

**VERNON MYERS**  
MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

**MARY LAWSON BROWN**  
VICE MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

**ALLEGRA KITCHENS**  
COMMISSIONER

**PHIL LEARY**  
COMMISSIONER

**JAMES NORWOOD, JR.**  
COMMISSIONER



**ELWIN C. "WOODY" BOYNTON, JR.**  
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**  
February 9, 2012

Proceedings of a regular meeting of the City Commission of the City of Palatka, Florida, held on the 9<sup>TH</sup> day of February, 2012.

**PRESENT:**

Mayor	Vernon Myers
Commissioner	Mary Lawson Brown
Commissioner	Allegra Kitchens
Commissioner	Phil Leary
Commissioner	James Norwood, Jr.

Also Present: City Manager Elwin C. "Woody" Boynton, Jr.; City Attorney Donald E. Holmes; City Clerk Betsy Jordan Driggers; Finance Director Matthew Reynolds; Planning Director Thad Crowe, Police Chief Gary Getchell; Fire Chief Mike Lambert, Parks & Cemeteries Director Jeff Norton, and Main Street Manager Charles Rudd.

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

**INVOCATION** – Marsha Davis-Flowers, Board Chairman; Putnam Christian Service Center

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Police Chief Gary Getchell

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – 1/26/12 – Commissioner Brown moved to adopt the minutes as read. Commissioner Kitchens seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

**1. PUBLIC RECOGNITION/PRESENTATIONS:**

**PROCLAMATION Recognizing Black History Month** – February, 2012 – Vice Mayor Brown and Commissioner Norwood received a proclamation recognizing February as Black History Month in Palatka, as designated by the federal government, which was read and presented by Mayor Myers. Commissioner Brown said Mary McLeod Bethune organized the first chapter of xxx here in Putnam County. Commissioner Norwood said he is proud of the accomplishments and advances of those in the black community to serve local government and be good neighbors.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT RECOGNITION** – "PDN Reader's Choice 2012" Ofc. Todd Davis and Ofc. Andrew Huskey, Honorable Mention – Mayor Myers presented the Palatka Daily News

Reader's Choice 2012 Public Safety Officer Award to Officer Todd Davis and the Reader's Choice 2012 Honorable Mention Award to Officer Andrew Huskey, noting they are blessed to have such officers under the leadership of Chief Getchell. Chief Getchell said these men are two very productive officers; this is a recognition given by people in the community.

**COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD** – Donation of Arbor Day Trees – Bob Byrnes & Jim Lyons – Mr. Lyons was present to receive the recognition for his part in procuring over 200 trees for planting around the City as part of the Arbor Day celebration and to replenish the tree canopy. Mr. Byrnes, who donated the trees, was unable to attend. Mr. Lyons said the Master Gardeners are glad to help the City with its beautification project, and thanked Jonathan Griffith for coming to the nursery to pick out the trees. He introduced Kay Deuben and Betty Faulkner, other Master Gardeners present.

## 2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Linda Crider, 116 Kirkland Street, spoke to the matter of the 100 block buildings. She'd like to keep Memorial Drive preserved as a promenade, festival site and staging area, but not reopened to the public as a cut through from the Bridge to River Street. It has a much better use as a non-vehicular area. There is a good grid pattern in the City and people can find other ways to get from the bridge to River Street. The City does not necessarily have to officially "close" it; they can call it a "special use designation" and place portable structures on it for use by the public.

## 3. **CONSENT AGENDA:**

- a. **Authorize execution of Change Order #1 to SE Cline Construction Contract** to extend the completion time of the project by 135 days for the Palatka Downtown Redevelopment Project, per City Manager's recommendation
- b. **Appoint Kay Deuben to the Palatka Tree Committee** to serve at the pleasure of the City Commission (no set terms) – sole applicant
- c. **Issue Class A Special Event Permit for 2012 Florida Azalea Festival\*\*\***
  1. **Class 'A' Permit for Riverfront/Festival Area** March 3 & 4, 2012; 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
  2. **Grant Noise Ordinance Exception during festival hours** March 2, 2012; 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
(no boat races or amplified sound on  
Sunday, 3/4/12 prior to 1:00 p.m.) March 3, 2012; 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.  
March 4, 2012; 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
  3. **Close St. Johns Avenue from Memorial Parkway to 9<sup>th</sup> Street** during festival hours to parking and vehicular traffic.
  4. **Grant Permission to use City Hall parking lot** for Handicapped Parking on Saturday and Sunday
  5. **Grant permission to close Main Street from 1<sup>st</sup> Street to 11<sup>th</sup> Street** on 3/3/12 from 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. for Azalea Festival Parade
  6. **Festival Permit fee** – per staff recommendation; Amount TBD for police security fees (@ \$23.00/hr.); \$450.00 for Festival Permit Fee (\$225/day for two days); \$375.00 for green roll-outs (25 @ \$15/ea). Applicant pays actual landfill tipping fees. Applicant agrees to pay City of Palatka for the actual FP&L charges for use of their electrical boxes. Total permit fee TBD
- \*\*\***STAFF RECOMMENDS APPROVAL of all request items.**
- d. **Issue Class A Special Event Permit #12-10** and grant Special Requests Items for "St. Johns River Showdown BASS Elite Bass Tournament," March 15<sup>th</sup> thru 18<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 am – 9:00 p.m. and March 19<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. – Putnam Co. Chamber of Commerce, Applicant
  1. **Grant permission to exceed allowable noise levels** during Event hours
  2. **Grant permission to close Memorial Drive** from Reid Street to Short Laurel and St. Johns Avenue from Memorial Drive to 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to parked and vehicular traffic March 15 - 19;
  3. **Grant permission to close City of Palatka Boat Ramp** during event dates and times to reopen March 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.;

4. **Grant permission to serve/consume alcoholic beverages** on public property under "Bourbon Tent" on 100 Block of Reid Street and Amphitheater Area
 

March 15, 1:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
March 16, 1:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
March 17, 1:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
March 18, 1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
5. **Festival Permit Fees per staff recommendation:** Amount TBD for police security fees (@ \$23.00/hr.); \$600 for Festival Permit Fee (\$150/day for four days); \$150.00 for green roll-outs (10 @ \$15/ea). Applicant pays actual landfill tipping fees. Applicant agrees to pay City of Palatka for the actual FP&L charges for use of their electrical boxes. Total permit fee TBD

Commissioner Leary moved to pass all items on consent as recommended. Commissioner Norwood seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

4. **COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY BUSINESS** – Accept CRA Recommendations as follows (CRA meeting held 2/9/12)
  - a. **REALLOCATE FUNDS TO WALKING TOUR PHONE GUIDE** from mural lighting
  - b. **ALLOCATE MURAL FUNDS** – up to \$9,250.00 for two murals: Annie Oakley Mural and 1909 Train Station Opening – John Alexander, Chairman, Conlee-Snyder Mural Committee

Commissioner Norwood moved to accept the recommendation of the CRA to allocate TIF funds for the walking phone tour guide program and \$9,250 for two murals. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.
5. **PUBLIC HEARING - MAIN STREET FAÇADE GRANT AWARDS** – 2011 Application Cycle:
  1. 608 Main Street – Serve Pro of Putnam Co. – Ed Killebrew \$6,442.00

Mayor Myers opened the public hearing. There were no public comments. Commissioner Norwood moved to accept the recommendation of Palatka Main Street to award a Façade Grant in the amount of \$6,442.00 to Ed Killebrew, Serve Pro of Putnam County, for 608 Main Street. Commissioner Leary seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.
6. **ORDINANCE** amending and restating Chapter 58, Secondhand Goods, renaming Chapter "Secondhand Dealers, Secondary Metal Recyclers and Salvage Motor Vehicle Restrictions" and replacing, deleting and amending code to make it more restrictive, and adding penalties and provisions for enforcement – 1<sup>st</sup> Reading- The Clerk read an ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, AMENDING AND RESTATING CHAPTER 58, ENTITLED "SECONDHAND GOODS" BY ADDING SPECIFIC LANGUAGE TO SECTION 58-31, PURPOSE OF ARTICLE, TO ADD MORE RESTRICTIVE MEASURES THAN THOSE PROVIDED IN STATE STATUTE 538 AND 319; BY DELETING SECTIONS 58-32, 58-34 THROUGH 39 IN THEIR ENTIRETY; RENAMING CHAPTER 58 AS "SECONDHAND DEALERS, SECONDARY METAL RECYCLERS AND SALVAGE MOTOR VEHICLE RESTRICTIONS" AND REPLACING SAID SECTIONS WITH NEW CODE SECTIONS HEREIN NUMBERED 58-32 THROUGH 46 AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO ADD MORE RESTRICTIONS ON SECONDHAND DEALERS, SECONDARY METAL RECYCLERS AND SALVAGE MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS BY; PROVIDING DEFINITIONS; PROVIDING PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS; CAMERA SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS; RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS; ADDITIONAL RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS FOR SECONDARY METAL RECYCLERS ON NONFERROUS METALS, AND REGULATED METALS PROPERTY; DAILY REPORTS TO POLICE; INSPECTION OF PROPERTY AND RECORDS; SECONDARY METAL RECYCLER, SECONDHAND DEALER, AND SALVAGE MOTOR VEHICLE DEALER REQUIRMENTS; PROVIDING FOR LIMITATIONS ON CERTAIN RESTRICTED REGULATED METALS; RESTRICTIONS FOR PAYMENT FOR CERTAIN METALS; HOLDING PERIODS FOR STOLEN METALS; RESTRICTIONS ON TRANSACTIONS WITH MINORS; ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PURCHASE OF DERELICT MOTOR VEHICLES BY SECONDHAND DEALERS AND SALVAGE MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERS; ADMINISTRATION OF ARTICLE; PROVIDING FOR THE RENUMBERING OF CHAPTER 58 IF NECESSARY;

PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Norwood moved to pass the ordinance on first reading as read. Commissioner Kitchens seconded the motion. Police Chief Gary Getchell was present to answer questions. He said they have a responsibility to protect citizens from those who prey on others. People have found a new way to victimize by stealing all types of metals, which can be sold to metal recyclers. The State legislature addressed this issue two years ago. The statute revisions helped somewhat but not with all issues. There is a bill before the House and Senate that takes enforcement to a new level, and allows the City to create its own ordinance without pre-emption by the State, but this ordinance has to be established by March 1, 2012. He has been in discussion with Commissioner Leary on this, as he has been the "eyes and ears" in Tallahassee. There has been an increase in thefts of vehicles over 10 years old because there is a provision in the Statute to allow people to sign an affidavit stating they have a title to the car without actually producing it. This is their recommendation.

Commissioner Leary asked if the statute limits the City to a \$500 fine; he personally thinks it should be higher and the yield curve longer. They need a greater deterrent to companies that deal in secondhand metals. Chief Getchell said they are limited by state statute; the highest fine they can levy is \$500.00. As they put ordinances in place and Statute changes, there will be new loopholes that will arise, and they will be constantly changing this ordinance. Commissioner Norwood asked if the county is passing a similar ordinance. Chief Getchell said he has coordinated activities with the County as late as two days ago. They are not as far along as the City is and he doubts they will get under the March 1 requirement. Commissioner Kitchens noted this is a serious problem all over the County and a very important measure to slow down car thefts, which have been on the rise. Criminals are hooking tow trucks up to cars and pulling them away in broad daylight. She watched as her neighbor's car was being stolen in such a manor. Chief Getchell said insurance companies now require new air conditioners to be fenced and alarmed. There being no further discussion, a roll call vote was taken with the following results: Commissioners Brown, Kitchens, Leary, Norwood and Mayor Myers, yes; Nays, none. The ordinance was declared passed on first reading.

7. **ORDINANCE** amending Chapters 62 and 94 of the Municipal Code to clarify sign specifications, allowable locations and prohibitions – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, Adopt – The Clerk read an ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA AMENDING SIGN CODE SECTION 62-1 TO PROVIDE DEFINITIONS FOR SPECIFIC SIGN TYPES, CLARIFY ISSUES IN SECTION 62-4 PERTAINING TO MAXIMUM SIGN SIZE, REMOVE LIMITATION IN SECTION 62-10 OF WALL SIGNS TO COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ZONING DISTRICTS, DELETE SECTION 62-14 WHICH PROVIDES STANDARDS FOR PORTABLE SIGNS, ADD SECTION 62-14 THAT REQUIRES LANDSCAPING AROUND NEW SIGNS; AND ADD NEW SECTION 62-15 TO CLARIFY THAT SIGNS NOT DEFINED IN CODE ARE PROHIBITED AND SIGN LOCATIONS ARE LIMITED BY CHAPTERS 62 AND 94; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Leary moved to pass the ordinance on 2<sup>nd</sup> reading for adoption as read. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. As there was no discussion, a roll call vote was taken, with the following results: Commissioners Brown, Leary, Norwood and Mayor Myers, yes; Commissioner Kitchens, No. The ordinance was declared adopted by vote of four in favor, and one opposed by Commissioner Kitchens.
8. **ORDINANCE** amending the Municipal Code Fee Schedule Index for Chapter 54, Sewer Impact Fee basis for residential connections – 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, Adopt – The Clerk read an ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA AMENDING PLANNING CODE SECTION 54-157 TO REVISE SEWER IMPACT FEES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Brown moved to pass the ordinance on 2<sup>nd</sup> reading as read. Commissioner Leary seconded the motion. –

J Normand Jutras, 412 Mulholland Park, said they need to eliminate impact fees. This is a negative connotation. Maybe they can call this service connection; they need to stop making negative changes.

As there was no discussion, a roll call vote was taken, with the following results: Commissioners Brown, Leary, Norwood and Mayor Myers, yes; Commissioner Kitchens, No. The ordinance was declared adopted by vote of four in favor, and one opposed by Commissioner Kitchens.

Following the vote on the motion there was discussion regarding changing "impact fees" to "service connections," and it was determined that the City Attorney will draw up an ordinance to properly word the change.

9. **100 BLOCK DISCUSSION** – Mr. Boynton said they have held several workshops regarding the fate of the Riverview Property and especially the 100 block buildings. The overwhelming theme from citizens was "do something" no matter what it is. He still does not have the full structural report that was done by S&K Engineering. He has spoken with them by phone and has incorporated suggested changes in those comments into this memo, so his comments are not erroneous or not well founded. The memorandum is available on the City's website.

Mr. Boynton said the structural report indicated that the buildings are structurally sound; there are some upgrades or minor modifications that should be made. The issue is really the aesthetics of the buildings, and he can't put a number to that other than renovating the buildings. After all the assessments are done, the buildings appear to be structurally sound buildings that have been around for 125 years, and the difference in the cost to either build new or renovate these are within 10 to 15 percent of each other. In the past the City has put the fate of these buildings in the hands of two developers. The cost to demolish the buildings is around \$100,000 to \$110,000, given no environmental surprises. It's a given there may be asbestos there. For \$100,000 he could clean up the buildings, gut them from wall to wall and floor to ceiling, and remove the backs of the buildings and provide a clean building that is more presentable to a developer. For either building or renovating 30,000 SF the cost is the same. Someone will have to put that \$100,000 into those buildings no matter what they do. They did not budget \$100,000 for this work. They would have to stall other work to find that \$100,000. It is his recommendation to just move forward with the RFP. They are spending \$1,200,000 on landscaping the riverfront. The comments he hears no longer revolve around having to look at "those hideous buildings". They are going to do something to mask the appearance of those buildings. They plan to plant "disposable" trees along the base of those buildings, which can be moved or removed at a nominal cost. There are many things they can do to the aesthetics that won't cost a significant amount of money. Allowing 60 to 90 days for the RFQ and more time for the review process, they are looking at July-August for a decision on that. There is time to give more consideration to what will become of them. In the end the lack of moving forward with the fate of these buildings is not the fault of the Commission; it has been more due to the national economic condition. They just need to move forward. It is his opinion is to wait four more years to do something. They need to ensure this process doesn't take four years to complete. He can't find a significant reason to either take them down or keep them one way or the other. He can do minor aesthetic repairs with an in-house crew. Maybe they won't get a response to the RFQ; it may become the City's responsibility to make these improvements. They may need to do this in phases. The questions he has is, is there a major financial advantage to tear them down or keep them? This information has not made this decision any easier for the Commission. He and Mr. Holmes have met twice this week to get the RFP ready to release, and in two weeks they could have a fully developed RFP to release at the end of February. They can make aesthetic improvements over the next few months that won't affect the character of the buildings or the budget.

Commissioner Brown said Marcia Lane visited her yesterday regarding this issue. She has sat in the seat 28 years, and they were talking about rejuvenating downtown all that time. People are tired of them "waiting a little longer." They need to come up with a solution. They have received letters and phone calls on both sides. She believes they need to come together as a community and do something to make this happen and stop waiting on government to take care of everything. All those people can write a check or hold a fundraiser, or maybe someone can come up with a way to do it. If citizens want to save or change those buildings, they need to come up with a way to do it. There are smart businesspeople in this town. They can look for grants and foundations that can assist in this. They can rent these buildings to new business start-ups. One of the things that makes those buildings so unsightly is the brown paint on them. The City could pay for the paint to change them to a beige color, something softer. The college is interested in doing something with those buildings and might look at using the 2<sup>nd</sup> floors for student housing. This puts the entire community on the spot. Citizens in other towns come together to work out ways to get things done. There isn't going to be a lot of financing options available or grants or government money. They need to make change occur themselves.

Commissioner Kitchens compared this with the saving of the Bronson House, which was done in conjunction with the Historical Society. They could apply for national registry status which will open them up for historic grants. People in the community can form a group to save them, such as a community authority, in partnership with the City. They call themselves historic and they do have to take into consideration the historical aspect of the buildings. She suggests they go with the City Manger's recommendation, go out with an RFP, and let groups and citizens get together and come up with a support group. They can allow the city manager to do some aesthetic improvements, to include repainting the buildings to a lighter color. The landscaping has been a great improvement. She suggested murals painted by art students to cover the windows in place of plywood.

Commissioner Leary said the RFP is a separate recommendation than what to do with the buildings, and asked Mr. Boynton for clarification on that. Mr. Boynton said he has no recommendation on the fate of the buildings. Commissioner Norwood said the issue at this time is aesthetics; they don't look nice. He believes they RFP is germane to tonight's conversation. If they put the RFP out and get no proposals, the City should look at doing the project or entering into a public-private partnership. The citizens cannot wait around for them to do something. They have been talking about doing something since he came onto the commission. They have made significant progress on this project over the last few years and he'd like to see that continue. During the 90-day RFP period they need to improve the buildings' aesthetics. He asked if the RFP can be ready this week.

Mr. Holmes said they had an RFP ready which was drafted in the same fashion as the one prior, in order to seek the same type of proposal CDP made. They then decided the prior RFP was too restrictive and should be broadened to encourage novel financing ideas or a public-private partnership, and all proposals should be accepted. They can add to the RFP in order to solicit ideas that are outside the prior framework, and be as broad as they can in soliciting proposals. Commissioner Norwood said if they get a developer within the next 90 days he'd like the developer to tell the City Manager up front whether or not he can or wants to save those buildings. If he can't decide within 90 days the City should take over the decision. The CRA was created to eliminate blighted areas and can address this within its goal to improve Downtown. Mr. Holmes said they would not recommend or point towards any disposition of the 100 block buildings, and just wait to see what they receive.

Commissioner Leary said they extended the time frame for CDP to come back with financing. Last week he sat in a meeting wherein the state's economist was predicting no change in the economic forecast. The State's budget has been cut over \$12 billion in the past four years. The

state is getting ready to cut 4,200 positions this year. The economy won't change, and they need to make a decision to move forward. President Pickens said to him they are still interested in being part of these plans, but that they don't want people to "make money" off their students. They plan on putting student dorms on campus. There is no architectural, historical and/or archaeological significance to these buildings; they are just old. Any one should look at the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph on the 2<sup>nd</sup> page, which talks about the roof structure; the building code is going to change dramatically and the cost to renovate the buildings will be prohibitive. The plumbing code alone will cost an additional \$300,000. People are so frustrated with these buildings. He was not elected to give his ability to make decisions to a developer. They need to give a developer a clean canvas and set those buildings back; there is no parking. He moved to move forward with demolition of the 100 Block buildings and in the interim provide some aesthetic relief. Following discussion on whether or not a motion can be entertained on this, Mr. Holmes states the subject is agenda item and a motion is not out of line. The motion then failed for lack of a second. Commissioner Kitchens proposed that because there is no economic change forecast in the next four years, she asked for the purpose of tearing the building down. She moved to move forward with the City Manager's proposal as outlined in the last four paragraphs on the last page of his memorandum, which includes bringing an RFP back to the next meeting to put out, and to improve the aesthetics of the buildings. Commissioner Norwood seconded the motion. Commissioner Brown said she spoke to Mr. Boynton about a place she visited, The Villages. During dinner she learned they have three workable golf courses and were in the process of building a third commercial area there. She was wondering where that developer came from, how he was doing it, and suggested they take a field trip to see how they are doing this to find if there is a connection they can make to do something similar. Mayor Myers said that area has a whole other set of demographics. It is all new development and populated by wealthy retired people. Mr. Holmes said they started the community from nothing; it was a blank canvas.

Commissioner Leary said in the City Manager's last four paragraphs, he does not address keeping or demolishing the buildings. Mayor Myers said this motion doesn't say whether they will keep the buildings or demolish them. Mr. Holmes asked Commissioner Kitchens to clarify the motion as to spending \$100,000 on the buildings or just do minor clean up. Commissioner Kitchens said the City Manager spoke to her about inexpensive ways to improve the aesthetics. Mr. Holmes said if they spend a bunch of money on the buildings and then tear them down in a year, people will question the intelligence of that. Mr. Boynton said he's talking about 20 sheets of plywood and replacing the plywood on the windows, and removing old wood and do some window dressing, and addressing roof issues on the east wall by demolishing them and putting new sheeting over the area, because that is what is causing the rot on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. He wasn't talking about painting them. He's talking about labor and time to clean them up. They spent several thousand dollars on painting the buildings a few years ago; at that time they were white, but people wanted them painted brick color, so they painted them brick color. If he wants to spend more than a few thousand dollars on them, he will bring that back.

Mayor Myers said this is all economy-driven. CDP pulled out due to the economy. He believes the national outlook is much more positive now; things are starting to turn. It's a big country and there are a lot of developers out there looking for opportunity. The buildings might be valuable to a developer who sees some benefit in their historic nature. Another developer may want nothing to do with them. They need to take the time to let the RFP play out. He understands the frustration level as he gets calls from both sides, too. They need to do what's in the best interest of citizens economically. Commissioner Brown said they need to put a time limit on developers and not be strung along. Mayor Myers said they gave CDP appropriate extensions. They have made great strides in improving the waterfront and spent \$3.2 million on just the purchase and demolition of the Highrise. The park improvements going on now are significant. They need to build into the RFP that the developer has the choice of tearing them down or renovating them. The renovations CDP planned were attractive.

Commissioner Norwood said they don't want the RFP to be out on the street for more than 90 days. Commissioner Brown concurred. Mr. Holmes said you need to allow time for a serious developer to come up with a serious proposal. Commissioner Kitchens clarified that a 90-day period for the RFP is part of the motion, per the City Manager's recommendation.

Linda Little Crabill, 609 S. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, said she is in favor of saving the buildings, and asked the City to at least paint the north side of the buildings, where the paint is chipping.

Christy Sanford, 312 Dodge Street, said she was impressed by the Commission's suggested to get citizens' input. If a developer wants to tear the buildings down they will go through the same emotional upheaval. There are more factors to consider than just financial. There are alternative ways of getting funding. She's shocked to hear that the Florida School of the Arts not wanting to come to Downtown Palatka.

Kay Deuben, 1322 Kirby Street, said she is thrilled to hear the level of optimism coming forth from speakers because she is tired of the doom and gloom attitude. They have been ignoring this big wart for a long time. She challenged people to match her \$50 to help paint the building. Christy Sanford pledged \$50 also. Ms. Deuben said art students at the high school would love to do the murals on the buildings. If the City would clean up the storefronts many artists would love to set up their work for display. Deland used to be just as unsightly as Palatka, and they'd be doing themselves a favor to look at how they've redeveloped their downtown without tearing down buildings.

J. Normand Jutras, 412 Mulholland Park, said the Commission has done a lot of good things with the waterfront. It looks great. They need to consider what improvements will do for the tax base. The "community wealth" will improve as well as real property in a very short time period. It gives them tools to foot the bill. He provided statistics on real estate sales in a community that copied Walt Disney's building plan and bond-funded development. He agreed with Commissioner Brown that The Villages is worth a visit.

Pam Garris, 603 Emmett Street, related a concrete example of a person who went to Mandarin or World Golf Village looking for property to purchase, and consulted a realtor who has properties for sale in Palatka. She showed them property in the historic district and they bought property here. They are educated people. They have old properties here that are valuable and regarded as valuable. People from elsewhere value what they have here. Once they see what Palatka has to offer they buy here.

There being no further discussion, a vote was taken on the motion, which passed, four in favor, opposed by Commissioner Leary.

#### 10. **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

Mr. Boynton said he wants the public to know there is a plan in place for the development of the riverfront; this is the Michael Redd plan. They are not doing things arbitrarily. They talked about moving the Clock Tower and torpedo, but did not move either of those; other than that they have followed the Plan very closely and systematically, and will have it completed within the next 3 – 5 years. This has been a progressive Commission. They will not stand pat on not "not doing anything" over the next few years. The citizens should understand there is a plan in place and the City is moving forward on it. They've invested well over \$40 – \$50 million in infrastructure in Palatka over the past seven years. Most of that is through the diligence of this Commission. They haven't laid people off and have cut back staff through attrition. This City is moving forward in spite of the economy.

Mr. Boynton said the Commission has been operating with a paper agenda for a long time. He is seriously considering the purchase of iPads for the Commission so they could move away from a paper agenda. He knows there are some who prefer paper agendas. This will give commissioners plenty of time to go over their agendas. This will also allow for emails to go to a Palatka.com address. There are times they may need to put paper out, but the County has moved forward on this. This will streamline the process and eventually eliminate paper. The Clerk's office spends countless hours on assembling paper agendas, and iPads will give them an agenda prior to Friday afternoon.

Chief Lambert, Fire Department, said in the 1500 block of St. Johns Avenue they will be doing training in a house the Becks want to tear down. They will be completely demolishing it in two months. They have been smoking it up and will utilize it for training.

## 11. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Kitchens said the County Commission has a desk area with iPads built into the dais. She'd be thrilled with an iPad but still needs paper copies to do her research, as she makes copious notes and does massive research. Prior to a couple of years ago they never got agendas before Monday or Tuesday. She'd be just as pleased to get an agenda on Monday. She doesn't want to spend her weekend going through the agenda.

Commissioner Kitchens said the City has made great strides in Downtown Palatka, noting the façade grants and BIG grants have helped transformed rundown storefronts. New stores have opened up in existing buildings. They've done a tremendous amount of landscaping. They are moving forward with a limited budget. Sometimes if you want things done well you have to take your time.

Commissioner Brown said they will want to visit the Villages and see how they are doing what they are doing.

Commissioner Norwood said they are making significant progress. He likes the Commission's diversity. They make decisions based upon information and not emotions. They have one of the best city managers in the State. He is proactive and has made significant changes over the past four years. They have the right tools in place to move the City forward. The citizens will reap the benefits of their elected officials and administrators.

Mayor Myers commended John Youell, Airport Manager, for the very successful Fly-In held a few weeks ago. They had 125 aircraft that were flown in from all over Florida and it was written up in a flight magazine. This was successful due to the leadership of Mr. Youell and the AAB.

They have the Azalea Festival and the Bass Elite Tournament coming up in March, an event that is broadcast nationally. This is very positive for the community. The 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Mug Race will be at the riverfront on May 5.

12. **ADJOURN** – There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m. upon a motion by Commissioner Norwood.