

Proceedings of a regular meeting of the City Commission of the City of Palatka, Florida, held on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2001.

PRESENT:	Mayor	Karl N. Flagg
	Commissioner	Mary Lawson Brown
	Commissioner	Hernan Azula
	Commissioner	James Norwood

Also Present: City Manager Allen R. Bush; City Attorney Donald E. Holmes; Finance Director Ruby Williams; Police Chief Gary Getchell; Fire Chief Rudy Howard; Planning Director Adam Mengel; Main Street Manager Debbie Banks; Fire Capt. Randy Porter.

INVOCATION – The Reverend Leroy Lewis, Pastor; First Baptist Church of San Mateo

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Marc Spalding

Mayor Flagg noted for the record that Commissioner Ish Edwards is not in attendance pursuant to Governor Bush's Executive Order #01-299.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 9/13/01 - Commissioner Norwood moved to table this item until the next meeting; Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

LEE CONLEE HOUSE – Joyce Conlee, Linda Lansford and Mary Kay Engleking were present to accept a Resolution recognizing October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month on behalf of the Lee Conlee House battered women and children's shelter. Ms. Engleking said they also need funding for operational expenses for the next year as they await the opportunity to access the marriage license trust fund and federal families' money next Spring. For more than 10 years, Gainesville has received Putnam County's allocation of this money, and they feel it is time Putnam County is allowed to receive and manage the money they are entitled to. They would like the Commission's support in their quest for certification as a domestic violence shelter. Once they acquire their certification, they will receive those funds, which total \$72,000 for this year. They would also like permission to store their donations at 117 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, which is a vacant building in the 100 block.

RESOLUTION 7-72 – Mayor Flagg read a resolution entitled A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PALATKA DESIGNATING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER, 2001 AS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH, AND PLEDGING SUPPORT TO LEE CONLEE HOUSE IN ITS EFFORT TO BECOME A STATE-CERTIFIED VIOLENCE SHELTER in its entirety. Commissioner Brown moved to adopt the Resolution as read. Commissioner Norwood seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken, with the following results: Commissioners Azula, Brown, Norwood and Mayor Flagg, Yes; Nays, none. Resolution #7-72 was declared adopted.

Mayor Flagg said the City does not rent out the 100 block as it creates a liability for the City in terms of taxes, etc. Per the question, Ms. Engleking said it will take three to six months to receive certification. They are the first shelter in the state to gain this recognition in such a short period of time. Mr. Bush said the building is available, but is not suitable as a business location. He has had staff inspect the building with the Conlee House representatives and it is their recommendation to allow them to use it for storage only. They will come up with a rental agreement for \$1.00/year. Commissioner Brown asked if they were aware that the lease is month-to-month in the event that a buyer comes forward for the 100 Block; Ms. Engleking acknowledged they understood those terms. Commissioner Brown moved to grant a month-to-month lease for \$1.00/year to the Lee Conlee House on the building located at 117 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, for purposes of storage space. Per the question, Mr. Holmes said he sees no problem with an at-will lease arrangement. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – James Williams, Jr., 1424 Ocean Street, read in its entirety an article which appeared in the PDN on Sept. 1 concerning the train depot renovation grant. He then read the construction commencement notice and contract. He referenced the public hearings held in 1985 for the original Price-Martin building grant. He said the community center buildings are designated for use by low to moderate income persons and senior citizens for a meeting place on a daily basis through organized recreational services, and for serving senior citizens hot, nutritious meals. Its location was chosen so that people can walk to it. Mayor Flagg noted that Mr. William's presentation is in reference to two different buildings; the Price-Martin Center and the Train Depot. Mr. Williams said the original grant for the Price Martin building was based on the combined square footage for both the train station depot and Center. Mayor Flagg asked what his concern was; Mr. Williams said the citizens should still have use of the neighborhood facility. Mr. Bush said the train depot was originally set up as small and large meeting rooms. Most of the activities referred to in the original grant took place in the Price Martin Center. All this goes through DCA and they are aware of it. This new grant is for renovations to the north end of the train depot as it is about to fall down. The south end was restored in the original overall grant. Amtrak has always used the interior, and they have never relinquished the use of that section of the building. Mr. Williams said the Commission adopted a resolution to use the train station for recreation, library space and hot meals. It was supposed to take the place of a neighborhood facility building. The location was moved from Crill Avenue when people complained. Mr. Bush said if Mr. Williams has questions, he can meet with him in his office and they will call DCA together.

Daniel R. Ziem, Sr., 401 Olive Street, said it is a state law that the sidewalks be repaired, and he would like to see it enforced. On St. Johns Avenue, where it was re-paved, there is a high crown, and manhole covers that are recessed two to three inches. The water meter shut off valves need to be brought up. Mr. Bush said they have already taken care of some of those manhole covers, and are working on leveling them all out. Mr. Ziem said there is a two-or-three inch drop off from the asphalt to the curbing, and it poses a hazard for people getting out of cars. Mr. Bush said he will look at that. A brand-new sidewalk is being constructed from the corner of 19<sup>th</sup> between Main & Reid, due to heavy pedestrian traffic. Also a sidewalk is being constructed on Eddie Vreen Road in front of the elementary school. They have set priorities and are moving the sidewalk crew around according to those priorities, which were set by both the city and county. Mr. Ziem said they need sidewalks from the RR crossing west on St. Johns Avenue, both sides. Mr. Bush said they have a master list which they are working their way through. The next street they are addressing is St. Johns Avenue, once they are finished with Eddie Vreen road. Mr. Ziem said they need to enforce no parking across sidewalks.

CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAM BLOCK GRANT — Mevlyn Ryles, CEO of Putnam Clay Flagler Economic Development Council, said the Agency has been in this community for 35 years. Their crime prevention program has grown from 7 children to 76 children in the seven years she has been there. The program lasts for two weeks each summer. The Community Services Block Grant does not provide enough money to pay for the activities they would like to include in this program. They are requesting match funds for transportation and food; they provide breakfast, lunch and a take-home snack. They take the children on visits around the Putnam County area. The Grant requires a 20% match. Most of the kids in the program are all from Palatka. They are supposed to be serving all of Putnam County, but it seems that the kids from Palatka have dominated this program. They do operate other programs, like home weatherization, home energy and food programs. They are working three counties, and spend over 75% of their total budget in Putnam County; of that money, over 60% is spent in Palatka. They need some help in order to maintain the level of services they are currently providing to the citizens of Palatka. They would like to get \$5,000 in funding. Mr. Bush read a memorandum he wrote and distributed, saying the City Commission made available \$2,500, which was plugged into the preliminary budget. The commission transferred that amount to contingency, and requested that each agency seeking funding appear before the Commission to present their request. Since that time, the City has found itself confronted with higher-than-budgeted expenses, and warnings from the State that state-shared revenues may not be as high as was projected. The budget is still balanced due to a reduction in health care premiums over what was anticipated, and higher-than-anticipated

telecommunications services tax revenues. The City will have an idea of the amount of state-shared revenues it will receive by the end of December. The first quarter's results could constitute a deficit, or a balanced budget, depending on the effects of the economic slow-down and unfavorable census numbers. He suggested the Commission ask EOC to wait until the end of the quarter, but the grant may not give them that kind of latitude. In the past, they have funded them at \$2,500/year. Ms. Ryles said in the time she has been with PCFEOC, she has never received a letter telling her the City has budgeted that money for them, or to appear before the Commission to ask for it. Mayor Flagg said it is not the City's responsibility to solicit the agencies, but it is the agency's responsibility to come in the beginning. They were preparing their budget in case they came and asked for funding. Mr. Bush said the procedure in the past has been for the agency to invoice the Commission for whatever funding they were granted. He assumes she is coming before the Commission to ask for the \$2,500 he previously plugged into the budget in anticipation of her request. Per the question, Ms. Ryles said they will not need the funds until March of next year. The program begins when school lets out. Mr. Bush said due to the shared revenue shortfall, census figures, tourism decline, terrorism and anthrax issues, the City's economic picture is not stable at this time. The Governor is having to cut \$1.5 billion from the state budget. It is his recommendation to wait until the end of the first quarter to re-evaluate whether or not the City will be able to fund PCFEOC for \$2,500. Mayor Flagg said they may want to look at putting a moratorium on all funding requests until they get a clearer picture of what the budget will look like after the end of December. Commissioner Brown said they should at least put PCFEOC on a priority list if they don't go ahead and grant her request tonight. Commissioner Norwood moved to accept Mr. Bush's recommendation to re-evaluate the budget at the end of December to determine whether or not the City will be in a financial position to grant PCFEOC's funding request of \$2,500. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion, which passed unopposed. Commissioner Brown and Mayor Flagg thanked Ms. Ryles for everything PCFEOC do for Putnam County.

SUBDIVISION CHAPTER VARIANCE – 507 Third Avenue – Marc Spalding, agent for owner – Mayor Flagg read Staff's memorandum of 10/5 outlining Mr. Spalding's request and noted the Commission's options and stipulations in granting those requests. Mr. Bush said when the Commission reviews these variances, they can grant one or more of them, should the Commission see fit, as long as they meet the required conditions. Mr. Mengel said there is no recommendation from the Planning or Zoning Appeals boards on this request. Mr. Spalding passed out a drawing of the property, which he noted is not exact. They are working on a final site plan. This property is located almost directly across from the side entrance to Winn Dixie on Third Avenue. The cul-de-sac will be raised quite a bit. They will have around 21 or 22 lots total. Per the question, Mr. Spalding said the cul-de-sac will probably be 75', which may or may not be sufficient to accommodate a fire truck. Mr. Mengel said he spoke with the fire Marshall about this today, and Section 74-20 says "all streets shall be paved and approved to a width of not less than 24 feet." Mr. Spalding is not asking for a variance of that, but would like to see the right-of-way decreased, not the pavement surface. It is around 800' from Third Avenue to the cul-de-sac. Mayor Flagg asked Mr. Mengel to explain the reasoning behind the requirement that permanently dead-ended streets not exceed 600' in length. Mr. Mengel said he supposed it has something to do with fire access, but cannot come up with a reason otherwise. Per the question, Mr. Spalding said they also received a variance on Fairways, which is the last new subdivision they developed, and the last new subdivision in the Palatka city limits. They are modeling the infrastructure after Fairways. The houses will be priced between \$80,000 - \$100,000, which is affordable for the working people. There is additional room on each side of the roadways for escape in case of a woodland fire. They had this same discussion when they granted the variance for Fairways. Commissioner Brown said the landscape is different in this instance; this area is tree-lined. Mr. Spalding said fire hydrants will be located every 300 ft. Mayor Flagg said the Commission needs to know how long the roadway at Fairways is so they will know what precedent has been set. Per the question, Mr. Spalding explained the proposed drainage plan. All the water will run in the direction of the water retention pond. SJRWMD will tell them how big the retention area has to be and how much runoff they have to contain in so many hours. Per the question, they plan to have all single-family residences. Commissioner Brown said he should install sidewalks and curbing, so the City won't have to do it later. Inward drainage doesn't work well, and the City

doesn't need more drainage problems. Mr. Spalding said people at Fairways walk on the street and like it better than the sidewalks. Fairways totals 23 lots. Commissioner Brown said sidewalks should be part of his master plan. It is costing the City a large sum of money to install and repair sidewalks all over town. Per the question, Mr. Spalding said Fairways drains via swell on the outside of the road to a water retention area at the bottom. Per questions, the front lots are buildable; they will have a minimum square footage on the houses, but there is no minimum they are required to follow. Mayor Flagg then took each request individually for discussion and voting.

1. Reduction in the minimum right-of-way width from 60 to 50 feet: Mr. Mengel read Code Section 74-13, which says it falls to the Commission to grant or deny variances. He has no personal knowledge of any variances having been granted previously, and checked minutes from those boards that would typically deal with variances on zoning items and planning reviews, going back to the late 1908s, and found no evidence on commission agendas, either. Mayor Flagg noted the property on either side is still in the County, and the traffic flow comes off of Third Avenue. Mr. Bush said most times r/w is wider than the road surface in order to accommodate utilities and infrastructure. The amount of utilities that would need to go through there will be limited, as it is a dead-end road. This would be the most innocuous of the variances requested. Mr. Mengel agreed. Commissioner Azula moved to grant a variance for the proposed subdivision at 507 Third Avenue to reduce the right-of-way width from 60 feet to 50 feet. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.
2. & 3. No curbing and no sidewalks: Commissioner Brown said they need to have both curbing and sidewalks for future use. Mayor Flagg said this proposed subdivision is comparable to Fairways and asked if they had had any complaints. Mr. Mengel said they should check with any of the City's departments to determine if they have received any complaints about poor drainage, etc. This may be a little different situation, but not very. Mr. Bush said most times, after the lots are sold out and the developers are gone, people come in and want sidewalks and curbing, and then the City is stuck with providing them. Mr. Mengel said it is important to remember that this is a subdivision that will have to be accepted by the City Commission, and the right-of-way will become public right-of-way. Commissioner Azula said this is going to be so close to Winn Dixie and the proposed Walmart, and there will be a lot of pedestrian traffic. He would like to see curbs and sidewalks. Commissioner Brown moved to deny the request for a variance on curbing and sidewalks for the proposed subdivision at 507 Third Avenue. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.
4. Permission for a dead-end street exceeding 600 feet in length: Commissioner Norwood moved to grant a variance to allow construction of a dead-end street exceeding 600 feet in length for the proposed subdivision at 507 Third Avenue. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion. Per discussion, Mr. Spalding said the short side of the property is 805 feet and the road will not be much longer than that. It will be slightly more than 200 feet beyond the standard. The cul-de-sac requires a radius of not less than 75 feet to the centerline. It will require 3 hydrants. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unopposed.

EDGAR JOHNSON SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER – Long Term Lease – Mayor Flagg noted this discussion is carried over from the 9/27/01 meeting and asked for the City Manager's report on the negotiations. Mr. Bush said the full lease is attached to the agenda. He met with Mr. Holmes and representatives of the Center and came to an agreement on a 50-year lease, which contains a reverter clause, should the property cease to be used as a senior citizens center and considerations for renewal of the lease at the end of the term, if the center is still active. All parties have agreed to the terms. Commissioner Brown moved to grant and execute a lease on ½ acre of the Oak Hill West Cemetery Extension property to the Edgar Johnson Senior Citizens Center for a term of 50 years. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

#### REPORTS:

- a. Codes Enforcement Board – Kenny Downs, 2020 Ashford Lane, Chairman, said he wants to bring the Commission up to date on their actions. They are discussing ways to resolve some of the code enforcement problems in the community with dilapidated

homes. One of the major costs of clean up is the county's landfill tipping fees. He spoke with Rick Leary, County Administrator, about ways to resolve this. The Board can put a \$25/day fine on some of these houses, but most of the offenders can't afford to pay those fines, let alone be able to afford to clean up their properties. They are working closely with Keep Putnam Beautiful. In the past they could not use inmate help on private property, but by using the nuisance ordinance and having the City involved in the clean-up, he talked with people at the correctional facility and in Tallahassee and they spoke to the City Manager about the use of a front-end loader and dump truck. These dilapidated houses are drug-user-gathering places. If one catches on fire, it will burn down many homes around it and put people on the streets. The county has the same problem with dilapidated houses; this is a great opportunity for the city and county to work together to rid the area of these problems. They have been working with Keep Putnam Beautiful about using their landfill pass and partnering with them. The County Commission is very much in favor of this. They can bring two dump trucks to this in addition to waiving tipping fees. They could conceivably clean up a site in a matter of a few days and move on to the next house. If they do two a month, one inside and one outside the city limits, they could get 48 – 50 houses cleaned up a year. Obtaining a nuisance abatement order takes some time and money, but they can get a few started through the system now. The Codes Enforcement Board has been working on this for some time. The people living in these neighborhoods will be pleased that these nuisances are being eliminated. Mr. Bush said he has concerns about DOC people going on private property; that needs to be worked out. Mr. Downs said it has already been worked out. Mr. Bush said city crews are already strapped for manpower, and these would have to be done when the growing season ends, during winter months. It can be done, and he would like to explore it with the County and the Codes Board and then come back with a plan that can be presented to both Commissions. Mayor Flagg said they need to work out the boundaries that would be covered under this joint venture, as they don't want to be sending crews out to tear down houses in Interlachen. Mr. Downs said it would be in the 'greater Palatka' area, and not further out in the county. City and County staff should determine the priority list of houses that will be targeted. Mr. Bush said the next step is to put a plan in writing and present it to both Commissions. Commissioner Brown said there are some houses that don't need tearing down; there is HUD money available to help teach kids at the schools to do this type of work. She wants Code Enforcement to look at this, also. She moved to direct the Codes Enforcement Board to move forward with this nuisance abatement project and to direct them to look for funding sources for renovation, also. Commissioner Norwood seconded the motion. Mr. Downs said it is not proper for their board to go by and look at these houses when they are brought to them. They can look at the pictures and hear the complaint. They go on what the Building Department says they can do. There is also SHIP money available to help people repair their homes, and he believes the County needs to raise their limit on that so more than one major repair can be accomplished. Commissioner Norwood said this is a good opportunity to continue developing a partnership with the County.

James Williams, Ocean Street, said when they tear down houses they lien the property for the expense, and asked if they can start giving out grants to replace the homes. Mayor Flagg said agencies such as Putnam-Clay-Flagler Economic Opportunity Council have those types of programs. The City does not have a committee that can look at houses that have gotten to the point of being code enforcement cases. They do not want to 'water down' what they are dealing with now. By the time they have gotten to the Codes Enforcement Board, the owners have received numerous notices. If they need help repairing their houses, they should come forward in a different format. They should not be going to the Code Enforcement Board asking for help to repair their house; by the time it gets to that point, it is time to take action to abate the nuisance. Mr. Williams said the City has the means to get CDBG grants to replace the houses. They have an advisory board that looks at the needs of the community.

Debbie Banks, Code Enforcement Officer, said the main problem with the City being able to do anything with the properties is that the City doesn't own them. They are still privately owned. Commissioner Norwood said once the properties are cleaned up they need to be maintained, which is another issue. Mr. Downs gave an example of a property that is worth \$1,500 and has a tax lien on it, and it costs the City \$5,000 to clean it up, they still don't own the property. You can file a lien, but then you have to buy the tax

certificates, which may cost another \$600 - \$800. The City needs to be able to clean them up as inexpensively as possible. Many of the landowners are absentee owners, and keeping their lots cleaned should be a neighborhood project. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unopposed.

b. Recovery of attorney fees on code enforcement actions – Mr. Mengel said he provided text for an amendment to the Code, section 30-38. Commissioner Azula moved to direct the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance amending Section 30-38 of the Code to provide a provision for the recovery of legal expenses on code enforcement actions. Commissioner Norwood seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

c. Engineering Services for SRF Pre-Construction Grant Services for Drinking Water Facilities – Mr. Bush said the City received six responses to its request for qualifications from interested engineering firms. He asked the Commission to appoint a committee to review and rank these requests and award a contract to the engineer. The grant application, including engineering plans, needs to be completed and submitted prior to November 15. The water facility plans must be submitted by December 15, and the review by DEP must be completed by February 15 in order for the City to be included on the priority list for funding. This grant is for \$204,000, and they are required to meet those deadlines or the money will be given to someone else. Commissioner Brown moved to accept Mr. Bush's recommendation to appoint Commissioner Norwood, Allen Bush, Mike Felton, Platt Drew and Randy Porter as a committee to review and rank engineering firms and negotiate & award a contract for engineering services for the SRF pre-construction grant services for drinking water facilities. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

RESOLUTION – The Main Street Manager read a resolution entitled A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, IN SUPPORT OF ACTIVITIES BY GOVERNMENT TO ASSURE DOMESTIC PEACE AND SECURITY, AND EFFORTS BY PEOPLE TO RESUME THEIR DAILY LIVES, AS A DEMONSTRATION OF AMERICA'S STRENGTH AND SPIRIT. Commissioner Brown moved to adopt Resolution #7.75 as presented. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken with the following results: Commissioners Azula, Brown, Norwood and Mayor Flagg, Yes; Nays, none. Resolution No. 7-75 was declared adopted.

APPOINTMENT – Putnam County Library Board – Commissioner Norwood moved to recommend to the Putnam County Board of County Commissioners, the appointment of Annie M. Spell to the Putnam County Library Board, for a three-year term to expire 6/30/04. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Planning Director Adam Mengel had nothing to report.

Fire Chief Rudy Howard said with all the terrorism going on in the nation, as the Fire Chief and City Safety Officer he is urging and recommending that the City delay or cancel Halloween trick-or-treating, scheduled for October 31. He does not believe they should take any chances by allowing it to proceed.

Allegra Kitchens, S. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, agreed with Chief Howard due to the terrorism and anthrax scares. Mayor Flagg said it would be to the City's advantage to speak with the County and the other municipalities to determine what others are doing, in an effort to have some uniformity. They should promote organized activities in lieu of door-to-door activities. Mr. Bush agreed whatever they do, it should be a coordinated effort. Mayor Flagg said the unofficial designation for trick-or-treat across the county is Oct. 31 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. The City has no direct liability in the issue, but there are always tragedies associated with it that occur, and people still do it. Chief Howard said in this time of war it is a safety consideration. The City should take the lead. Church or civic group based functions are fine, but with people walking up and down the streets, you don't know what will happen. Mayor Flagg asked Mr. Holmes and Chief Getchell if canceling trick-or-treat is enforceable or legal. Mr. Holmes said you would have to pass a special ordinance in order to enforce it, and you would have to prove the

constitutionality of that ordinance. It must be specific, particular, and define the behavior you are prohibiting, similar to the questions that surround the vagrancy and loitering ordinances. It could be a nightmare for the Police Dept. to enforce. Are the Police going to arrest trick-or-treaters, or just take them home? Mr. Bush suggested some of the City's public safety people get with the County's public safety people and discuss the issue, and come back with a consensus.

Chief Getchell said unless it is a state of emergency, it would be very difficult to impose any sort of rule, and next to impossible to enforce. He has not spoken to Chief Howard on this, but can understand his concerns. Other municipalities around the nation may well cancel festivities related to Halloween. He would like to sit down away from this environment and discuss the issues with Chief Howard.

Daniel Ziem 401 Olive Street, said Halloween trick-or-treat has never been cancelled due to war. Chief Howard said the City can just not designate any hours for trick-or-treat. Mr. Bush said he would rather get some consensus from the people in the City and County as to whether or not they believe it should be cancelled. Commissioner Azula said terrorists are trying to disrupt our normal way of life, and they should not allow them to do it. This is just what the terrorists want them to do. They can be more cautious, and put out warnings, but we should not change our way of living. Are they going to stop doing other things because of terrorists? Mayor Flagg said they should designate the regular hours, but also should urge folks to participate in group functions and supervise their kids, whatever they choose to do. Commissioner Azula said she knows most of the kids in their neighborhoods; it is different from some parents who bring their kids in from outlying areas. Certain neighborhoods are targeted for trick-or-treat, which is probably not a good thing, but they can't live in fear. Mayor Flagg said law enforcement, public safety and administration should make a joint statement and get it to the newspaper. Mr. Bush said Jeff Norton is planning a large Halloween party at the Price Martin center. Mayor Flagg said individual organizations should come forward and provide a list of activities that are going on. Parents should be urged to accompany their children.

Rev. Ted Rodda, 2017 Oak Street, said this is a difficult issue, and they will have a hard time enforcing a cancellation. They should come up with a list of safety issues & precautions, and publicize it in the newspaper, urging parents to take care. After discussion, the consensus of the Commission was to direct Chief Howard, Chief Getchell and Mr. Bush to get together with County officials to come to a consensus on the issue.

Police Chief Gary Getchell had nothing to report.

City Manager Allen Bush said everyone has probably seen the FBI alert that was posted today concerning possible terrorist activities over the next few days. They are asking public safety officials to be on high alert. The City is doing everything it can to safeguard its facilities. Department Heads met today to come up with strategies on assistance and patrol. They should take these warnings seriously, even though it is not likely that something bad will happen here. He urges all citizens to report any suspicious activity to City Hall, especially around our water tanks, well fields and hydrants.

Mr. Bush said the County has appointed a Task Force to explore county-wide strategic fire planning. He would like the Commission to forward the names of Chief Rudy Howard, Firefighter Brian Connell, Fire Capt. Randy Porter, and himself to serve on that Task Force. He provided them with a copy of the Task Force Mission Statement. Per discussion, a commissioner was not appointed as the decision will come back to the Commission. Commissioner Brown said she believes they ought to have someone at the table during discussions. Mayor Flagg said one cannot speak for all; this task force is going to develop a plan, which they will all receive at the same time. The County cannot take any action without Commission approval. Mr. Bush said the City will be well-represented and will have the most number of representatives on that task force. It will be a long process, and a draft will take some time. Commissioner Norwood moved to ask the County to appoint Rudy Howard, Brian Connell, Randy Porter and Allen Bush to the County Fire Task Force. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

Mr. Bush said he will be on vacation next week. Ms. Driggers will have his contact information and he will be in touch with her almost daily. The department heads know to direct anything that comes up to Ms. Driggers, and anyone else should do the same. She can contact him at any time.

Finance Director Ruby Williams had nothing to report.

City Attorney Don Holmes had nothing to report.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Brown said she received today some information from the Rural Development Council on an Enterprise Florida conference in Lake City. They have an international trade component and will also be discussing tourism opportunities for rural Florida, and she would like to attend. Commissioner Azula moved to allow Commissioner Brown to attend the Enterprise Florida conference. Commissioner Norwood seconded the motion, and asked if there is enough money in the budget to cover expenses. Commissioner Brown said she may have a friend she can stay with. Mayor Flagg said they are planning to attend some national meetings, and some of them are on state committees, so they need to look at what they can do. Commissioner Brown said the Rural Development Council puts them in touch with federal dollars and federal partners. They get contacts and input from Washington. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unopposed.

Commissioner Azula commended Mr. Bush on his resolution of the Fire Task Force issues; they were resolved properly and he appreciates his advice and help.

Commissioner Azula said he has been getting a lot of calls on lawn trash from the tropical storm that has not been picked up. He spoke with one neighbor who has had a pile of yard trash for four weeks, while yard trash is being picked up all around him. Mr. Bush said he has received numerous calls himself, and directs them all to Mr. Williams. Commissioner Azula said people are promised their trash will be picked up in two days, and it doesn't get done even weeks later. They should not be making promises they can't keep. Mr. Bush said he has spoken to Sanitation about it and they are working overtime and Saturdays. Mayor Flagg said the issue is that they get one pile, but not the pile next door, and people get frustrated when this keeps happening.

Commissioner Norwood said he has a conflict with the October 25 meeting; he will be out-of-town that evening. Mr. Holmes said he will also be gone that week. Mr. Mengel said they will have a Planning Board meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup>, and will probably have some items from that. After discussion, Commissioner Norwood moved to set the next two meetings on Tuesday, October 30, 2001 and Thursday, November 15, 2001. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

Mayor Flagg asked for confirmations on reservations for the Lake Butler NEFLC meeting for Thursday evening. Commissioners Azula & Norwood said they will attend.

Mayor Flagg said they all received an invitation from DEP Greenway & Trails for the grand opening of the visitor's center on Saturday, Oct. 27 from 10:30 a.m. – noon.

Mayor Flagg said Representative Larry Crow has a bill coming up in the Legislature, HB113, concerning prohibiting Chromated Copper Arsenic treated wood in publicly funded playground equipment. The state will be coming in with something on that and they will get copies of this to the media. Mr. Bush said they are staying away from wood in playgrounds.

Mayor Flagg noted Mayor Godwin of Interlachen is recovering from a recent heart attack; their Councilman Henderson is in recovery from a stroke, and another Councilman Lyles is recovering from knee surgery. There is also a lot of trauma with the events that happened in their police department. The Commission's thoughts are with them.

Mayor Flagg said the City needs representation for Friday morning-after-commission-meetings radio broadcasts, and they would like to rotate those duties.

Mr. Bush said the City has received a Byrne Grant award in the amount of \$51,537.00. The officers at the PD work hard to acquire this and other grants. Chief Getchell said the PD has received this grant for the last six years. It is used for community policing for the Northside. It funds a position for one year and purchases equipment for that officer. That officer will work an 11-block area doing community-policing initiatives. Commissioner Brown moved to authorize Mayor Flagg to execute the Byrne Grant in the amount of \$51,537.00 for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Commissioner Norwood.

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CITY CLERK

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MAYOR