

TERRILL L. HILL
MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

MARY LAWSON BROWN
VICE MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

RUFUS J. BOROM
COMMISSIONER

JUSTIN R. CAMPBELL
COMMISSIONER

JAMES NORWOOD, JR.
COMMISSIONER



CITY of *Palatka* FLORIDA

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

TERRY K. SUGGS
CITY MANAGER

BETSY JORDAN DRIGGERS
CITY CLERK

MATTHEW D. REYNOLDS
FINANCE DIRECTOR

JAMES A. GRIFFITH
INTERIM CHIEF OF POLICE

MICHAEL LAMBERT
CHIEF FIRE DEPT.

DONALD E. HOLMES
CITY ATTORNEY

MINUTES CITY OF PALATKA WORKSHOP MEETING July 23, 2015 – 5:00 p.m.

Proceedings of a workshop meeting of the City Commission of the City of Palatka, Florida, held on the 23rd day of July, 2015.

PRESENT: Mayor Terrill L. Hill
Commissioner Mary Lawson Brown
Commissioner Rufus Borom
Commissioner Justin Campbell
Commissioner James Norwood, Jr.

Also Present: City Attorney Donald E. Holmes; City Clerk Betsy Jordan Driggers; Finance Director Matt Reynolds; Interim Police Chief James Griffith; Planning Director Thad Crowe; Fire Chief Mike Lambert, Projects Manager Jonathan Griffith

CALL TO ORDER & Reading of Workshop Meeting Call – Mayor Hill called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and read the following workshop meeting call, which was issued on July 17, 2015:

**TO COMMISSIONERS: MARY LAWSON BROWN, RUFUS BOROM,
JUSTIN CAMPBELL AND JAMES NORWOOD, Jr.:**

You are hereby notified that a Workshop Meeting of the Palatka City Commission is called to be held on Thursday, July 23, 2015, at the regular meeting place of the Palatka City Commission, Palatka City Hall, 201 N. 2nd Street, Palatka, Florida, to commence at 5:00 p.m.

The purpose of the workshop meeting is to hear and discuss a presentation by representatives of Palatka Main Street.

/s/ Terrill L. Hill
Terrill L. Hill, MAYOR

The following commissioners acknowledged receipt of a copy of the foregoing notice of a Workshop meeting on the 17th day of July, 2015.

/s/ Mary Lawson Brown
COMMISSIONER

/s/ Justin Campbell
COMMISSIONER

/s/ James Norwood, Jr.
COMMISSIONER

/s/ Rufus Borom
COMMISSIONER

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Vice Mayor Mary Lawson Brown

1. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** –There were none.
2. **MAIN STREET PRESENTATION:** Jerry Hafner, 122 Hilty Lane, EP, President, Palatka Main Street Inc., narrated the PowerPoint presentation on Palatka Main Street. He said Main Street is a grass-roots approach in the revitalization of Palatka's downtown and the waterfront by bringing all stakeholders to the table to work together. It is run on volunteerism. It operates on a four-point approach guided by eight principles. The approaches are:
 - **Organization** – Establishes consensus and cooperation of stakeholders by building partnerships among various groups that have a stake on commercial development with a goal of getting everyone working towards the same goal. The program incorporates a wide range of perspectives. This is a volunteer-driven effort supported by a paid Main Street Manager.
 - **Promotion** – Creates a positive image of Downtown to renew community pride. A variety of tools helps to rekindle vitality of the community. Mr. Hafner related a story of a city manager from another community who was very impressed with Palatka's program.
 - **Design** – Gets Main Street in top physical shape and preserves its historic character to provide a safe shopping environment by taking advantage of all physical characteristics.
 - **Economic Development** – Strengthens existing economic assets and diversifies economic base. Success communities accomplish this by retaining and expanding existing business and attracting new business that the market can support.

Commissioner Brown asked what type of marketing they are currently doing and how effective they believe that is.

A slide was shown describing the makeup of the Board of Directors, liaisons, and forms of communications including Facebook and website, newsletters, members, volunteer recruitment, etc. They also support other activities that they don't sponsor such as Blue Crab Festival, Azalea, bass tournaments, parades, and other activities that are centered around and support activity downtown. Promotions includes sponsorship of 3rd Friday street parties, which have been mostly successful and getting bigger and greater. They also sponsor the 4th Saturday cruise-in. They sponsor the tree lights, banners, table-top information, the plien air art banner program and other programs. They put out an event calendar on the website quarterly. Commissioner Norwood said Thomasville, GA puts out an annual calendar that is posted at every hotel, restaurant and store. The design aspect promotes murals, clean-up dates, landscaping and streetscaping, façade and BIG grants, trees and public art.

The eight Main Street principals are Comprehensive, Incremental, Self-Help, Partnerships, Identify and Capitalize on current assets, Quality, Change and Implementation. They build up their events incrementally. As to self-help, no one else will save their Main Street area. Partnerships are formed between public and private agencies as they both have an interest in the revitalization of the Main Street area. They are seeking more corporate members. As to capitalizing on assets, they have some very unique assets such as the St. Johns River. Quality means capitalization on improvement of design and making the area impressive. As to Change, skeptics turn into believers and then help turn things around. Ideally, as public perception changes, more partners will help them achieve their objectives. They are working hard to change people's perception about Palatka and shopping in and supporting local business. As to implementation, Main Street must show visible results that can only come from completed projects. Some of these are attracting and promoting new businesses. They have lost some, but they have brought many in through contact and support.

A slide was shown which shows how all the individual groups and organizations have input into the revitalization effort through the Main Street organizations. Mr. Hafner said their board has incorporated a lot of these.

They have developed a Vision Statement which was shown on the following slide based upon the principal that Main Street should be the soul of the community.

The Main Street Mission Statement is to assist in the preservation and revitalization of historic downtown Palatka and for the benefit and enjoyment of all.

As to "Who is Main Street," Mr. Hafner said the stakeholders are everyone in Palatka. For this to happen they have to reach out to and communicate with all these different groups and find out how they can help each other to achieve their goals.

Slides showing stakeholders, which is where they get much of their funding, and volunteers, which is what drives Main Street and is its strength, were discussed. Mr. Hafner said this covers those four areas. Without the volunteers, the Main Street goals will never be achieved. They need to attract more volunteers to help accomplish their goals. They have their Board of Directors whose members are elected by the various volunteer groups.

A slide was shown on Board Organizational Structure. The Executive Committee works with the Main Street Manager and City Manager, and they oversee the four subcommittees and various stakeholders. They do need another representative appointed from the City; Mr. Czymbor was the former City representative.

The one part of their program that is not in alignment with the model program is the Main Street Manager, who should be independent of the City and not a direct City employee. Not every Main Street Program is set up that way. The primary reason is that all the other stakeholders deal with the City anyway, and they want to deal with someone who is not directly controlled by the City. They can do this through a contract with the Main Street Board, who would hire and oversee the Main Street Manager. Deland operates in this manner; they have a contract with the CRA for funding.

Mr. Hafner invited the members of the Commission to attend any Board Meeting, saying it is a good opportunity to gain first-hand information.

A slide was shown entitled "Distinguishing the Missions and Roles," which lists the missions and roles of the CRA, Palatka Main Street, Downtown Palatka, Inc., and Putnam County Chamber of Commerce.

A slide was shown on the Main Street Funding Model, which is recommended by the national model. The next two slides showed where the program was during 2012-13. A slide shows the Palatka Main Street Budget for 2014-15. The next four slides show the goals and types of activities the four major committees work on and try to accomplish. The Organization Committee runs the organization. The Promotions Committee handles marketing and events. Economic Development works with prospective businesses and such. The Design Committee is an important committee; this is headed up by Robbie Correa. The Design Committee's Work Plan slide was shown. They had put together a "Wayfinding" Committee at one time. This was originally going to cost around \$32,000 and they never did accomplish it, but they have designed a series of wayfinding signs to direct people into the community. It is waiting for funding and implementation. Mr. Hafner said the four-point approach is a proven program and works in many communities. It is important that this is an "incremental" program and is accomplished in baby steps.

Mr. Hafner said the “summary” discusses the new programs and events initiated by Charles Rudd, and noted it was his leadership that got the Main Street organization going. They must search for a dynamic Main Street Manager to direct the efforts of the Main Street volunteer corps. Mr. Hafner noted Mr. Rudd did a lot of the lighting work in his spare time and started up many events, including 3rd Fridays, Wine Strolls, the annual bicycle festival and Azalea City Cruiser Cruise-ins. They would like to get back into the First Friday breakfasts on the first Friday of the month at Magnolia Café. The Wine Stroll has proven to be a great event.

3. DISCUSSION AND COMMENTS

Mayor Hill asked if there has ever been a “needs survey” done. Mr. Hafner was not aware of one. Commissioner Brown said UF did one several decades ago and they published a needs assessment. Mayor Hill asked if they have done anything internally to determine the buying patterns in Palatka, such as surveys in a written form. Mr. Hafner said they looked at hiring a consultant a few years ago. Mayor Hill said he has two marketing degrees and will provide them with the information on how to do this. He said there is a void in Palatka from a business standpoint of trying to sustain business in downtown in that they have not done grassroots homework in the community. They don’t reach out to citizens and churches from different areas. The largest consumer of luxury items in the country are “poor” people. The majority of consumers in Palatka purchase these items out of town. They need to have something for sale that meets those needs. They have not identified the needs of the consumer and then paired those up with entrepreneurs. You can’t sustain the business community by attracting from the outside; they have to shore up their local base. Until they do that, and reach out to local people and meet their needs, they are missing dollars that end up going out of town. They cannot make an educated decision without data. They can pair up with any area college to do these studies.

Mayor Hill said he’s received communications about the 3rd Friday parties. They only happen with the businesses are closed. If they want to attract people to business, they need to change the times on these to Saturdays when businesses are open. They’ve done nothing to attract churches. When everything is alcohol related, it is difficult to bring families in. In order to attract tourism they need entertainment, but they also need to be family oriented, and reach multiple target markets. Mr. Hafner said they have a good volunteer force and can work on these points. Mayor Hill said most of the people in Palatka want the community to remain small, but they also want to have all the essentials provided locally. This is difficult to do on a wholesale basis, but they can work towards it. Discussion ensued regarding using area universities to do studies as part of student projects. Commissioner Brown said Downtown Palatka can provide resources. She brought back information on economic development based upon attracting certain anchor stores, which attract other stores. She pointed out they no longer have a men’s clothing store here other than JC Penney’s. She’d like to see Main Street partner with Downtown Palatka; these organizations are going after the same things. Mayor Hill said merchants are essential to downtown revitalization. Discussion ensued on the benefits of uniform merchant hours. Ms. Correa said they have been discussing this internally and with DPI. Discussion ensued on demographics and synergy downtown. Commissioner Norwood related his experience with a Wednesday Food Festival held in Green Bay, WI.

Regarding Palatka Main Street separating from the City, Commissioner Borom asked how they would pay the Main Street Manger. Mr. Hafner said they would do so through a contract with the CRA which would fund the position. Main Street would be responsible for hiring and supervising the Main Street Manager. As to measurement of success of events, they gather information from the participants and store owners that are open. The Wine Stroll is measured by the number of tickets sold. Success is measured by attendance. He does not have any stats available tonight but they can provide data on number of businesses brought in and revenue realized. Commissioner Brown said she will distribute an article written about Palatka by a Wellington resident.

Commission discussion ensued regarding follow-up to this workshop. Mayor Hill volunteered to be Commission Liaison to Palatka Main Street and will follow up with Mr. Hafner. He said he taught at Bethune-Cookman School of Business. They have a satellite campus in Hastings. They can look at putting those partnerships together. Mr. Hafner said they need to get a Main Street Manager on board soon. Mayor Hill said they need to be sure that within that description they need to include the community in a more involved way than they historically have been included.

4. **ADJOURN** - There being no further matters to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Hill.

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