

Proceedings of a regular meeting of the City Commission of Palatka, Florida held on the 12th day of December, 2002.

PRESENT:	Mayor	Karl N. Flagg
	Commissioner	Mary Lawson Brown
	Commissioner	Hernan Azula
	Commissioner	James Norwood, Jr.
	Commissioner	George Sanders

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Allen R. Bush, City Attorney Donald E. Holmes, City Clerk Betsy Jordan Driggers, Police Chief Gary Getchell, Fire Chief Ken Venables, Planning Director Adam Mengel, WTP Supt. Mike Felton, WWTP Supt. Platt Drew, Sanitation & Streets Supt. Bernard Williams, W & S Asst. Supt. Rhett McCamey, Parks Supt. Jeff Norton, Golf Pro Tom Kukitz.

INVOCATION: The Reverend Wes Taylor, Putnam Community Blood Bank

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Coach Willard Cooper

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 10/24/02 – Commissioner Sanders moved to approve the minutes as read. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

PROCLAMATION – Mayor Flagg presented Wes Taylor of Putnam Community Blood Bank with a proclamation declaring December, 2002 as Putnam County Blood Bank Month in recognition of their 10 years of service to the citizens of Palatka.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW AIRPORT SUPERVISOR – Mr. Bush introduced Michael A. “Mike” Cavallo, the new Airport Supervisor, and welcomed him to Palatka. Mike will begin work on Monday and is eager to get his feet on the ground. Everyone is looking forward to working with him. Mr. Cavallo said he is grateful for the opportunity they have given him to manage this airport, which is a national asset as part of the National Plan of Airports. He would like to see the Airport grow, and he is sure it will. Commissioner Brown said since 1995 she has been gathering information on international trade, and she is very interested in expanding the airport so that they can begin doing some international trade. She will pass that information on to him. Mr. Cavallo said the Airport is already in a designated Enterprise Zone, and he would like to also obtain a Foreign Trade Zone designation for it.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH – December, 2002 – Commissioner Sanders joined Mayor Flagg in presenting certificates of recognition to the following students for academic excellence, achievement, citizenship and attendance:

Abram Jones	Beasley Middle School
Natasha Costa	Browning-Pearce Elementary School
Dustin Eeversohl	E. H. Miller School
Amber Weaver	James A. Long Elementary School
Bragan Mace	Jenkins Middle School
Dylan Rosenberg	Kelly Smith Elementary School
Sean D. Jackson	Mellon Elementary School
Kadeja Cooper	Moseley Elementary School
Corey Roan	Palatka High School
Torie Bennett	Peniel Baptist Academy
Kellen Hill	River Breeze Elementary School

PUBLIC COMMENTS – There were none.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. Authorize City Planning Director and Chief Building Official to negotiate with the County Planning, Zoning and Building Director to develop an inter-local agreement with the City of Palatka for reciprocal building official, plan review and inspection services, per a request received from the Putnam County BOCC & Peter Brown, Director, Putnam County Planning, Building & Zoning Department.

- b. Surplus Water & Sewer Distribution Dump Truck & remove from inventory for disposition at auction – Rhett McCamey, Water & Sewer Distr.
- c. Authorize advertisement of Request for Qualifications from Irrigation Specialists for the Golf Course Irrigation Project, per Allen R. Bush & Tom Kukitz, Golf Pro.
- d. Award Base Bid for Airport Security Fencing to Florida Detention Systems, Inc. in the amount of \$139,989.68, per recommendation from HTA, Airport Engrs.
- e. Forgive Arts Council's \$2,197 debt for the Larimer Arts Center Chair Lift and accept ownership of equipment, to be transferred to the City of Palatka, per recommendation – Allen R. Bush

Commissioner Brown asked for assurance that any Inter-local Agreement negotiated with the County come back before the Commission for final approval. Mayor Flagg said it would. Commissioner Sanders moved to pass the items on the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

PETITION TO REZONE NEIGHBORHOOD – all property south of River Street, north of Whitewater Drive, east of S. 13th Street & west of S. 10th Street from R-2 (high density multi-family) to R-1A (low density single-family residential) – Allegra Kitchens & neighbors – Ms. Kitchens, 1027 S. 12th Street, said they are zoned R-2 in the middle of all this R-1A zoning. She and her neighbors feel they should all be zoned the same. R-2 is high-density multi-family, and this neighborhood has been made up of single-family residences at least since 1876, when Hart's Plat was recorded and her house was built. They have a very quiet neighborhood. The only problems they have had in recent years began when some of the older homeowners died and their homes became rental homes, and that is when they began experiencing problems with prostitution and drugs. They understand this won't stop rental houses, but R-2 zoning does allow high-density multi-family units. They don't want apartment complexes or multi-unit public housing to come in. Problems follow low-cost rental units. They want to keep the character of their neighborhood from further deteriorating and begin to improve the character. Both the north and south historic districts changed their zoning to improve their neighborhoods, and they have improved. They would like to be zoned like their neighbors.

Planning Director Adam Mengel said the R-2 zoning currently would permit 2-family houses, patio houses, cluster and town houses, in addition to single-family residential; up to 8 dwellings are permitted per acre. R-1A permits only single-family dwellings, RR rights of way and family day-care homes, and only 4 units per acre. Per the city attorney's question, the Planning Board has not looked at this to determine if they are going to create any non-conforming properties by changing the zoning. Mr. Holmes said if there are any lot sizes that are less than ¼ acre, and the home burns or is otherwise destroyed, the lot-owner would not be permitted to rebuild. It is his understanding that the Commission is being asked to initiate this rezoning, which is permitted by code (#94-38). The procedure is essentially the same, but the application would be generated by the City Planning Director. If the Planning Board does recommend against the rezoning, it would take a 4-vote majority of the Commission to override their recommendation. The difference here is the fees, which are usually paid by the citizen. In this case, the City would absorb the fees. If the area is more than 10 acres, it would have to be treated accordingly, and two public hearings should be held, at least one after 5:00 p.m. on a weekday. It will have to be publicly advertised. If it is over 10 acres, they are not technically required to send a letter to each individual lot owner, but he recommends they do send letters to each individual lot owner in addition to newspaper advertisements. He recommends taking a conservative approach to the advertising, and Mr. Mengel agrees. Mayor Flagg said before the Commission sends this to the Planning Board they need to get the 'pulse of the community', and recommended they agenda this item for the 2nd meeting in January so the Commission will be better suited to make a decision. Commissioner Brown said she would like to know how many lots are non-conforming. Mr. Holmes said even if citizens were in favor of the rezoning, this would still have to go before the Planning Board. Rezoning issues are not based on a popularity contest. The City can submit an application to the Planning Board to rezone the entire parcel, and if 40% of those people don't want to be rezoned, that should not hold any sway over whether or not the Planning Board decides what the appropriate zoning should be, as long as they follow the Code. The Planning Board weighs requests against standard criteria when making their decision. Mayor Flagg said they should make it clear that they are not sending a directive to the Planning Board to rezone these parcels; they are sending a

petition to them so they can apply the necessary criteria. The cost is not only linked to advertising, but also to staff man-hours and certified mail-outs. There are some 70 parcels in this area. Commissioner Norwood said people sometimes put their names on petitions not fully understanding what they are signing. These individuals need to know the consequences of rezoning. He asked if individual property owners will have an option to withdraw from the zoning. Mr. Holmes said they cannot, if they are not the petitioners. If they do want to table this item for a future meeting, Mr. Mengel should look into this further so that they are not spending money sending an application for rezoning to the Planning Board which that board cannot support. He can at least form a tentative idea from his perspective as to whether this is a wise or practical move. Commissioner Azula moved to schedule this item for further discussion at the 2nd meeting in January, and to direct Mr. Mengel to come back with a report, in layman's terms, on the feasibility of this request and how it will affect the current properties in this district should the zoning be changed, to be submitted to the Commission prior to the 2nd meeting in January. Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

RESOLUTION – the Clerk read a resolution entitled **A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, URGING THE FDOT STRATEGIC INTERMODAL SYSTEM STEERING COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER US HWY 17 (SR15) AS A PRIMARY ROUTE FOR INTEGRATION INTO THE FDOT STRATEGIC INTERMODAL SYSTEM, AND TO CONSIDER STATE HWY 315 AS AN EAST-WEST CONNECTOR ROUTE BETWEEN I-95 IN JACKSONVILLE AND I-75 IN OCALA.** Commissioner Brown moved to adopt the resolution as read. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion. Mayor Flagg said he is concerned about the Palatka Commission asking FDOT to consider SR-315 as an east-west connector, as it does not come through Palatka. Interlachen should have precedent in stating a case for that. Mr. Bush said the County Commission asked for their support on this and they are looking at this from a countywide aspect. Commissioner Brown said they are looking at support for upgrading all the roads in Putnam County, and the more support they get the more likely they are to get the dollars for it, and the stronger their case is. They would certainly want support from the County to get certain areas of the City upgraded. Mr. Bush said if Hwy 315 is 4-laned and becomes part of the system, it will be to Palatka's advantage. Mr. Holmes advised leaving the resolution as-is. There being no further discussion, a roll-call vote was taken with the following results: Commissioners Azula, Brown, Norwood, Sanders and Mayor Flagg, yes; Nays, none. The resolution was declared adopted.

ORDINANCE – the Clerk read an ordinance entitled **AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, BY AMENDING SECTION 54-32, MEMBERSHIP, SO AS TO INCLUDE A NON-VOTING SCHOOL DISTRICT APPOINTEE TO THE CITY PLANNING BOARD; AMENDING SECTION 54-33 TO PROVIDE FOR APPOINTMENT OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.** Commissioner Brown moved to pass the ordinance on the second reading for adoption. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken with the following results: Commissioners Azula, Brown, Norwood, Sanders and Mayor Flagg, yes; Nays, none. The ordinance was declared adopted.

APPOINTMENT – PLANNING BOARD – Appoint a School District Representative for an indefinite term – Commissioner Norwood moved to appoint C. L. Overturf, Jr. to the Planning Board for an indefinite term as the Putnam County School District Representative. Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

APPOINTMENTS – PLANNING BOARD – Mayor Flagg noted that both Mr. Roberts and Ms. Jester are present in the audience. Commissioner Brown moved to reappoint W. W. “Bunky” Roberts and Jill Jester to the Planning Board for additional 3-year terms to expire December 31, 2005. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

Bunky Roberts, Chairman of the Planning Board and member for 27 years, said the current Planning Board is the finest that has been seated in all his years on the Board.

They are widely diverse and aware of the citizens' needs in Palatka. He thanked them for re-appointing him for what he predicts to be his final term on this Board. Commissioner Norwood said he has had an opportunity to sit in on some of those meetings, and he appreciates the job he and Ms. Jester are doing for the citizens of Palatka.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Planning Director Adam Mengel had nothing to report.

Police Chief Gary Getchell had nothing to report.

Fire Chief Ken Venables invited the Commission to ride by the Kay Larkin station at their convenience, as the firefighters continue to improve its appearance. This week they have erected planters in front of the station.

City Clerk Betsy Driggers, per the question, said today's closing of City Hall went smoothly; there were no problems. Mayor Flagg expressed the Commission's condolences to her on the recent loss of her beloved mother. Ms. Driggers thanked Mayor Flagg and the Commission and Staff for their flowers, support and presence during the funeral proceedings, and on behalf of her family thanked Mayor Flagg for all his support and the outstanding job he did of officiating at the funeral. She said with his permission her family would like to publish the poem he wrote in her mother's honor in the newspaper as a Christmas tribute.

Ms. Driggers said she passed out two called meeting agendas, both scheduled for December 19th. The 10:00 meeting is a workshop on the fire/water supply ordinance, which was proposed by Fire Chief Ken Venables. The 12:00 meeting is a called meeting for the consideration and adoption of a resolution giving the City Commission the authority to assess a special fire district tax in the coming year, should they choose to do so. Also, next Friday the City Hall/B&Z/Annex employees will hold their annual Christmas luncheon, and all department heads and commissioners are invited.

City Attorney Don Holmes had nothing to report. Mayor Flagg said they all appreciate the counsel that Mr. Holmes provides to the Commission and all the Boards. He noticed while attending a Board meeting the other day that the City Attorney was not sitting at the dais with the rest of the Board. He should be sitting at the right hand of the Chairman of each and every Board whose meetings he attends in order to give legal advice.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Brown:

- Said she put some information in the commissioners' boxes on an International Academy coming up. She will also leave applications with Mr. Bush. She would really like to see Palatka hold a round-table meeting here. Maybe this is something the new airport supervisor can work on to facilitate. They can invite representatives from the County and all municipalities within the County.
- Said she hopes they all have a Happy Holiday Season.

Commissioner Azula:

- Expressed Christmas Greetings to all in attendance, and asked the supervisors to pass his greetings along to all their employees. City employees do good work for them, and the goodwill they create lasts all year. He hears very good things about the jobs they are doing.
- Said he would like them to start thinking about and reflecting on what their role is and what they should be doing. Normally, they are reactive, and they should be more proactive about what they want the City to look like in the coming years. It is so much nicer when they are not creating sensational headlines.
- Said he would like to look into their Boards and get some understanding of what the Boards are doing for them. They may need to set some guidelines for future selection of members. Their board members don't get enough training and have little indication of what is expected of them;
- Said lately the truck traffic on Reid Street has increased heavily over the past year. It is like a racetrack for semi tractor-trailers. They have a lot of automobile traffic and 30,000 – 40,000 lb. Semi's speeding down the road side-by-side. They need to

address the speeding problems. If you go look at Waldo on Hwy 301, they don't have a problem. They are considered a speed trap, which has worked in their favor to slow those semi's down.

- Expressed Christmas Greetings to all.

Commissioner Norwood:

- Said there have been a lot of changes with City Departments over the year, especially with department heads, and with those changes comes expectations so that the City might realize all the potential they have. The personnel for proactive action is in place, and he believes this commission has set itself forward to support and be an asset to department heads so they may help departments move forward. This year they have pointed the City in the direction it needs to go. He thanks God for all the commissioners and employees that make the City what it is. He sets the direction for them.
- Said he and Mr. Mengel have discussed getting the semi tractors & trailers out of the residential areas, and he would like to see some action taken on these issues.
- Said he is thankful to be a part of this Commission, which God has assembled. He is elated with the type of harmony this commission has. He is excited about the coming year. They all know what the "T" in team means. He appreciates all the help they have given him as the least experienced Commissioner, and is grateful for their allowing him to be a part of this team.

Mayor Flagg:

- Asked Jeff Norton to come forward and give an update on the train depot. Mr. Norton passed out photos of the construction, saying they are now at the halfway point. Putnam County has awarded the City \$20,000 to go towards a grant addendum which will net the City \$88,000 to finish the project. He passed out a highlighted blueprint showing a wall separating the museum from the waiting area. At this time they feel that they should omit the wall and leave the area open. The museum will still have the artifacts on display in secure display cases. He is meeting with the Railroad Preservation Society on Tuesday to get their feelings on this. Commissioner Brown said for the last 15 years or so they have been using a large room to build miniature trains, and this has never come to fruition. Mr. Bush agreed the rooms in the back have been underutilized. They are not asking the museum to move out. This building will be occupied 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Commissioner Brown said they could move all the historical things into the miniature train room, and keep some historical objects in the main room. Mr. Bush said he does not know what the reaction of the Preservation Society will be, but he agrees that parts of that building can be put to better use. Commissioner Brown said the bus people might want to add some bus memorabilia. The City has been gracious enough to let the Train Society have more than half that building. She would like to see that museum open several days each week. Mayor Flagg said Mr. Bush and Mr. Norton need to get the Preservation Society in to do some visioning; they don't want anyone who should be on the inside to read about these things in the newspaper. Commissioner Azula said everyone who uses a city building should turn in an annual report on the use of the facility, as part of the budgeting process. They depend on word-of-mouth to know what is going on. They only see these tenants when they want money or have a problem. The president of these clubs should appear before this commission once a year. Mayor Flagg said it is the City's responsibility to determine if these buildings are meeting their utilization expectations. They will depend upon Mr. Bush for those reports. Commissioner Brown said they have always said a room should be set aside in the Depot for meetings, possibly with a small kitchen. It is a public building for all the citizens, and not just for a few. Mr. Norton said they are looking at developing a "park & ride" area, and are hoping to obtain the land north of the building from CSX. If that doesn't come through, they will look at putting it at the south side of the building. It will be next to the police substation, and there will be some security there. Commissioner Brown thanked Mr. Norton for going after all the grants he gets for them and for doing such a great job for the City.
- Said with the new airport supervisor, he would like Mr. Bush and the Clerk to get the information together to advertise to seat a new Airport Advisory Board for the new

supervisor. There is not a need at this time for monthly meetings, but they do need to get it organized.

- Said he agrees with Commissioner Azula on the need for training for new Board members, as it is crucial for those board members to understand their role. They don't expect people to be informed just because they have been appointed. They need to provide orientation to every person appointed to these boards. He also believes they need to provide refresher courses to persons serving repeating terms. There are regulations, laws and protocol to follow. Some things come to them that should not come to them, and would not if things had been handled appropriately and according to proper procedure at the Board level. It places a burden on the Commission. They also need to schedule a joint Commission-Planning Board meeting. He does not need a social relationship with the board members, but he wants to know that they understand the City's codes, which regulates what they do. Commissioner Norwood said the City should also generate a 'membership package' in addition to the orientation. Mr. Mengel said they do provide new board members with orientation packets.
- Said any staff person who is responsible for dealing with the public needs to be trained in customer service. You cannot hire people just because they have a 'pretty resume'. Everyone who answers telephones and handles the public needs a customer service refresher. They don't need to be nice to only certain individuals; they need to be nice to every single individual that walks in the door or calls in to any city facility. First Coast Institute has some customer service classes that are going on, and he would like to see those courses mandated for supervisors of those individuals as well as those individuals. The supervisors should be experts on customer service techniques in order to mentor those under their charge. They cannot compromise on this. People have a negative perception of City Hall and than needs to be changed. Commissioner Brown said they all need this type of training in order to make them all more conscious of other people. They all have bad days. Commissioner Azula said they are all servants; the citizens are the ultimate bosses. Mayor Flagg said the PD is doing an excellent job of dealing with the community, and they all need to follow suit, right down to their advisory boards. They all need to be user-friendlier.
- Said as of next Friday he will complete two years as Mayor of this community, and he is extremely grateful for the opportunity. It has been fun, and they have all been very good to him. He expressed his wishes that all have a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Years.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m. upon a motion by Commissioner Brown.

CITY CLERK

MAYOR