

Proceedings of a regular meeting of the City Commission of the City of Palatka, Florida, held on the 18th day of July, 2002.

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

ABSENT:	Commissioner	George E. Sanders
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Also Present: City Manager Allen R. Bush, City Attorney Donald E. Holmes, City Clerk Betsy Jordan Driggers, Finance Director Ruby Williams, Police Chief Gary Getchell, Fire Chief Kenneth Venables, Police Lt. James Griffith, Planning Director Adam Mengel, WTP Supt. Mike Felton, WWTP Supt. Platt Drew, Sanitation & Streets Supt. Bernard Williams, Sanitation Foreman Ed Chandler, W & S Supt. Gene Garrett, W & S Asst. Supt. Rhett McCamey, Parks Supt. Jeff Norton, Main Street Manager Debbie Banks.

INVOCATION – Dr. Algerine Adkins, Evangelist; Holy Temple of God

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Police Sgt. Alex Sharp

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 6/13/02 and 6/18/02 workshop – Commissioner Azula moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

PUBLIC RECOGNITION – Mayor Flagg and Chief Getchell presented Mrs. Lois Whitaker with a Good Citizenship Award in recognition of her heroic actions in preventing the attempted kidnapping of a small child in the WalMart parking lot in May of this year.

Mayor Flagg presented Chris King, former manager of the Palatka Publix, with a Community Service Award and City lapel pin in recognition of his generosity in donating food and products to the City whenever called upon. Mr. King was manager of Palatka Publix for 10 years, and was transferred to the Anastasia Island Publix on June 29.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – Clint Snyder, 7800 Crill Avenue, President of the Conlee Mural Committee, gave the Commission an update on the recent publicity that Palatka has received from the mural program, and presented the City Commission with a framed artist's print of the mural "Heartbeat of Palatka", which appears on the side of the City Hall Annex. Mayor Flagg accepted the print on behalf of the City Commission, and praised the Conlee Mural Committee for all they have done to beautify and promote tourism in Palatka.

CONSENT AGENDA (staff recommendations):

- a. Award bid and authorize execution of contract for Restoration of the Old Train Station with Riverside Builders of Putnam County, Inc., based upon their bid of \$195,480.
- b. Authorize the Mayor to execute an Adopt-A-Byway Litter Removal Agreement with the National Guard & Family Readiness Group to remove litter on Moseley Avenue
- c. Authorize the Mayor to execute an agreement for engineering services with HTA for Phase 1 Water Treatment Plan Improvement per the SRF Grant Project Contract
- d. Authorize the City Manager to renew the Fla. Dept. of Corrections Contract #WS088 for the Street Department's paid prison crew for 2002-03.
- e. Reappoint Marc Spalding and Blanch L. Perry to the Board of Zoning Appeals for five-year terms to expire July 2007, per City policy.
- f. Authorize Execution of Amendment #2 to the Hartman & Associates contract for engineering services on the WWTP Effluent Disposal for the Municipal Golf Course.

Mr. Bush asked the Commission to pull item (f) from the consent agenda to discuss. Commissioner Azula moved to approve Items (a) through (e) on the consent agenda. Commissioners Brown and Norwood seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

CONTRACT – HARTMAN & ASSOCIATES – WWTP Effluent Disposal for Municipal Golf Course – Amendment #2 - Mr. Bush said he is still in the process of negotiating with the engineer on certain points in this agreement, and asked the Commission to approve Parts 1 and 2 only. Commissioner Azula moved to authorize execution of Items 1 and 2 only of Amendment #2 to the Hartman & Associates WWTP Effluent Disposal contract. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

TRIM CALENDAR – ADOPT TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATE – 2002/03 Budget Year – Mr. Bush said the budget presented at the workshops was based on a tentative millage rate of 7.8 mills, which represents an increase of 9.18% above the rolled-back rate. This is his recommendation, based upon the balanced tentative budget. Commissioner Norwood moved to adopt the tentative millage rate of 7.8 mills. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

GOLF COURSE ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION – Perry Parish, Chairman, Golf Course Advisory Board, read a letter of recommendation (filed) pertaining to the future direction of the golf course procedure, which is designed to increase play and keep expenses in check. Their plan is to raise player membership and player rates in order to purchase equipment and hire additional maintenance personnel. They believe this is necessary to keep the course in playing condition. The members who attended the workshops have agreed that a price increase is a necessary step to move forward. They are looking forward to the new effluent disposal irrigation system. They are not going to concentrate so much on recouping the \$300,000 deficit, as they are going to concentrate on reversing the trend so it does not get larger, and on future profits. Mayor Flagg said he gives all the glory to God for the rain, but if the rain stops tomorrow, where will they be? Will they just revert back to the previous condition? He wants to see a plan spelled out in black and white, something he can look back at and refer to. There are accountability issues here; he would like an official monthly report.

Charlie Baird, Central Avenue, San Mateo, said he is against any increase in membership fees. Increasing prices will drive members away. The Commission should approach the County about helping out, as the majority of the membership lives in Putnam County. Raising prices will have the opposite affect, and membership will decline.

Charles Lowe, 2416 Crill Avenue, said the problems with the course will be resolved by the summer of 2003. He has talked to three county commissioners, and they are 100% behind keeping the golf course solvent. The County needs to get involved with this golf course, which is an asset for Putnam County. People look for a golf course when searching for a home. The irrigation system is very important. The equipment is in a sorry state. They need membership and they need to promote the course through literature at local hotels and restaurants. Mayor Flagg said he hopes the sincerity of the advisory board continues, and that the members who participate and ‘pay the bills’ are always kept advised. They should keep the bulletin board updated for that purpose.

Commissioner Azula said for the last four years they have had drought conditions in Putnam County, and all over. This problem started due to lack of water. It takes less than 6 months without water for the grass to go away. Now the rain is back and the greens are good. How long it will last, no one knows. The irrigation will resolve the problem. Mayor Flagg said rain has nothing to do with the condition of the equipment. They shouldn’t get to the point that the equipment is in terrible shape; they need a comprehensive plan. This Commission has to be involved in what is happening at the golf course. Any increase in prices has to come before the Commission. They need to know there are problems before it reaches the point of crisis. Commissioner Norwood said if they are charging a premium price, they need a premium course for play. Otherwise, it makes no sense to raise rates. A five-year plan is important so that they don’t repeat past mistakes.

RESOLUTION – The Clerk read a resolution entitled A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE PALATKA POLICE DEPARTMENT’S 2002 – 2007 STRATEGIC PLAN. Chief Getchell said they put a lot of work into this document; there were surveys done in the community and inside the department. A lot of people served on a lot of committees to put this together. This plan is a building block; it

is a blue print for the next five years. It is fluid rather than static. As the city's needs change, they can adjust the plan to meet those needs. They will keep the Commission abreast of their progress, good or bad, both in writing and in person. Their next step is to put together specific goals and objectives for the year. At the end of the fiscal year, prior to January, they will present the Commission with an annual report on finances and accomplishments, and future goals. They will remain open to any comments, whether from the community, department or commission. Commissioner Azula moved to adopt the resolution setting forth the Palatka Police Department's 2002 – 2007 Strategic Plan. Commissioner Norwood seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken with the following results: Commissioner Azula, Brown, Norwood and Mayor Flagg, yes; nays, none. Resolution No. 7-87 was declared adopted. Mayor Flagg said they all feel the vibrations of a welcomed change in the department under Chief Getchell's leadership. They would like to assist in promoting this resolution to the citizens of the city. Chief Getchell said he would like a cover letter to go with the resolution to post on the website and distribute to the public. They are open to suggestions for any promotional strategy. They will use this as a training tool, and will provide officers and the public with training on its points. Commissioner Azula thanked Chief Getchell and Lt. Griffith for keeping them all equally informed on items in the PD.

RESOLUTION – The Clerk read a resolution entitled A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, ADOPTING A PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM. Chief Getchell said the Commission directed he and Fire Chief Venables to put together an employee incentive package. At that time, the PD was having difficulty finding quality candidates for employment. They contacted other agencies about their policies. This plan will become a benchmark for many other agencies. Next year as people complete the first phase of the state's DROP program, there will be a shortage of qualified public safety employees. Many state and county agencies will be losing much of their department. Everyone will be clamoring for qualified labor. They will only use this when they need to. If there is an adequate pool of candidates, there will be no reason to use city money to entice them. There are several different options available which are both fair and reasonable for employee and employer. Mr. Bush asked if a 1-year employment obligation is standard. Chief Getchell said the city's labor attorney informed him that there is a state statute that says they cannot seek reimbursement for anything beyond one year. Chief Venables said the fire service typically does not experience any difficulty in recruiting; however, they will experience the same massive retirements next year as law enforcement. He does not know what impact that will have. They have no career vacancies at this time. Their difficulties lie in retention. In the last 10 years, 18 firefighters have left the City to go to other departments. There is a 300% turnover in the entry-level rank. In terms of recruiting, he does not anticipate having to use any of these provisions. Mr. Holmes asked how paragraph (1) figures in, which has a three-year obligation. Chief Getchell said it only applies to option (2), which involves sending the recruit to the academy. If the other options are employed, the statute does not apply. There being no further discussion, Commissioner Norwood moved to adopt the resolution setting forth public safety employee recruitment incentives. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion. Commissioner Brown asked if there are any minority firefighters. Chief Venables said at this time they are an all while/male department. They don't anticipate losing any career people for another 4-1/2 years unless they have some premature retirements. The upcoming budget does have a provision to recruit 10 new reserve firefighters, and he hopes to develop that into a hiring pool. Commissioner Norwood said he does not promote quotas, but would like to see all of their departments reflect the makeup of the city. Chief Venables said he realizes the demographics of the Fire Department should reflect the demographics of the city, realizing that the turn-over is at the entry-level rank. There being no further discussion, a roll-call vote was taken, with the following results: Commissioners Azula, Brown, Norwood, and Mayor Flagg, yes; nays, none. Resolution No. 7-87 was declared adopted. Chief Getchell said these were their first resolutions, and thanked Ms. Driggers for her help in helping them get these resolutions done.

POLICE PENSION EARLY RETIREMENT INCENTIVE – Lt. James Griffith, Secretary, Palatka Police Pension Board, said due to budget constraints at the PD they are looking at options on saving money by reducing total salaries so that they can upgrade salaries across the board. They would like to revise the pension ordinance to be able to

provide a one-time incentive to allow eligible officers to retire at an increased rate, which amounts to adding about a year's service to their multiplier rate. Only two officers will be able to take advantage of this. This will result in an overall savings for the City while assisting the PD in making the necessary salary adjustments by replacing higher paid officers with officers making entry-level salaries. They included an actuarial review (filed) which states the total additional city contribution will be \$2,764 per year for up to 15 years. This money will be recouped in the first 2 years. Mr. Bush said he supports this incentive. The will help to retain employees by raising the level of salaries. Commissioner Azula moved to direct the Police Officer's Pension Board to submit an ordinance for first reading and adoption adding a one-time retirement incentive increase of 3% for retirement-eligible police officers. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. Commissioner Azula asked if they can do this for all pension plans. Mayor Flagg said the other Boards will need to bring the request to the Commission for action. Commissioner Norwood said this proposal benefits the City as well as the officers, and is a win-win situation. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unopposed.

SANITATION ORDINANCE REVISIONS – Bernard Williams, Superintendent, passed out a letter requesting a change in residential collection starting times. The code says they will begin collection at 7:00 a.m.; he is requesting they change the start time to 5:00 a.m. The usual collection time for many other cities of similar size is 7:00 a.m., but larger cities begin their collections at 5:00 a.m. There is less traffic at that time, and it is cooler. With trucks leaving earlier, they will finish earlier, and it leaves more time for maintenance.

Mr. Williams said he also recommends that the Commission revise the ordinance requiring businesses and residences to bag their leaves. In years past the requirement was not there as the landfill did not like to receive plastic bags, but now all plastic bags are biodegradable, so that problem no longer exists. Also, at recent meetings there have been discussions on unsightly dumpsters overflowing with trash. He has included a memo to them (filed) recommending that all accounts with an open dumpster be required to erect an enclosure around them. Mr. Bush said this may create a hardship for some businesses that have limited space. Commissioner Brown asked about businesses that share a dumpster; there may be access problems. Mr. Williams said every problem has a solution; they can work on those solutions individually. Mr. Holmes said if they do this they will have to designate standard design requirements, and factor in the difficulties of getting trucks into those enclosures. He cautioned them about having the enclosures look worse than the dumpsters did. If they don't have a constant repair plan to combat the damages the trucks do to the enclosures, they may cause a larger problem for themselves. Mayor Flagg said they may want to require enclosures for new commercial accounts, and try to obtain voluntary compliance for existing accounts. This is a public morale issue. They can take a picture of their dumpster and show them that this is what the community sees when they see their business, and hope that it will urge them into compliance. If there is an area they are already having a difficult time with in getting to a dumpster and they tell them they don't have to enclose their dumpster, they may be 'caught in the crosshairs' versus those that don't have a difficult access. Per the question, Mr. Williams said all new construction must erect a pad for the dumpster. Mr. Bush said if the pads are universal and they start requiring a backstop, it will minimize the damage.

Adam Mengel, Planning Director, said they do require 6" pads for dumpsters. The more critical area is typically not the dumpster, but the area where the truck drives. The weight is typically in the truck that picks up the dumpster. They should look at that as well. Mayor Flagg said the Commission needs to study these issues before they can give further direction. They should receive a report on how many accounts this will affect, etc. Per the question, Mr. Williams said they have around 80 dumpster accounts. Mayor Flagg said he needs to make a report on how many accounts need an enclosure vs. how many don't create an aesthetic problem. Other issues include overloaded dumpsters, and dumpsters that are in disrepair and need to be replaced. He needs to provide them with an analysis of his accounts. As to bagging, Commissioner Norwood said he sees no problem with requiring residents to bag leaves. He also does not have a problem with starting collections at 5:00 a.m., but he does have a problem with people putting their cans out at night. People put their containers on grass, and many people complain that the cans end up in the middle of the driveway when they return home. If collection is

made prior to people leaving for work, they will have to remember to check that cans are not in their driveway so they do not back over them. Mr. Williams said he receives those complaints, and disciplines employees accordingly. Commissioner Azula said he may use up to 100 bags to bag leaves at his house. He has 7 large oak trees on his property. He piles them on both corners. It will create a problem in his neighborhood. He does not mind paying more for pickup. Per the question, Mr. Williams said the clamshell allows the leaves to blow out, and they receive complaints about it. When you use forks, it gets more, but he would like to get away from the pitchforks, as it is dirty and dangerous work. They have a leaf-vac, but received many complaints on it as it sounds like an airplane engine. Per the question, the noise problem is due to the model; they don't all sound like that. Changing the time won't affect it; people work shift work and sleep at all hours. It is very dusty and time-consuming. Mayor Flagg said until they can get a new model, they should move forward with other options. Mr. Bush said they need to check with other cities; there are some cities that provide their residents with bags and a very minimal cost during leaf seasons. Commissioner Azula said they are a Tree City and should be able to assist people with leaf disposal. Mayor Flagg asked how you achieve compliance; Mr. Williams said some people just rake them into the streets, which plugs up storm drains. Mayor Flagg said commercial lawn maintenance services blow leaves into the storm drains, which creates problems. Per the question, Ms. Driggers and Mr. Drew said there is a law against dumping anything into storm drains. Per the question, there has been no enforcement effort. Mr. Mengel said they considered sending notices of pending enforcement to lawn service businesses prior to cracking down on the practice. Commissioner Brown suggested they table these matters until they can talk with their constituents and see how they feel about making these changes. Mayor Flagg said they need to get some input from those who will be impacted by these changes, and let them know these changes are being contemplated. They should also reward those people who are voluntarily taking care of their dumpsters and setting a good example for others, and hold them up as examples. They all agree there is a safety factor on the time, and a change is probably necessary. People can adjust the time they place their cans out according to their work schedules. Commissioner Azula said the biggest problem he sees with dumpsters is the lids are always off or broken, and scavengers strew the trash. Per the question, Mr. Williams said there is a law against scavenging. B&Z should be notified of infractions. Chief Getchell suggested training street & sanitation personnel as code enforcement officers and allowing them to issue citations. Mayor Flagg directed Mr. Williams to get with Mr. Bush and return with a plan at the next meeting.

Mayor Flagg received consensus from the Commission to take a 5-minute recess.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Planning Director Adam Mengel had nothing to report.

Fire Chief Ken Venables said all continues to proceed well in the Fire Department. They had a hard landing at the airport yesterday, which resulted in damages to the runway and lights, but no fuel spills or injuries. Per the question, a police report is being prepared, and the bills for the repairs will be submitted to the owner of the airplane.

NOISE ORDINANCE REVISIONS: Police Chief Getchell submitted copies of a memo recommending changes to the noise ordinance, per directions he received from the Commission. He was directed to look at placing limits on noise levels for festivals and other special events. During the last year they have taken noise readings during festivals at prescribed intervals and locations, both inside and outside the city limits, including East Palatka. He has come to the conclusion that no changes are necessary. They don't really have to set another level for people to meet and/or exceed. There are a lot of issues that can be worked out at the pre-planning issues. Festival sound people have been more than willing to turn the noise down when asked. Even when exceptions to the noise ordinance were granted, they did not exceed the current ordinance's limitations. The other recommendations are minor. They compared Palatka's ordinance to other ordinances, and felt that Palatka's was superior. Commissioner Norwood moved to direct the Attorney to prepare a draft ordinance making the changes as recommended in Chief Getchell's memo (filed) for first reading at a future meeting. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed. For the record, changes recommended are Section 30-109 (2) (b), The permit may be given for the following times: Sunday,

1:00 pm – 12:00 pm; Monday – Saturday, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm, including holidays; Section 30-109 (3) (a – c), delete the word “special” throughout; Section 30-109 (3) (c), add “and no more than once in any thirty day period.” at the end of the sentence; delete 30-109 (3)(d) in its entirety, and change Section 30-109 (3)(e) to read, “Special permits may be issued for no longer than 5 consecutive days.”

Chief Getchell cautioned the Commission that if they are going to change the sanitation collection time to 5:00 a.m., they will actually be violating their own ordinance, so a change will have to be made if they do so.

Finance Director Ruby Williams had nothing to report.

City Clerk Betsy Driggers reported that the City collected more than \$10,000 towards fireworks from community donations. She will have a breakdown in a report to come at a later date.

PUMP-OUT STATION BID AWARD - City Manager Allen Bush deferred to Jeff Norton, Parks Director, to bring forward an issue on piggybacking a bid submitted to Clay County for a pump-out station at Knight’s boat ramp. Mr. Norton said he has received permission to ‘piggy-back’ onto a 5/26/01 bid received by Clay County from Mariner Technologies, Inc. for a pump-out station to be location at the City Dock. The City has received the funds from a ‘Clean Vessel Act’ grant to build the station. Mariner will build the station for \$5,560, which will amount to a savings of over \$3,000. Commissioner Brown moved to accept a bid from Mariner Technologies, Inc. to install a pump-out station at the City Dock for \$5,560, per their 5/26/01 bid submitted to Clay County. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Brown:

- Said the River Navigator visited with Palatka Riverboat, Inc. this past week. The State informed Mr. Bush that a contract for a grant is forthcoming. The Federal grant has also come through, and they should have a contract in-hand by the end of the month. They are meeting on a weekly basis looking for ways to promote this project.
- Said she attended a Regional Planning Council meeting last week and this week. She presented them with information she obtained from Wes Larson on goals, objectives and solutions. She asked Mr. Bush and Mr. Mengel to look at them, and urged the rest of the Commission to also look at them, as they need to be fully covered on these points when they get ready to write EDA grants. Mr. Bush can provide them with a copy.
- Said she has been informed that they need to appoint a member of the School Board to the City’s Planning Board, per recent legislation, for input on school legislation. They can be either a voting or non-voting member. If this is not done by the deadline, funding will be cut off. There are two members of the School Board that represent the City of Palatka.
- Said they should look at appointing an alternate voting delegate for the Convention, in case Mr. Sanders needs a break or is unable to attend. Ms. Driggers said the Commission designated Commissioner Norwood as an alternate when Commissioner Sanders was appointed. Commissioner Brown said she has also submitted her name for reappointment to the Board of Directors.
- Said the Riverboat committee would like to utilize the concession stand for ticket sales, etc. when they get the boat. She will bring a proposal to them at a later date.

Commissioner Azula:

- Said it has been nice to work with Chief Getchell and Chief Venables, because they have kept the Commission abreast of what is going on in their departments. He knows the rest of the departments and Mr. Bush have worked hard on the budget and he appreciates what they do. He has learned a lot from the process, and believes it is important for all the supervisors to participate in the process, as they are what makes the City run smoothly. The process is working well.

Commissioner Norwood:

- Said the department heads' CIP presentations during budget workshops gave him some insight into their concerns, and hopefully will help bring about some solutions to their concerns, even if they can't provide those solutions this year.
- Said Mayor Flagg does a tremendous job of representing the community, and is always at their disposal for representation at any event. The rest of the Commission shows support for each other when they need extra support. He enjoys serving with a group that shows compassion towards each other and the city's citizens.
- Said the Betty Holzendorf Fun Day was a success. During that celebration they had an AIDS awareness program. AIDS in Palatka is at epidemic proportions. They can stick their heads in the proverbial sand, but if it doesn't affect them now, it will at some time in the future. He would like to see the City show support to testing and prevention measures, and promote citizen awareness.
- Said the fireworks display was tremendous; he has heard comments that it was one of the best ever put on by the city. The Georgia-Pacific Credit Union has asked to be allowed to spearhead the funding for next year's fireworks celebration. They would like to get more involved in the community. He has asked them to get with city staff to obtain the names of contributors. They still going to promote them as the City of Palatka's community fireworks. Per the question, Mr. Bush said the City is sending the contributors a thank you note. There are open to suggestions as to another way to recognize them for their contributions.

Mayor Flagg:

- Said he has received calls asking him why the City of Palatka has not yet endorsed the Better Place Plan, and asked if they are coming up on a future agenda for endorsement. The community would like to know where they stand. Many people are tying this into the 1-cent sales tax option, but the issue is much bigger and more comprehensive than that. There is only one more meeting before it goes to the polls. The BOCC has been to all the other municipalities on this. Commissioner Norwood said Chairman Purcell said the City of Palatka was last on the stop. Commissioner Azula said he has spoken with Mr. Bush about a provision in the Statute allowing for negotiation on the distribution percentage. Normally, it is based on population percentages. You can enter into discussion to determine if those percentages should change. The City probably serves around 30,000 people per day on any given day, and the infrastructure is overtaxed. The population figures do not reflect this. Around 60% of the total sales tax collected in the County is collected inside the City limits. Mr. Bush said he has written the BOCC on that issue, but has not yet received a response. Mayor Flagg asked Mr. Bush to contact Mr. Leary about the date of the next meeting, and try to get an earlier meeting to discuss the issue before it comes before the Commission. Commissioner Azula said when this same issue has appeared on the ballot, the City voters have voted for it, but the County voters have voted against it.
- Said the City appreciates the group that has entered into a new Adopt-A-Byway contract. He spoke with Mr. Williams about this issue earlier today; they have a lot of areas they need citizen participation for clean-up on right-of-ways, whether residential or commercial. The City needs to accept their help and be progressive enough to recognize those organizations that are doing their part.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35p.m. upon a motion by Commissioner Brown.

CITY CLERK

MAYOR