

**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**  
December 11, 2014

Proceedings of a regular meeting of the City Commission of the City of Palatka, Florida, held on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2014.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Vernon Myers  
Commissioner Mary Lawson Brown  
Commissioner Allegra Kitchens  
Commissioner Phil Leary  
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; Planning Director Thad Crowe, Grants/Projects Manager Jonathan Griffith and Main Street Manager Charles Rudd

Also Present: Mayor Elect Terrill Hill; Commissioners Elect Rufus Borom and Justin Campbell

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

**INVOCATION** – Father John Jacobs, Vicar; St. Peter's Anglican Church

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Commissioner Norwood

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – 10/23/14 and 11/20/14 – Commissioner Kitchens moved to adopt the minutes as read. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

**1. PUBLIC RECOGNITION/PRESENTATIONS: SPECIAL RECOGNITION**

**MAYOR VERNON MYERS, 7 yrs of service** – Vice Mayor Brown presented Mayor Myers with a plaque recognizing and commemorating his seven years of service as a member of the Palatka City Commission; four as Mayor, almost three as Commissioner Group 4. Mayor Myers said it has been his pleasure to serve the Citizens of Palatka. Together they've made great strides with the end goal of improving the quality of life for the citizens of Palatka. He will make further remarks at the end of the meeting.

**COMMISSIONER PHIL LEARY – 4 years of service** - Mayor Myers presented Commissioner Leary with a plaque recognizing and commemorating his four years of service as Commissioner Group 4. Commissioner Leary said he has a long history of service with the City; his father was

with the Police Department. It has been an honor to serve the citizens and to serve with the Mayor and Commissioners. He praised City Staff, saying they are all professionals.

**COMMISSIONER ALLEGRA KITCHENS - 9 yrs of service** – Mayor Myers presented Commissioner Kitchens with a plaque recognizing her nine years of service as Commissioner Group 2. Commissioner Kitchens said it has been her pleasure to serve the citizens. She represented all the citizens of Palatka – all ages, groups and colors. As a Commission, they may have taken different paths to reach their decisions, but it was with the ultimate goal of serving the citizens of Palatka.

**NE FLORIDA REGIONAL COUNCIL REGIONAL AWARDS** – Mayor Myers said the NEFLC is a regional planning and growth management organization covering seven counties in NE Florida, which holds an annual awards ceremony recognizing excellence in several areas. Last week the City of Palatka received two awards. The first was an award for Excellence in Adaptive Re-Use for the Palatka Water Works Environmental Education Center. Platt Drew, retired WWTP Superintendent, and Dick Franz, retired UF professor, were present, and were recognized for their work on that project. Mayor Myers said the Palatka Water Works was opened and provided water to Palatka from 1886 until it was closed in 1996. In 1999 a grant was acquired to replace the roof, paint the interior and repoint the bricks. Other grants have been procured for further building renovation. It is now an award-winning environmental educational facility. He noted Dr. Shann Purinton, who was not present, originated and heads up the working WVEEC Committee. The Project also received the First Coast Chapter of Florida Planning Association's 2014 Environmental Award.

Mayor Myers said the City also received the NEFLC's award for Excellence in Tourism and Economic Development, which was received by the City for its Palatka Riverfront Revitalization Project, which includes the GP Environmental Center, the Hampton Inn and Park Improvements. They've spent close to \$5 million in federal, state, private and other funds on this project, which has spurred millions in private development. Jonathan Griffith was recognized for being the "point man" on this project and he accepted the award on behalf of the City.

**STUDENT OF THE MONTH – December, 2014** – Commissioner Norwood joined Mayor Myers in presenting certificates of achievement to the following students in recognition for their academic excellence, leadership, citizenship and attendance at their respective schools:

Lainey Stallings	Browning-Pearce Elementary
Annabelle Price	C. L. Overturf, Jr. 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Center
Amaris Mack	Children's Reading Center Charter School
Marian Webb	E. H. Miller School
Brandy Ginter	James A. Long Elementary School
Cayla Hutchinson	Jenkins Middle School (December Honoree)
Jaleel Johnson	Jenkins Middle School (November Honoree)
Honor Parker	Kelley Smith Elementary School
Yolismary Monserrate Delgado	Mellon Elementary School
Luis Perez	Moseley Elementary School
Jacob Higginbotham	Palatka High School
Jade Thomas	Peniel Baptist Academy
Kai'e Miller	Putnam Academy of Arts & Sciences
Blake Bowling	Putnam EDGE High School

## 2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Askew Vickers, 207 N. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Palatka, said tax dollars are being spent on things for which the public receives no benefit, citing the drainage work being done on St. Johns Avenue in the area of Beck Chevrolet. The streets and water system are in need of repair.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. **Adopt Resolution No. 2014-10-148** authorizing the expenditure of Law Enforcement Trust Funds in the amount of \$8,545 to customize and retrofit the PD's 2000 Ford Crisis Response Team (CRT) Van
- b. **Adopt Resolution No. 2014-10-149** declaring the service weapon assigned to Police Chief Gary Getchell as surplus and directing the City Manager to present it to him upon his retirement
- c. **Adopt Resolution No. 2014-10-150** authorizing the execution of Passero Associates' WO #14-46G in an amount not to exceed \$3,500 to conduct gopher tortoise and wetland site investigation and protection for the South General Aviation Area at Palatka Municipal Airport
- d. **Adopt Resolution No. 2014-10-151** accepting Armstrong Contracting as the low bidder for the USDA Golf Course Clubhouse Improvement Project and authorizing the award of a contract in an amount not to exceed \$171,000.00
- e. **Adopt Resolution No. 2014-10-152** authorizing the renewal of the Employee Assistance Contract (EAP) benefits contract with Vanessa Townsend & Associates for a one year term beginning January 1, 2015
- f. **Adopt Resolution No. 2014-10-153** amending the Polling Location Agreement with the Putnam Co. Supervisor of Elections for use of the Price-Martin Community Center, originally dated May 5, 2014, to add Special Election Primary and General Election dates for 2015 and expanding hours of access.
- g. **Adopt Resolution No. 2014-10-154** authorizing the following Nominal Lease renewals effective January 1, 2015 for one-year terms:
  - 1. Palatka Duplicate Bridge Club on a portion of the Cooper Building
  - 2. American Red Cross Lease on a portion of the Cooper Building
  - 3. Keep Putnam Beautiful Lease on office space at 205 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street
  - 4. Palatka Art League Lease on the Tilghman House
- h. **Accept resignations** of Lavinia Moody and Justin Campbell from the Palatka Planning Board
- i. **Appoint Tammie Williams to the Palatka Planning Board** for a three-year term to expire December 31, 2017 (sole applicant)
- j. **Reappoint Danny Sheffield and Joseph Petrucci to the Palatka Planning Board** for three-year terms to expire December 31, 2017 (incumbents; sole applicants)
- k. **Appoint Pat A. Wilson to the Code Enforcement Board** as Member with Engineering Experience for a 3-yr term to expire September 30, 2016
- l. **Recommend appointment of Phil Leary to the Putnam County Better Place Plan Oversight Committee** for the remainder of a two-year term effective January 6, 2015, and expiring December 31, 2016
- m. **Adopt 2015 Palatka City Commission Meeting/Event Schedule** for January thru June, 2015

Commissioner Norwood moved to approve all items on the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Kitchens seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

- 4. REQUEST to authorize execution of Palatka Housing Authority's Annual Forms:** Determination of Exemption & Categorical Exclusion, 24CFR 58.34(a) and 58.35(b) on behalf of Palatka Housing Authority's Site Improvements FY 2015-2019 CFP AMP 11, 12 & 15, and certifying its consistency with the City's Comprehensive Plan – John Nelson, Executive Director

Thad Crowe, Planning Director, noted his memorandum that was included in the Agenda Package erroneously stated the Laurel Street location was in the South Historic District Community Redevelopment Area. It is actually in the Downtown/CBD CRA area and located in the South Historic District. In their five-year plan, the PHA references the creation of six public housing units located on two lots in the Historic District. At the PHA's public hearing on this Plan,

they verified that these would be multi-family units to be constructed on what are now two lots in the 900 block of Laurel Street in the South Historic District and Downtown (CBD) CRA District. The PHA has requested the City Commission's support of its five-year plan and certify its conformance with the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Crowe said the City's Housing Element calls for provision of adequate and affordable housing for current and projected populations of the City. Objective C.1.2 & Policy C.1.2.1 compel the City to ensure provision of special needs housing. i.e. homeless, handicapped, elderly. Policy C.1.4.1 requires the city to allow for statutory-permissible group homes. The plan does not call for support of public housing specifically. Policy C.1.3.3 requires the city to support & assist the PHA only in maintaining condition & appearance of existing subsidized units.

Mr. Crowe stated Future Land Use Element Objective A.1.5 and related policies call for the city to regulate and strongly protect historic resources and neighborhoods. These properties are in the South Historic District. These Comp Plan policies are implemented through Section 54, Article III of the Municipal Code pertaining to Historic Districts. Various standards in this section pertain to new construction in historic districts. In particular, Sec. 54-79(b)(2) states that in the case of a proposed new structure, that such structure "will not, in itself or by reason of its location on the site, materially impair the architectural or historic value of a structure on adjacent sites or in the immediate vicinity;" and that "such structure will not be injurious to the general visual character of the district in which it is to be located." These criteria are from the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, which are issued by the National Park Service, and are typically applicable to historic districts across the nation. This is an accepted and standard interpretation of the criteria pertaining to exterior appearance and development pattern of new construction.

Mr. Crowe said it is his opinion as a Planner that developing six multi-family units on this property would result in a tripling of current density in that section of the Historic District, and a departure from the recognized development pattern of single-family structures on individual lots. He further stated the Comp Plan does not require that the City provide any favorable stance towards public housing, and in his opinion as a Planner, this specific development proposed within the PHA's 5-year plan is not in conformance to the City's Comprehensive Plan due to its clear incompatibility with the Historic District. This is his interpretation as the Planner. He is specifically referring to Page 3 of 5, Paragraph 7.0 of the proposed PHA 5-year plan. He has no problem with any other parts of the PHA's proposed five-year plan. Typically, they certify this routinely each year, but this is a departure from previously submitted 5-year plans, so they flagged it.

Jonathan Griffith, Projects Mgr, speaking from the perspective of the Community Redevelopment Area, said the properties fall within the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA). Mr. Crowe asked him to review the 5-Year plan as it pertains to the CRA Plan. This falls within the purview of the CRA Board, but they do not have the consult the CRA Board. Mr. Crowe referenced the Comprehensive Plan, which refers to the CRA Plan. In reviewing the CRA Board, they are directed to preserve and enhance the tax base of the Authority. They are also directed to promote Affordable Housing if there is a need for it. It does not reference whether it be for rent or for ownership. That is up to the CRA Board.

John Nelson, Executive Director, Palatka Housing Authority, 400 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Street, said it is his understanding that the proposed five-year plan, with the exception of the development of public housing units on Laurel Street, is acceptable and approvable by the Commission. They have not yet determined whether they are putting in four or six units at the Laurel Street location. They also recognize and understand that site plans and drawings for development in historic districts have to go before the Historic Preservation Board for approval. His understanding of the redevelopment area is that affordable and low-income family housing can be developed. As for taxable properties, he reminded the Commission that, during the last five years, roughly 17 new

homes were constructed in the City which are taxable properties. The PHA constructed 11 of those 17 units and those properties were put back on the City's tax rolls. In addition they have reconstructed 36 of the 100 units that were taken out of public housing domain with the demolition of the Frank George Highrise. These six units are part of the remains of those 100 units they proposed to reconstruct. The City committed to supporting bringing back these public housing units. The dollars they will use to construct these units are called "replacement housing dollars" and specifically go to replace housing units that were taken off of public housing rolls. The units are going into a community that has no subsidized housing now. For the record, he was told that this Community does not want subsidized housing in their community, and the PHA was asked to "put it someplace else." In his opinion people have the right to live in areas that enhance their livelihood and lifestyles, and not be relegated to other areas with public housing. In his professional opinion, these units will do nothing but enhance the community. The houses they are replacing have been burned out for several years. There has been little done by the City or the community to enhance those lots. The PHA will develop units that will enhance the community. A good example of this is the Annie M. Spell development on Crill Avenue. They are not out to mismanage property or allow residents to run rampant. Anything they would build on those two lots would enhance the community.

Mr. Nelson said, according to the application submitted to the National Historic Register for this community's Historic designation, 210 units make up the District. Of those, 72 buildings "contribute" to the standard that the historical society sets. There are 97 units that add some credence to the District. There are 41 non-historical, non-contributing units. These four to six units won't impact the historical nature of this Community. They also have a letter from the Florida Department of State (not distributed or filed) which states it is the Department's opinion that the demolition of those units will not have an impact on the historical aspect of the Community, nor will the construction of these proposed replacement public housing units have an impact, as long as the construction is "sympathetic" to the construction of current units and historic standards in the South Historic District. In conclusion, the State of Florida says the construction of these units of low-income affordable housing will not have any impact on this historical community. This is the basis on which he seeks Commission approval of his request.

Commissioner Kitchens asked if the proposed units will be paying full City and County taxes and 100% of the County's solid waste assessment. Mr. Nelson said they pay a water and sewer bill in full every month. These buildings will not be on the tax roll. They will make payments in lieu of taxes as they do on their other properties. They will pay a portion of the County's Solid Waste Assessment. The 11 units he referred to that are back on the tax rolls are single-family homes that the PHA built and sold. They are not in the business of building taxable units. The 11 units he is referring to that now generate taxes for the City were constructed by the PHA. Commissioner Kitchens said Dr. Craig Raby called her today and stated he has 2.5 acres of buildable land for sale, which is located behind the First Coast Community Credit Union, which is already zoned for multi-family housing. He asked her to inquire as to why the PHA wouldn't seek out this property, which is near schools and shopping, and already zoned correctly for this type of development. Mr. Nelson said they chose the Laurel Street site because utilities are already available. They can't afford to put in sewer facilities. They have saved these comprehensive planning dollars up for several years to plan for this construction. Dr. Raby may not want to sell the PHA only a portion of that property. Commissioner Kitchens said there is water and sewer available at the site owned by Dr. Raby.

Commissioner Leary asked why he wouldn't build single family housing on the lots on Laurel Street similar to the single family houses the PHA built in the Carr & 14<sup>th</sup> Street area. When people have an investment in their homes, they take more pride in them. From a Planner's perspective, it's very inconsistent to put multi-family units in residential single-family areas. Mr. Nelson said they have 900 families on their wait list; those families are looking for rental units.

They would need to find a grant to provide the money to construct two single family homes on those lots. These units will satisfy a small portion of the need in Palatka. Commissioner Leary said the PHA currently has over 400 multi-family units which house families. This is a high ratio of public housing compared to single-family units. They are continuing down the “generational poverty” avenue in the City by providing more public housing, and aren’t doing anything to reverse it. They won’t solve the problem with six housing units. They need to look at this in a broader scope, and look at why Palatka has this dilemma when other cities don’t.

Commissioner Brown said her concern is that the City is struggling due to the anemic tax base. Government entities continue to take properties off the tax rolls. They don’t know how they are going to make up for that. They can’t absorb the taxes and solid waste fees the PHA won’t be paying. They need to try to put single-family housing on that land, sell it and move on. The City struggles to balance its budget every year with the lack of a tax base and continues to cut essential services. If they keep going like this they won’t have any money left to keep the City afloat. The PHA needs to construct affordable housing on these two lots that can be put back on the tax rolls, and encourage people to move out of subsidized housing. Mr. Nelson said the money they now have to fund this project has to be used to develop rental public housing. The City losing its tax base is a serious problem. The properties they are using haven’t brought in taxes for a number of years. These units will bring in a payment in lieu of taxes. This pales in comparison from the loss to the City from the demolition of the Highrise.

Commissioner Norwood said they had this discussion 8 or 9 years ago. There is a high concentration of public housing in Palatka. He asked if Palatka is the only place in Putnam County where public housing can be built, and if the PHA can has looked at building public housing units in other areas that have water & sewer, like Crescent City and Interlachen. Mr. Nelson said they can, and have looked for suitable areas in other communities. They have logistic problems in making repairs to units in other communities; it is not financially feasible to send their maintenance department out of Palatka.

Commissioner Kitchens asked how many of the 900 families are Putnam County residents? Mr. Nelson said about half of them are currently Putnam County residents.

Mayor Myers opened the floor for public comment.

Elizabeth Van Rensburg 310 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, asked if there are guidelines the City can consider for determining the appropriate ratio of public housing for its population and area, and if the City has enough, not enough or more than enough public housing now. Mr. Crowe said he does not have that information; the Comp Plan Housing Element did a survey showing Palatka has a fairly high ratio of public housing and low income housing compared to other areas. He has no set of standards, limitations or guidelines on proportion of subsidized housing compared to other types of housing. Commissioner Norwood said they don’t have adequate housing to meet the Community’s needs. This is why many City employees live in other cities. Mayor Myers noted it also has to do with the City’s high millage rate.

Susan Frank, 314 S. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, said she is a 17-year resident of the District. She loves being in the Historic District. They have seen a lot of improvements to the neighborhood. The TIF-funded grants have really helped their neighborhood. It is her understanding that no home in the District can now be apportioned into apartments. They were all zoned out. She also lives in the South Historic District/Downtown TIF District. This is not what they want to see for their neighborhood.

Robert Correa, 118 Dodge Street, read her comments into the record which she read into the record at yesterday’s PHA Public Hearing held. She opposes the PHA’s plan to construct public

housing units in the South Historic District. She said when you combine the cost to demolish these structures, purchase the properties, and build new structures in keeping with other homes in the district, this seems to be a poor investment of tax dollars. Also, this takes more property off the tax rolls. In Palatka, 14% of its occupied units are public housing, compared to Jacksonville's 3% of occupied units. She urges them to consider building housing in other Putnam County cities and areas outside of the City of Palatka. This doesn't make sense in terms of revitalization of Palatka or preservation of the Historic District.

Sam Deputy, 917 Carr Street, said he is for demolishing these burned out houses, but he will be directly affected by the construction of these units. This is a close-knit, ethnically diverse area; the residents in this area have lived there for many years. Putting two tri-plexes on two city lots is overwhelming. There could conceivably be 12 cars parked there. When HUD housing is nearby, property values fall. He researched this on-line and found nothing that stated that his property value would increase due to proximity to public housing. He did find a litany of problems that people experience when public housing moves into a neighborhood. He is all for public housing; he was raised downtown. He believes in racially mixed neighborhoods. As long as they are at 25 mills in Palatka, no one will build in the City. People will live and build outside the City. If this happens, he will have no choice but to sell immediately and move outside the City Limits.

Suzanne Jacob, 117 Hotel Street, said she has lived in the District since 1967. She's seen the resurgence since the rentals and apartment housing went away. Many families came in, remodeled homes and made it what it is today. The South Historic District had to put zoning in place to eliminate the rentals to get the property listed on the national register. If a one-story house is destroyed, it has to be replaced with a two-story historically based home constructed of historic materials. They would rather see single-family homes constructed here. The goal is to have a pleasing entrance to Palatka on Crill/9<sup>th</sup> Street so that people will want to move here.

Michael Gagnon, 703 Emmett Street, said he received 67 phone calls today and at least that many emails concerning this matter, all in opposition to this. The membership of the SHNA is adamantly opposed to this use by the PHA. These lots are in the South Historic District and the CRA. Non-taxable multi-family properties are counter-productive to the CRA Plan. The TIF funds are grown by tax-producing properties.

Mayor Myers said he received written communication from Skip Lorenzen, Alex Sharp, Julia Deihl, Sam Deputy and Michael Gagnon, all opposed to the PHA's proposal for the properties on Laurel Street. Those communications will be included in the Record of the meeting (filed).

Commissioner Leary said in 1975, when they were pursuing the Historic Designation, his mother was among those who lead an initiative to have the entire area rezoned to single-family residential, returning the area to single-family homes from multi-family homes. They need continuity of their Comprehensive Plan. If they are to reverse the City's situation, they need to stick with the comprehensive plan, lower ad valorem taxes, and grow the tax base. He is surprised to hear that only half of those on a waiting list to come into housing that pay no taxes are now Putnam County residents. Palatka has an exodus of people paying taxes, and an immigration of those paying no taxes. They are slowly pulling out of a recession. They have to change the paradigm. He can't support Item 7 but will support the rest of the PHA's five-year plan.

Commissioner Kitchens said the existing rental units were grandfathered into the District. If at any time they become vacant for more than six months, they lose their multi-family use. An apartment building that was originally built as a four-plex apartment building in the North Historic District is now no longer allowed to be used as an apartment building because historic districts prohibit this use. There are two apartment buildings in the South Historic District that have now

become vacant and now are being advertised for sale as single-family homes. She does not know how the zoning could allow for multi-family rental units; the zoning alone prohibits this. As to real estate values, it is a known fact that public housing affects real estate values adversely. It will cause property values to drop. The City had been working on purchasing these two properties to demolish them, and when the City went to pay for the properties, they discovered the PHA had gotten their check in first, it was accepted and the City's wasn't. Later this evening the City will look at contracts to sell other properties in this area to several buyers who are rehabbing those properties for single-family occupancy. Those buyers could now likely back out if this is allowed as this action would lower the value of these properties. She fails to see how it is cheaper to construct four or six multi-family housing units than to construct two single-family homes. They do need affordable housing. She was very surprised to find that only 450 of the 900 families on the wait list are Putnam County families. This means that other counties are sending their public housing people here. She supports the PHA's five year plan with the exception of Paragraph 7, which addresses building public housing on Laurel Street.

Commissioner Norwood said the City did make a commitment to the Housing Authority when they tore down the Highrise to find locations for housing for those who were displaced. The City needs to help the PHA look for a location to put these units. This proposed location is not a proper location. He does not object to the rest of the five-year plan, but objects to Paragraph 7.

Mayor Myers said this request requires action. The request is to authorize his execution of two documents. Mr. Holmes said Mr. Nelson stated that the PHA hadn't yet determined whether they would construct four or six units, but the PHA document states six units will be constructed. If the Commission votes to adopt the PHA's five-year plan with the exclusion of paragraph 7, they should rely upon the information Mr. Crowe provided as to the reasoning. As a matter of legality and law, they won't be able to consider the property value impact of public housing. If it is the Commission's choice to adopt the Plan with the exclusion of Paragraph 7, the factors that Mr. Crowe articulated are those they need to rely upon.

Commissioner Leary moved to approve execution of all forms but with the exclusion of Paragraph 7.0 of the PHA five-year plan, concerning the proposed construction of multi-family rental units on two lots on Laurel Street, due to its inconsistency and incompatibility with the City of Palatka's Adopted Comprehensive Plan and Housing Element. Commissioner Kitchens seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

5. **RESOLUTION** authorizing the execution of a Public Parking Lease Agreement with Ruth Burk for 210 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (CRA Business) - Adopt – The Clerk read a resolution entitled A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A PUBLIC PARKING LEASE AGREEMENT WITH RUTH BURK FOR 210 SOUTH 3<sup>RD</sup> STREET – Commissioner Kitchens moved to adopt the Resolution as read. Commissioner Leary seconded the motion.

Mayor Myers opened the floor for public comment.

Johnny Brown, 107 S. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, said he's been trying to get compensation from the City for the boxes being placed on the side of his building for 30 years. He objects to this lease based upon that reasoning.

There being no further discussion or comment, a roll-call vote was taken, which yielded the following results: Commissioners Brown, Kitchens, Leary, Norwood, and Mayor Myers, Yes; Nays, none. The resolution was declared adopted.

6. **RESOLUTION** confirming and accepting the ranking of Development Proposals received for three (3) properties and authorizing the City Manager to negotiate the Development/Purchase

and Sale Agreements with successful respondents – Adopt – The Clerk read a resolution entitled A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, ACCEPTING THE RANKING OF DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR THREE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES IN RESPONSE TO RFP 2014-15. Commissioner Leary moved to adopt the Resolution as read. Commissioner Kitchens seconded the motion.

Jonathan Griffith made a Power Point presentation on the proposed properties, saying the City issued an RFP for redevelopment proposals for city-owned single-family residential properties at 215 Dodge, 300 S 9<sup>th</sup> Street, and 2002 Eagle Street. They received responses on all properties and ranked the responses according to the RFP criteria. The top ranked respondent for 215 Dodge is Tony Harwell. Eco Covering Group was the top ranked respondent on both 300 S. 9<sup>th</sup> and 2002 Eagle Street properties. He described contract provisions to be negotiated with all respondents, and noted the contracts will contain reverter clauses. They would prefer single-family occupied homes for all three locations. Rental would only be allowed if the property does not sell after having been on the market for a defined extended period of time. The Eco Covering Group proposes to rent the property should they not be able to sell it at market value, until such time the market improves. The property must be initially be listed within 30% of the market value as determined by the property appraiser.

Discussion ensued regarding Eco Covering Group's principals, existence and contractor licensure status. Mayor Myers said he knows the principals and they are valid contractors. Mr. Griffith said he will verify whether they are a "corporation" or a "Group" following this meeting. Most of these responders proposed restoration or renovation/restoration. Mayor Myers noted anything they do will be a great improvement and a winning proposition for the city. After discussion, there was consensus to have Mr. Griffith, Mr. Holmes and Mr. Czymbor negotiate the contracts with the successful respondents.

Mayor Myers opened the public hearing. There being no further discussion or comment, a roll-call vote was taken, which yielded the following results: Commissioners Brown, Kitchens, Leary, Norwood, and Mayor Myers, Yes; Nays, none. The resolution was declared adopted. Commissioner Norwood asked if the City can demolish the Eagle Street property if the Eco Covering Group backs out of the purchase/rehab agreement as a result of negotiations. Mr. Holmes said the City owns the property and can demolish the structure at any time.

7. **RESOLUTION** concurring with the City Manager's appointment of James A. Griffith to the position of Interim Police Chief – Adopt – The Clerk read a Resolution entitled A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, CONCURRING WITH THE CITY MANAGER'S APPOINTMENT OF JAMES A. GRIFFITH AS INTERIM POLICE CHIEF EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2015. Commissioner Kitchens moved to adopt the Resolution as read. Commissioner Norwood seconded the motion. Mr. Czymbor said he has a lot of confidence in Assistant Chief Griffith's ability to lead the Department during the interim period. He believes the Department is in good hands. There being no further discussion or comment, a roll-call vote was taken, which yielded the following results: Commissioners Brown, Kitchens, Leary, Norwood, and Mayor Myers, Yes; Nays, none. The resolution was declared adopted.

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

8. **ORDINANCE** amending Chapter 94 of the code of Ordinances to move home occupation standards from the Definitions section to the Supplementary Zoning Regulations section, and prohibiting business signs for such uses – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, Adopt – The Clerk read an Ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 94, ZONING, TO RELOCATE HOME OCCUPATION STANDARDS FROM THE DEFINITIONS SECTION TO SUPPLEMENTARY ZONING REGULATIONS AND PROHIBITING BUSINESS

SIGNS FOR SUCH USES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Norwood moved to pass the ordinance on first reading as read. Commissioner Leary seconded the motion. There being no further discussion or comment, a roll-call vote was taken, which yielded the following results: Commissioners Leary, Norwood and Mayor Myers, Yes; Commissioners Brown and Kitchens, no. The Ordinance was declared adopted by a margin of three in favor, opposed by Commissioners Brown and Kitchens.

9. **ORDINANCE** amending Chapter 26, Elections, to amend precincts, electors, laws governing elections, qualifications of candidates and duties of Supervisor of Elections – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, Adopt The Clerk read an Ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 26 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, TO AMEND SECTION 26-1, PRECINCTS; ADDING PROVISIONS RELATED TO ADOPTION OF STATE ELECTION LAWS; AMENDING SECTIONS 26-2 AND 26-3 RELATED TO QUALIFIED ELECTORS; AMENDING SECTION 26-5, QUALIFYING FOR OFFICES; AND AMENDING SECTION 26-11 PERTAINING TO DUTIES OF THE SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Kitchens moved to pass the ordinance on first reading as read. Commissioner Leary seconded the motion. There being no further discussion or comment, a roll-call vote was taken, which yielded the following results: Commissioners Kitchens, Leary, and Mayor Myers, Yes; Commissioners Brown and Norwood, no. The Ordinance was declared adopted by a margin of three in favor, opposed by Commissioners Brown and Norwood.

10. **CITY MANAGER & ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

Mr. Czymbor said the City will be holding a Southern Riverfront Improvements dedication in the next few weeks, to which the public will be invited.

Mr. Czymbor wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mr. Czymbor thanked Mayor Myers, Commissioner Kitchens and Commissioner Leary for their years of service.

City Clerk Betsy Driggers said it has been an honor, a privilege and her pleasure to work with Mayor Myers, Commissioner Kitchens and Commissioner Leary, as well as the remaining members of the commission. She appreciates and values having had the opportunity to serve under and with them throughout the years. She hopes to work with them again in service to the City after they leave the City Commission.

11. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Kitchens said she's had the privilege of working with Mrs. Driggers for many years and appreciates her professionalism and hard work. She thanked Commissioner Norwood for his prayers, support and friendship. She noted she and Commissioner Leary haven't always agreed on issues, but she always knew he had the best interest of Palatka in his heart, as did she, although they came at it from different angles and perspectives. She's given Mr. Czymbor a hard time on occasions; she thanked him for taking her questions and answering her emails in the wee morning hours, as did the Clerk. He's done a good job as City Manager. It's been a pleasure to serve with Mayor Myers, who is a gentleman and a scholar; he's always had the best interests of the citizens at heart. She has appreciated Mr. Holmes hearing all of her concerns and answering them as well as her questions, and thanked him for the many hours he's spent addressing her questions and concerns and dispensing sound legal advice. As for Vice Mayor Brown, she has known her all of her life. She was born in her grandmother's hospital. They are like family. She is the person who talked her into running for office, has been supportive as a friend and as a mentor. She is looking forward to returning to City service on the other side of the podium, which is where she approached the City's business from prior to coming on the Commission.

Commissioner Brown said her daughter had the idea of bringing the Globetrotters to Palatka, which she did. This went very well; the gym was full. In the future they will have more people coming here to make Palatka a destination. She wished everyone a happy holiday season.

Mr. Holmes said he's enjoyed working with everyone on the Commission. In the entire time he's worked with all of them he's never had a doubt that any of them were working for the betterment of Palatka and in the citizens' best interests. Serving on the City Commission is rewarding, but less so due to the trials and tribulations of public service. He's appreciated their service.

Commissioner Leary said it's been an honor to grow up in Palatka. He brought a different perspective to the Commission, as for the prior 25 years he was on the other side of the dais making presentations on behalf of his clients. He ran for office to bring the benefit of his background and experience to the Commission. He believes the City is in much better shape today than it was four years ago, and said Mayor Myers gets a lot of credit for that. He's proud to have served with him and the other Commissioners. He will continue to work on behalf of the City and County and may run for higher office in the future, at the state or federal level. He remains passionate about neighborhood revitalization and lowering the millage rate. He hopes the new Commission will look seriously at adopting a Fire Assessment Fee.

Commissioner Norwood thanked Commissioner Kitchens, Commissioner Leary and Mayor Myers for their service. They have helped move the City forward over the past four years. They have been sincere in their efforts and made sure the City is now in a better place than they found it. He thanked them for their vision and displays of leadership and for having a caring attitude for the concerns of citizens. As the Commission sits today, it is very diverse. They have different backgrounds and each bring something different to the table. He's enjoyed serving with them and appreciates the friendships they have fostered. They have all served with integrity. He knows they all care about this community. He congratulated Mayor Myers on his leadership and representation of the office of Mayor.

Mayor Myers said it's been his honor and privilege to serve the City and its citizens. It's been challenging, stressful, rewarding and enjoyable. They all work for the benefit of the citizens, albeit from different perspectives and directions. All of his decisions have been made with the tenet of doing the very best for the citizens. The end goal of government should be to enhance the quality of life for all. He appreciates the competence, cooperation and professionalism of City Staff, citing Michael Czymbor, Betsy Driggers, Matt Reynolds, Chief Lambert, Chief Getchell, Mr. Holmes, Jonathan Griffith, Thad Crowe, and Charles Rudd, as well as all the department heads and their staff. He believes Palatka is a better place because of all of them.

As for incoming commissioners, Mayor Myers said he will help them in any way he can, and urged them to rely on the expertise and experience of City Staff. He looks forward to their success in the future. He urged the City to continue the downtown revitalization projects now underway. This is the key to reviving Palatka; it is vital that this work continue. Their greatest single asset is the St. Johns River and they must capitalize on it. He appreciates being able to serve the citizens, and believes he leaves the City in better shape than he found it.

12. **ADJOURN** – There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned by Mayor Myers at 8:07 p.m. upon a motion by Commissioners Kitchens and Brown.

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