

**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

**JASON L. SHAW, SR.**  
CHIEF OF POLICE

**MICHAEL LAMBERT**  
CHIEF FIRE DEPT

**DONALD E. HOLMES**  
CITY ATTORNEY

## MINUTES CITY OF PALATKA March 10, 2016

Proceedings of a Regular meeting of the City Commission of the City of Palatka, Florida, held on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2016.

**PRESENT:**

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

Also Present: City Manager Terry Suggs; City Attorney Donald E. Holmes; City Clerk Betsy Jordan Driggers; Finance Director Matt Reynolds; Police Chief Jason Shaw; Fire Chief Mike Lambert; Planning Director Thad Crowe; Airport Manager John Youell, Grants Administrator Jonathan Griffith

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

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**– The Reverend John Iskat, Pastor; Faith Baptist Church

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – 2/11/16 – Commissioner Campbell moved to adopt the minutes as read. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

### 1. PUBLIC RECOGNITION/PRESENTATIONS

**PROCLAMATION** – Women's History Month – Nancy Harris was present to receive the Proclamation, which was read and issued by Mayor Hill, who also presented her with a plaque recognizing her as Distinguished .... Mrs. Harris said women were made to serve and it's nice when they can reach out and serve as mothers to the community. It has been a blessing for her to serve this community. She has enjoyed her career in public service. She has worked with the Commission for many years on different committees; she has served with Vice Mayor Brown and former Mayor Tim Smith on numerous state and regional committees.

**PROCLAMATION** – Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month – Mary Garcia, Putnam Co. Health Dept. was present to receive the Proclamation, which was read and presented by Mayor Hill. Mrs. Garcia said Saturday a Cancer Survivorship Event will be hosted on Saturday by The Cancer Center. They are expecting 3,000 survivors and their families to attend. The theme is "War on Cancer." The public is invited to learn about cancer prevention and screening.

**PROCLAMATION** – Brain Awareness Week – March 14 through 20 – Members of the Pilot Club of Palatka were present to receive the Proclamation, which was read and issued by Mayor Hill. Barbee McKinney, President, said Pilot Club supports E. H. Miller School Projects as well as other brain-related educational projects, and they provide a scholarship to a worthy student who is going into a brain-related field.

**QUORUM** - Vice Mayor Brown left the meeting to attend the Boy Scouts of America's Ceremony at 6:15 p.m. A quorum remained.

**INTRODUCTION** – Leslie Dougher, Candidate, State House District 19, introduced herself to the Community and said she took the City's infrastructure and water report to Tallahassee last month. The City has not had leadership in the last 8 years; she would like to provide that to Putnam County and deliver help and aid at the State level.

**STUDENT OF THE MONTH – March, 2016** – Commissioner Campbell joined Mayor Hill in presenting certificates to the following students in recognition of academic excellence, leadership, citizenship and attendance at their respective schools:

Madeline Rotenberry	Browning Pearce Elementary School
Rylee Kenyon	C. L. Overturf, Jr. 6th Grade Center
Audrey Scranton	Children's Reading Center Charter School
Dustin Hawkins	E. H. Miller School
Jason Purcell	James A. Long Elementary School
Colten Eddins	Jenkins Middle School
Olivia Wilkenson	Kelley Smith Elementary School
Emma Mills	Mellon Elementary School
George Coupal	Moseley Elementary School
Derris Lee	Palatka High School
Luke Tincher	Peniel Baptist Academy
Leslie Sims	Putnam Academy of Arts and Sciences
Kelly Ann Fox	Putnam Edge High School

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – (limited to 3 minutes – no action will be taken on topics of discussion)  
Cody Burke, President Street, introduced members of his FloArts student-based Club. Their Empty Bowls event is being sponsored by Florida School of the Arts and Beef O'Brady's. All money raised is going to the people who sponsor backpacks of food for school children. They want to put back into the community and bring youthful art back into the community. Mayor Hill congratulated them on giving back to the Community and said they are always looking for opportunities to partner with Florida School of the Arts. At Mayor Hill's request, each member introduced themselves and stated where they were from. Mr. Burke said they have 17 members; some couldn't be here tonight. They will provide specific information on events at the next meeting. Commissioner Campbell said if it weren't for the Backpacks of Food program, some of his students wouldn't have meals on weekends. Parents can sign their children up for the program.
3. **CONSENT AGENDA**
  - a. **Adopt Resolution No. 2016-12-20** authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute and attest Change Order No. 8 with Scherer Construction of North Florida, LLC in the amount of \$9,452.00 to provide for necessary ingress and egress per the Florida Building Code associated with hangar improvements at the Palatka Municipal Airport (100% grant funded)
  - b. **Adopt Resolution No. 2016-12-21** authorizing reduction of the Code Enforcement fine/lien levied against 4510 W. Madison Street from \$26,625 to \$1,000 plus \$150 for cost of prosecution, provided the reduced fine is paid within 30 days of this action
  - c. **Adopt Resolution No. 2016-12-22** granting an exception to the prohibition of schools within the City's Airport Educational Facilities Restriction Zone to Putnam EDGE High School to allow their utilization of 600 College Road for a charter high school.

Commissioner Norwood moved to approve all items on Consent as recommended. Commissioner Campbell seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

4. **RESOLUTION** authorizing execution of Amendment #1 to Contract for Purchase and Sale between City of Palatka and Riverfront Development Group, LLC – Adopt – The Clerk read a resolution entitled A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, ACCEPTING AND ADOPTING AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO THE CONTRACT FOR PURCHASE AND SALE FOR AREAS 1 AND 2 CONTAINED IN RFP 13-002, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE 100 BLOCK OF REID STREET, TO RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT GROUP, LLC (RDG) AND AUTHORIZING ITS EXECUTION. Commissioner Norwood moved to adopt the resolution as read. Commissioner Campbell seconded the motion. Mr. Holmes said he reviewed and “tweaked” the Agreement and added paragraphs 4, 5 and 6, which were formalities. There being no further discussion and no comment, a voice vote was taken with the following results: Commissioners Borom, Campbell, Norwood and Mayor Hill, Yes; Nays, none. The resolution was declared adopted.
  
5. **DISCUSSION - Cemetery Benches** - Mayor Hill said the rules at the cemetery aren’t posted in a conspicuous manner. People are given rules when they purchase a gravesite. In some instances in the past, the rules haven’t been provided. Recently a plot owner purchased a bench and there is a question as to whether this person was given the rules. They need to give consideration when there are gray areas. He visited the cemetery along with the citizen. There are some benches there that are non-conforming, not made of granite or marble. Some are placed at the foot of the gravesite. The granite benches look nice. He suggests they look at the language and provide conformity. There is a question as to providing appropriate information in prior years. He suggests that benches that are at Oak Hill West now be grandfathered in. Going forward they should hold hard and fast to the standards. They need to be sure their methodologies provide that rules are posted and they should confirm that people sign stating rules have been provided to lot purchasers. Commissioner Norwood said they need documentation that individuals have received the rules. They need to set a date certain once that’s done. After that point they need to stand upon the rules. Mayor Hill said in this situation the bench is affixed to the end of the gravesite, just as they are in East Oak Hill. He’d like to review language and create a grandfather clause, and modify the rules for existing benches.

Discussion ensued as to placement of benches and requiring an additional plot for a bench at Oak Hill West. At Mayor Hill’s request, The Clerk provided the history on the difference of the bench rules that vary by cemetery. Oak Hill East was platted in the 1920’s and at that time benches were allowed at the foot of the gravesite. Oak Hill West was platted in the late 1980’s and when it was platted and opened, benches were only allowed at the head of the plot in place of a headstone, which is common in more modern cemeteries. An adjacent lot can be purchased for a bench. There are headstones available that also double as benches. Mr. Suggs said they’d like to do a moratorium on any and all items being placed at the cemetery until new rules are adopted. They can document where everything is tomorrow, but they don’t want to be caught in the position of having more illegal benches and having more non-conforming items be erected.

Commissioner Norwood moved to add a vote on this item to the Orders of the Day. Commissioner Campbell seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

Commissioner Norwood moved to place a moratorium on the placement of any items other than headstones on gravesites while rules are being developed. Commissioner Campbell seconded the motion. It was noted that letters have gone out on the existing non-conforming benches. There being no further discussion and no comment, the motion passed unopposed.

## 6. CITY MANAGER & ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS –

Mr. Suggs reported the following:

- He's been making house calls to residents that are unable to come to City Hall to do business.
- He has made contact with Beckler & Poliakoff in order to negotiate a contract for lobbyist services. He hopes to have that in place by the end of next week.
- He's been asked to speak at Trinity United Methodist Church regarding riverfront development, priorities and fire assessment fees.

**PUBLIC WORKS** – Mr. Suggs said he has named Jonathan Griffith as the new Public Works Director. Streets and Solid Waste have been split into two departments; Ed Chandler will remain over solid waste. Shaw Ladd will be over the Streets department. There are other changes in the works. They are going to put a 30, 60 and 90 day plan in place.

Commissioner Borom asked if all departmental employees have been informed about the changes; Mr. Suggs said they do. Commissioner Campbell asked for an update on hiring a Human Resources Manager. Mr. Suggs said it has been advertised and he has interviewed candidates. He has offered the position to a candidate, but they have not been able to come to an agreement on the position. If the candidate doesn't respond by tomorrow he will probably re-advertise the position. There was consensus to not rush into a decision. Commissioner Campbell asked to receive periodic updates on this search. Mr. Suggs said they are looking for a particular set of skills so they can shift some duties from other department heads onto this new position. There was consensus to provide updates at subsequent meeting. Mayor Hill asked that pertinent information on all candidates be disseminated to all commissioners or any position that comes before the Commission for approval. Mr. Suggs said he will abide by the City's charter and disseminate information accordingly.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT REORGANIZATION** – Police Chief Jason Shaw noted his reorganization plan was distributed with the Agenda Package (filed). The PPD has been under reorganization since his appointment as Chief. They are coming up for accreditation at the end of the year. He spoke about Shift Changes; they merged those into two districts; there are two day shifts and two night shifts. On each shift there are 10 officers; they work 11 hr days in overlapping shifts. Officers had been working 12-hr shifts. There is a built-in 6 hr day within each 30 day cycle which allows them to use overtime in a more efficient manner. This will ensure proper training, which is required for accreditation. This puts more officers on the streets during peak hours in order to reduce crime and provide community service.

An organization chart was provided. Chief Shaw said they opened an additional administration position, making four positions. There are 3 captains. He removed the assistant chief position. The captains have different areas of responsibility. The 2<sup>nd</sup> major change is rank structure, which is more in line with what they are doing in the field. There is no pay increase with the changes; they are aligning rank structures to other law enforcement departments in the local area.

Patrol division rank structure defines more clearly who officers report up to. Special Operations shows the same structure. They did put a sergeant in that role, which is a working supervisor. This person sticks with all major crimes to ensure major crimes are worked consistently. The Support Services captain is over records and most of the civilian personnel. They rely on them for business support. All these changes have been made to make the department more effective and efficient. They focused on Accreditation, Officer Deployment, Training, Crime Reduction and Overall Savings in the budget. These changes have resulted in savings. One of their goals and focuses will be on community service. They can use overtime in a more efficient manner.

Discussion ensued regarding structure changes and how the changes will affect budget over the long term. Chief Shaw noted that the Commission makes decisions as to raises during budget adoption. Mayor Hill said he's discussed these changes with Chief Shaw, regarding changing the PD's structure to more closely resemble that of the Sheriff's Office. If the next Sheriff changes the

structure, they will again be different. They don't need to match the SO's structure, when their structure may change every four years. They also spoke of PAL and where PAL fits into the structure. They need a full-time PAL officer in the same capacity the Chief Shaw served in when he was a sergeant. They need to focus on the community aspect. They need to commit to the community on a full-time basis. Chief Shaw is committed to community policing; they know what benefits come from programs like summer camp, PAL and Weed N Seed. Chief Shaw has addressed his concerns regarding rank structure and appearing to be "top heavy." They have eliminated the corporals and gone straight to sergeants.

Discussion ensued regarding the plan to develop a PAL officer from the current structure. Chief Shaw said they will be able to build this position in following upcoming retirements, when the budget allows. One of his goals is not to increase his budget due to organizational changes. Commissioner Norwood said he supports public safety and keeping the public safe. Commissioner Campbell concurred and noted if this doesn't work they can make other changes. There are officers who are functioning as community resource officers and PAL officers, even though they don't hold those official titles. Mayor Hill noted when they had full time PAL and community service officers there was a reduction in youth-related crime. Chief Shaw said they have gone from 40 sworn officers to 32 sworn officers due to budget cuts.

Mr. Suggs said this is why they went through this process of advertising, vetting and interviewing for Chief of Police. He is glad to see they are working on accreditation and bringing a savings to the City. He is pleased with the comments he receives from the Community. Mayor Hill asked that Police Department Reorganization be placed on the March 24<sup>th</sup> agenda for acceptance. Chief Shaw said he will bring the officers in for introduction.

**PHA FEDERAL HOME LOAN GRANT PROGRAM** - John Nelson, Executive Director, Palatka Housing Authority, was asked to brief the Commission on the Federal Home Loan Grant Program. Mr. Nelson briefed the Commission on their work on putting together a grant to purchase land to build taxable properties. They are looking at building 8 to 10 units on land they will receive from the City. These are 1,400 sf structures, 3 BR 2 bath, with single car garage. The application has to be in by April 7. They are in negotiations with a sponsor. Mayor Hill said last year he and Mr. Griffith worked with the PHA on this program. They believe this is critical to bringing adequate housing stock into Palatka. This allows them to put properties back on the tax rolls. Mayor Hill thanked Mr. Nelson for his partnership and taking the lead on this project.

**PROJECTS UPDATE** - Jonathan Griffith noted they didn't provide a written update. There is no status change on any City capital projects. They are assisting the chamber in preparing for the BassMaster Tournament. He invited the commission to meet with him and his staff to provide input on procedural changes.

## **7. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Norwood noted they will be evaluating the City Manager at the end of his first year. He asked if the City Manager evaluates staff and provides feedback to Staff so they will know if they are performing well or not and so they understand what their roles and responsibilities are. This is for all city staff. Mayor Hill said they have had those conversations regarding evaluations and input.

Mr. Griffith said he's had the playbook on facilities maintenance for some time; he just hasn't had the personnel to carry it out.

Commissioner Borom said he'd like to see top down evaluations as well as 360 degree feedback from subordinates, peer to peer to get a full picture of what is happening to identify performance and feedback.

Mayor Hill said they have had dialogue on ways they can better serve the Community, including providing software on allowing citizens to use smartphones to call in work orders, which will cut down on wasted work time. They are also looking at ways to break the City down into quadrants which work with the zones now in place for public works and public safety. He said they've been looking at assigning commissioners to different sections of the City which will rotate, and putting complaint boxes in place. They want to be more accountable to citizens and make staff more effective. Regarding the City Lot, it's had a long history of housing two departments that didn't necessarily work together. They have seen more cross training and cohesiveness over the past year; that is why they brought in a public works director. As to working conditions at the City Lot, those are abysmal in this day and age. They should look at changing the culture starting with a new City Lot to provide an adequate and safe work space. They'd like staff to look at the cost of building a new facility. Certain facilities are subpar.

Mayor Hill said The Azalea Festival was wonderful; they had a lot of visitors who were impressed with Palatka. There are numerous events coming up; there are several large bass tournaments as well as Blue Crab Festival.

8. **ADJOURN** – There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 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