve all items on consent as presented. Commissioner Kitchens seconded the motion, which passed unopposed. Col. Kiley was present and was recognized.

4. **RESOLUTION No. 2014-10-91** establishing an Audit Committee in accordance with requirements of Florida Statute Ch. 218 – Adopt – The Clerk read a resolution entitled A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, CREATING A CITY OF PALATKA AUDIT COMMITTEE TO IMPLEMENT CONTROLLING STATE LAW; PROVIDING FOR THE COMMITTEE'S PURPOSE, MEMBERSHIP, TERMS, DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND MEETINGS; PROVIDING FOR IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Brown moved to pass the ordinance on 2nd reading as read. Commissioner Leary seconded the motion. Commissioner Kitchens said they don't actually have to appoint a committee; the Commission could be the committee as they have been for the past 20 years. They weren't told at the prior meeting that the Commission has the option to be the committee. She would have liked to have had the choice. Commissioner Leary said he appreciates having a committee in place for this so there is no appearance of a conflict. There being no further discussion and no comment, a roll-call vote was taken, with the following results: Commissioners Brown, Kitchens, Leary and Mayor Myers, Yes; Nays, none. The resolution was declared adopted.

5. **APPOINT** Members of the City of Palatka Audit Committee:
- a. Gretchen Lunsford - Commissioner Group 1 (Norwood) appointee- 4-year term
 - b. James P. Neshewat - Commissioner Group 2 (Kitchens) appointee - 2 year term
 - c. Judy Wimberley - Commissioner Group 3 (Brown) appointee - 4-year term
 - d. Jeffrey Elledge - Commissioner Group 4 (Leary) appointee - 2-year term
 - e. Chip Dew - Mayor/Commissioner (Myers) appointee - 4-year term

Commissioner Kitchens moved to appoint all members of the Committee as proposed. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion, which passed unopposed. Mrs. Lunsford and Mr. Dew were present and were recognized.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

6. **PUBLIC HEARING** - 2525 Husson Ave - Planning Board Recommendation to Annex, Amend the Comprehensive Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designation from Putnam County UJR (Urban Service) to City RL (Residential, Low Density) and Rezone from County R-1A (Residential, Single-Family) to City R-1A (Single-Family Residential) - Thomas & Teresa Cheyne, owners

ORDINANCE annexing 2525 Husson Avenue – 2nd Reading, Adopt – The Clerk read an ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA ANNEXING INTO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA CERTAIN ADJACENT TERRITORY IDENTIFIED AS 2525 HUSSON AVENUE, LOCATED IN SECTION 13, TOWNSHIP 10 SOUTH, RANGE 26 EAST, PUBLIC RECORDS OF PUTNAM COUNTY, FLORIDA CONTIGUOUS TO THE BOUNDARIES OF THE CITY OF PALATKA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Kitchens moved to adopt the ordinance on 2nd reading as read. Commissioner Leary seconded the motion. There being no further discussion and no comment, a roll-call vote was taken, with the following results: Commissioners Brown, Kitchens, Leary and Mayor Myers, Yes; Nays, none. The Ordinance was declared adopted.

ORDINANCE amending the Comprehensive Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designation from Putnam County UJR (Urban Service) to City RL (Residential, Low Density) for 2525 Husson Avenue - Adopt – The Clerk read an ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, PROVIDING THAT THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP OF THE ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BE AMENDED WITH RESPECT TO THE FOLLOWING PARCEL OF LAND (LESS THAN 10 ACRES IN SIZE): FROM PUTNAM COUNTY UR (URBAN RESERVE) TO CITY RL (RESIDENTIAL, LOW DENSITY) FOR 2525 HUSSON AVENUE (SECTION 13, TOWNSHIP 10 SOUTH, RANGE 26 EAST); PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Brown moved to adopt the ordinance as read. Commissioner Kitchens seconded the motion. There being no further discussion and no comment, a roll-call vote was taken, with the following results: Commissioners Brown, Kitchens, Leary and Mayor Myers, Yes; Nays, none. The Ordinance was declared adopted.

ORDINANCE rezoning 2525 Husson Avenue from County R-1A (Residential, Single-Family) to City R-1A (Single-Family Residential) Avenue – 2nd Reading, Adopt – The Clerk read an ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA PROVIDING THAT THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA BE AMENDED FROM PUTNAM COUNTY R-1A (RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY) TO CITY R-1A (SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL) FOR THE FOLLOWING PROPERTY: 2525 HUSSON AVENUE (SECTION 13, TOWNSHIP 10 SOUTH, RANGE 26 EAST); PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Kitchens moved to adopt the ordinance on 2nd reading as read. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. There being no further

discussion and no comment, a roll-call vote was taken, with the following results: Commissioners Brown, Kitchens, Leary and Mayor Myers, Yes; Nays, none. The Ordinance was declared adopted.

- 7. DISCUSSION ITEM – Alarm Registration Fees –** Vice Mayor Brown said several years ago they set up an alarm program with a fee so that the PD could monitor alarm systems. There was a one-time \$25 fee to register an alarm. Now people have to pay each year to renew their registration. They need to look at these fees. They have senior citizens who are on fixed incomes and have alarm systems because they live alone. Some don't have the money to pay each and every year. If citizens are registered and nothing changes, they should not have to pay an annual fee.

Mayor Myers said the ordinance was passed several years ago before he came on the Commission but he was on the Committee that evaluated the program. Commissioner Leary asked if they could clarify how this works, when you have to pay a monthly fee to an alarm company to monitor your system. Mayor Myers said he has an alarm system and when the alarm goes off, the monitoring station calls the home. If the homeowner answers and gives the code, the alarm is ignored. If no one is home, and they can't get in touch with the owner, or the owner verifies it is a valid alarm, an officer is dispatched.

Chief Getchell said Statute dictates the homeowner is to be called to verify the alarm. If they can't get in touch with the homeowner, the police are contacted. If the PD is not called, they don't know if there is a false alarm. When he first took over the PD they found they were answering more alarm calls than they had officers to answer them. Most communities have a false alarm program. They had seven full-time police officers doing nothing but answering false alarms. People believe it is the Police Department's job to answer all alarms; they have to send a minimum of two officers to investigate all alarms, which they treat as valid. With businesses and banks they send more than two. Alarms consume a lot of resources and man-hours, and false alarms take officers away from other valid calls.

Discussion ensued regarding alarm calls. Chief Getchell said since the inception of the program, false alarm calls have been significantly reduced. The original ordinance had a one-time registration fee, but there is now a requirement to renew the registration annually. They send notices to the registered owner of the system, but sometimes the systems pass on to relatives. They put a system in place which contains a \$25 annual registration renewal fee. This went into effect in 2010. In 2009 they eliminated 4 sworn officer positions due to tax base constraints. This change to the alarm ordinance was approved in response to that. Commissioner Brown said she's had complaints that people are being charged as much as \$100 in late fees. This frightens people. They need a better way to educate people. Commissioner Leary suggested they work through the alarm companies to do this. That would be the logical venue. The cost of alarm services should be clearly articulated to potential customers. Discussion ensued regarding alternatives. Commissioner Brown asked for and received consensus to ask Staff to investigate viable alternatives to annual fees, and the findings brought back to the next meeting.

Regarding the information Commissioner Leary sent for distribution which he received from a lobbyist for ADT alarms systems, Chief Getchell said he believes there is one sentence in the ordinance that needs to be changed, but he does not agree that the two passages noted need to be deleted entirely. Alarm companies take your money. Every time the alarm company comes out because of false alarms due to sensitivity or other issues, the alarm company charges customers to fix their alarms. The PD doesn't know new equipment has been installed. The \$100 fee is for an unregistered alarm, where they discovered it is unregistered after it puts out an alarm that they

respond to. Alarm companies are supposed to be licensed and sometimes they are not. They don't always fill out the licensure for new systems.

Commissioner Leary said he asked that the material they received tonight be distributed for information and investigation. Discussion ensued regarding cost cutting measures. Chief Getchell said they stopped issuing decals several years ago to save money. It seems from the statute that now they are required to issue decals.

Christy Sanford, 312 Dodge Street, said she has a SafeTouch system. Some insurance companies will lower your fees if you have an alarm system. They did inform her that a permit was required. She has had two false alarms. SafeTouch fixed her sensitivity issue for free. She was billed for a late fee. She asked what she is getting for the \$25 renewal fee. The agency that collects and bills is very unfriendly and they have an unfriendly website.

Askew Vickers, 207 N. 18th Street, said it makes no sense to have a permit for an alarm. The monthly fee does not reduce calls for service. Police are supposed to answer alarm calls. That is their job. Companies don't charge people to repair alarm systems when they have problems with false alarms.

8. CITY MANAGER & ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mr. Czymbor said on Tuesday, July 1 at 4:30 p.m. the City will hold a groundbreaking ceremony for the Southern Riverfront Improvements.

Also on Tuesday, July 1, a budget workshop will be held beginning at 5:30 p.m. The public is invited to attend.

Last Thursday the City launched a new website and they are looking for feedback from the public in order to improve the site.

Independence Day Fireworks are scheduled for July 4th at the Riverfront. Events begin at 6:00 p.m. The parade starts at 7 p.m. Fireworks begin at 9 p.m.

Charles Rudd, Palatka Main Street Manager, said Palatka's Main Street Program has received national accreditation. Mayor Myers said Mr. Rudd has done a great job and has brought a whole new vision to the Main Street Program. Mr. Rudd said the Cruise-in is scheduled for this Saturday night.

9. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Brown said she missed the last Commission meeting as she was attending a FLC Insurance Trust meeting.

Commissioner Leary said the Golf Course Advisory Committee met today. Mr. Weed is asking PMGA for additional funding for work that was not in the budget. They are doing some major renovation work to the irrigation pond and system so they can utilize the waste water for irrigation and not put it in the St. Johns River. They are experiencing excellent play numbers and are looking forward to the restaurant being completed by the end of the year.

10. **ADJOURN** – There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m. upon a motion by Commissioner Kitchens.

ANY PERSON WISHING TO APPEAL ANY DECISION MADE BY THE CITY COMMISSION WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT SUCH MEETING WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS, AND FOR SUCH PURPOSE MAY NEED TO INSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS IS MADE, WHICH RECORD INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED. FS 286.105