

Proceedings of a regular meeting of the City Commission of the City of Palatka, Florida held on the 20th day of November, 2003.

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

Also Present: City Manager Allen R. Bush, City Attorney Donald E. Holmes, City Clerk Betsy Jordan Driggers, Finance Director Ruby M. Williams, Planning Director Adam Mengel, Police Chief Gary Getchell, Police Lt. James Griffith, Fire Chief Kenneth Venables, WTP Supt. Mike Felton, Parks Supt. Jeff Norton, Main Street Manager Cathy Nagengast.

INVOCATION – Jeri Melosh

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Allegra Kitchens

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 10/23/03 regular and 10/30/03 called - Commissioner Azula moved to adopt the minutes as presented. Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion, which passed unopposed

PUBLIC RECOGNITION:

Palatka Police Dept. Citizen of the Quarter, July – Sept. 2003 - Police Chief Gary Getchell presented Gail Hart, PD Volunteer, with a place recognizing her as Palatka PD Citizen of the Quarter. She was nominated and selected by her peers, and has been a volunteer for over 10 years in the records division. Mayor Flagg presented Ms. Hart with a City Lapel Pin.

Police Officer of the Quarter – Police Chief Gary Getchell presented an award for Officer of the Quarter to PD Officer Stephen Taylor. Officer Taylor was joined by his wife and children. Chief Getchell noted he was selected by his peers for this honor. Mayor Flagg presented him with a City Lapel Pin. Commissioner Azula commended Officer Taylor for the way he handles his duties in stressful situations.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH – November, 2003 – Commissioner Azula joined Mayor Flagg in presenting a certificate to the following students in recognition of academic excellence, leadership, citizenship and attendance at their respective schools:

Tara Friedli	Beasley Middle School
Shaylea Bowlby	Browning Pearce Elementary School
Lexus Williams	Central Academy School of Excellence
Dylan Williams	Children’s Reading Center
Justin Griffey	E.H. Miller
Lamarika Davis	James A. Long Elementary School
LaQuisha Bell	Jenkins Middle School
Kathryn Fields	Kelley Smith Elementary School
Jennifer L. Fricker	Mellon Elementary School
David Neely	Moseley Elementary School
Abdul Aldick	Palatka High School
Jourdan Crabtree	Peniel Baptist Academy
Latisha Simmons	River Breeze Elementary

CONSENT AGENDA -

- Concurrence on election of Vernon Myers to Police Pension Board.
- Terminate Putnam County Scholarship Fund’s lease eff. 12-31-03.
- Authorize the City Manager to negotiate the sale of water to Putnam County BOCC for the East Palatka area.

Commissioner Sanders moved to adopt items (a) and (b) on the consent agenda; Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

CONSENT AGENDA Item (c) – Sale of Water to Putnam County - Mr. Bush said he met with one of the engineers working on the re-use project and he was instructed to come up with an estimated cost to increase the quantity of treated water sufficient to provide Putnam County with 1 million gpd. He came up with an estimated gallonage cost for resale of this water to Putnam County. Approval of this item in no way obligates the City to sell this water to the County. He would like permission to come up with an Interlocal Agreement with Putnam County BOCC for sale of this water for the East Palatka urban service area. Commissioner Brown said she does not mind negotiations, but they need to look eyeball-to-eyeball with the County on this item. She would like to have this resolved very soon, as it has been an issue of contention for a long time. They have never turned anyone away who needed water, but they need to take a hard look at coming up with an agreement that will benefit everyone. Mayor Flagg said he expressed to the City Manager that they need to be progressive; this is not binding in any way, and Mr. Bush is fully aware that at no time will the taxpayers experience water shortages due to this agreement. This proposal is not about extending water outside the city limits, but about getting water to a portion of the County that needs it. Mr. Bush will come back with a preliminary agreement, and then joint City – County meetings will take place. Commissioner Sanders concurred. Mr. Bush said the County has a copy of his estimates, and will either counter, agree to negotiate, or go elsewhere. If they agree to negotiate, he will sit down with them and come up with a preliminary agreement. Commissioner Brown said the process needs to be very public with public comment, and needs to be done expeditiously. This has dragged on too long. They do need to stick with their policy of not providing water outside the County on an individual basis without an annexation. Commissioner Azula said the PDN made some editorial comments about the City being uncooperative on this issue. The City has an obligation to protect its taxpayers' interest, and do what is right for the citizens of Palatka. The newspaper needs to realize where their responsibilities lie. At the same time, they do care about what happens to the rest of Putnam County. The city is not ignoring the problem but is working cautiously towards a solution.

Commissioner Brown moved to authorize Mr. Bush to begin negotiations with administrative representatives of the Putnam County BOCC for sale of water for resale in East Palatka, with continued co-facilitation by SJRWMD. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion. Commissioner Norwood said this just shows that water distribution issues can be handled at the local level, without intervention from the State. The motion passed unopposed, per the results of a roll-call vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – There were none

ENTERPRISE ZONE REVISION – Consensus from the Commission to move Agenda item #6 up to the front of the Orders of the Day. Wes Larson, President, Putnam County Chamber of Commerce, passed out maps showing the proposed revision to the Putnam County Enterprise Zone. Three years ago they did the first map and since then have found they could have done some things differently. The Legislature has given them an opportunity to revise the map this year, and they are proposing revisions for the Interlachen, Crescent City and Palatka Maps, which he detailed. They have added an area behind Hwy 19, an area south of Reid Street, the waterfront development area, and all public housing units. Altogether the Zone contains over 4 miles within the city limits and a much larger area in the Greater Palatka area. Mostly they have added residential units, in addition to the commercial areas. Commissioner Brown asked for a list of those who have applied for tax credits under the Enterprise Zone provisions. Mr. Larson said next year they will have two seminars on accessing the incentives, and will invite everyone within the zone to attend.

Allegra Kitchens, 1027 S. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, asked Mr. Larson what the expansion means to homeowners. He said it means if they live in the area, their employers are eligible for these credits. Commissioner Norwood moved to accept the revision to the Enterprise Zone as proposed. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

The Commission then returned to the Orders of the Day

UPDATE ON FDOT PEDESTRIAN BOARDWALK PROJECT – Fred Wright, Consultant/Project Manager, FDOT Pedestrian Boardwalk at Memorial Bridge, said this project was commissioned by FDOT several years ago as an alternative to the overpass; the boardwalk will run underneath the bridge as opposed to over it. It will come off the south side of the Memorial Bridge at the Palatka side, run east about 500', cross underneath the bridge and back to the shoreline to tie in on the north side, all on FDOT R/W. It is 12 feet wide and 20 feet off the existing bridge. It is for bicycle and pedestrian use. It will be constructed of wood pilings and decking and is similar, almost identical, to the existing amphitheater construction. The bridge will contain an observation/overlook deck and pedestrian lighting, as well as red & green coast guard navigational lights, even though the channel is further out. As to the lights, they can go with either mercury vapor or (unintelligible) vapor, whichever the City prefers. He showed cross section and elevation views of the proposed walkway, saying the elevation will be constant at around 3 feet above high tide level. It is not conducive to boats being tied up to it; there are plenty of other dockage facilities available at this location. This is strictly for pedestrians & bicycles and will connect the Greenway on the north side to the riverfront location. They proposed to come straight in behind the existing statue and tie into the existing sidewalk. They can plant annuals at the entrance way or leave it open. They will present three submittals and the City will have opportunities to make comments on all three. There will be an 8-foot minimum height from the top of the bridge to this structure; it will not connect to the docking facilities at the Holiday Inn at all. There is an existing sidewalk on the south side of the bridge that ends at the gazebo, which they will extend and connect to the boardwalk. As to rescheduling, they are in the design phase and have contacted the appropriate agencies for permitting, including DEP and SRJWMD. He will send this project to Tallahassee to be let out to bid in Sept. 2004; it will begin construction about 3 months after that, or early 2005. It will be on schedule. They will get back to the Commission on time of construction. The cost is around \$600,000, inclusive of lights, sidewalks and permitting. It is similar to the bridge/walk at Doctor's Inlet just south of Orange Park, which is a very popular biking and pedestrian walkway. It is efficient and low maintenance. As to concrete vs. wood pilings, wood is less costly; the state is in a budget crunch. If the City or County can come up with \$450,000, they will install concrete pilings. As to maximum capacity, it will be designed to carry a load as though people are standing on the entire length side-by-side. He is aware of the City's festivals and events, and designed it to handle a full load. The pilings are designed for a 50-year life; this is brackish water, which lends itself better to pilings than salt water. Per the question, they cannot keep people from crossing Reid Street at the base of the bridge. They can put up signs, but can't enforce it. They will hold a public meeting on December 9 beginning at 5:00 with public comments at 7:00, at the Price-Martin Center. Per the question, they don't want to put lighting up higher than the railing of the bridge so that it won't cause glare in the eyes of the drivers. It will be taken up in the design process. Commissioner Norwood asked Mr. Wright if FDOT can address the uneven resurfacing that was done on Reid Street last year. Mr. Wright said they are currently planning a complete repaving project, which will commence later this year.

Askew Vickers, S. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, Palatka, asked if there would be a place for people to stop and rest. Mr. Wright said at the east end of the walkway there will be room, but nothing between.

Allegra Kitchens said she feels, in light of the references Mr. Wright made to the EDSA project, that the marina project is a 'done deal'. Mayor Flagg said one has nothing to do with the other. The marina project has not yet been voted on. Commissioner Brown said this project was started five years ago and relates to Greenways and Trails as well as tourism.

VICE ISSUES IN DOWNTOWN PALATKA – Sam Deputy, 917 Carr Street, business at 611 St. Johns Avenue, thanked the Commission and PD for their work on this issue. He understands that a Plan will be presented tonight. Their concern with their area on St. Johns Avenue is that prostitution has been quite heavy and is blatantly being practiced day and night. People are avoiding downtown for that reason. This is why he asked for a plan; so he could walk down St. Johns Avenue. He has enlisted the cooperation of the downtown business district to help resolve the problem. When they do call the PD, by the time an officer responds, the prostitutes are off with their 'johns.' Within the last

week much progress has been made, and he appreciates that. They, as downtown business people, will do whatever it takes to clean up the problem. This is a problem for the community at large.

**PROSTITUTION ELIMINATION PLAN ADOPTION** – Mayor Flagg said the Commission does not want to interfere with the PD's operations, and there are certain PD operations that neither the City Commission nor public are privy to. He believes that the downtown merchants, media, City Commissioners and citizens can partner with the PD to address this serious problem. They need proactive individuals who want to be a part of the solution. There is strong leadership in the PD. It can't be fixed overnight, but they will get long-term results. The Putnam County Health Department has signed on as a community partner. Strategies have been proposed to address the problem (PEP Plan-filed). They request that all citizens that are interested in making a difference please sign on to this. Commissioner Norwood moved to adopt the Prostitution Elimination Plan. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion.

Commissioner Brown said if there is no demand, there is no problem. They need to target the 'johns' heavily and let them know that if they solicit prostitutes they will be in the news. She was dismayed to see the bad press Palatka received on the Jacksonville news station; they were riding up and down St. Johns Avenue looking for prostitutes. No city representative should alert the press about things like this unless it is OK'd by the City Manager. This is an established protocol, and a memo needs to go out to department heads about this. If Mr. Bush does approve something like this, he needs to telephone them and let them know this is happening. If any department has anything they want to call the newspaper in on, it needs to go by Mr. Bush and the City Commission. She does not like to see Palatka shown in a bad light on the nightly news. People are approaching her saying they didn't know there was such a problem with prostitutes, and she didn't know, either. Mr. Holmes said he understands her comments and concerns, but he is concerned about the constitutionality of limiting the availability of city employees to the press. Good judgment does need to prevail. They are talking about access to the press and freedom of speech, and asked that she not make a motion on this tonight so they can sit down and talk about this one-on-one. They need to be careful about telling employees not to speak their mind to the press. Commissioner Brown said if they are going to tell things on the TV, they need to let people know first. She does not like having to answer questions on things she knows nothing about. Commissioner Azula said when they see on TV that crews have been in town for certain issues, many times they were not informed about it. It is a communication problem. They are all a phone call away. He does not want to restrict anyone's access to the public, but they don't have the right to misrepresent facts to anyone. He would like to be better informed of what goes on around City Hall when he can be informed by staff. Mayor Flagg said they can deal with this issue on a future agenda, but the motion is still on the table. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unopposed.

**JUVENILE JUSTICE GRANT** – Sponsoring Agency Request - Jim Roach, Beasley Middle School, said he is here to ask the City Commission to sponsor a JVG grant specifically for Beasley Middle School for an after school program to address targeted students with specific behavioral problems. If funds allow, they can include non-targeted students in the program. A time line on this project is included in the agenda packet (filed). He recently discovered that the Putnam County School Board cannot sponsor the grant. Mayor Flagg asked if this is an existing program, who is the existing sponsoring agent? He asked how they can write and receive a grant without a sponsor at the beginning. The total situation is cloudy. They have a responsibility to know what they are involving the City in. Per questions, Mr. Roach said the current program is run through his budget; there is no other sponsoring agency other than funds raised through fundraisers and Title One funds. They were told of this grant a few months ago, and they applied for it listing the School Board as the sponsoring agency. He found out last week that the School Board could not sponsor this grant. The current PASS program is run through a grant. This takes no manpower from the City; the school district handles all the paperwork and implementation. If he can't get the City's approval tonight, he will probably have to re-write it and resubmit. He needs to get this in the mail ASAP. Commissioner Brown asked that they give tentative approval, contingent upon Mr. Bush working out the details. She does not want to see this money go back. Something can be

worked out. Mr. Bush said he met with the Finance Director on this. When the city lends its name to a grant, they are responsible for it. They determined that the School Board can go ahead and handle the reports, disbursement and all paperwork and copy everything to the City so that there will be a paper trail for auditors. Commissioner Azula concurred with Commissioner Brown. He would like to give a tentative approval contingent upon Mr. Bush's further negotiation. Mr. Bush asked if a future audit shows that invoices were falsified and funds were diverted to some other purpose, will the City be protected? Mr. Holmes said he has not seen the guidelines for internal controls. The City will be primarily responsible, and will be on the hook for the reimbursement in the event of fraud. They can then look for reimbursement from the party responsible for the City's loss, and can certainly enter into an agreement to that end with the School Board. Mr. Bush asked if it is permissible, under the terms of the grant, to pass off accounting and auditing responsibilities to someone else, or are they putting themselves in jeopardy for doing that. Per the question, Mr. Holmes said the word "ensure that sound fiscal policies will be in place" (page 7, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph) is reassuring, as it provides the City with an avenue to fulfill their requirement to ensure that sound fiscal policies are in place. He doubts Mrs. Williams will be comfortable with turning over all oversight to someone else, but she can oversee that. Mayor Flagg said the School Board should have prepared an Interlocal Agreement on this. Per the question, Mr. Roach said the state has the money. This agreement needs to be overnighted to them tomorrow. Mayor Flagg said if the commission chooses to make a conditional support of this contingent upon the City Manager and City Attorney's approval, he is willing to concur on that.

Commissioner Azula moved to sponsor the Juvenile Justice Grant Application in question, conditional upon further scrutiny by the City Manager and City Attorney and final positive recommendation by them on an Interlocal Agreement with the School Board, with concurrence on a check and balance agreement. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. Mr. Holmes clarified that Mr. Roach, the Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Bush and he meet and agree on terms for this. The problem is timing. He feels uncomfortable with the delegation of an Interlocal Agreement without the City's seeing it first. He can determine if the City is adequately indemnified and what role the City will play. Mayor Flagg said they are asking Mr. Holmes and Mr. Bush to be the 'safety net' on this. Mr. Holmes said as long as an authorized representative signs for the School Board. He does not know who at the School Board knows about the agreement; his obligation is to the City Commission. Commissioner Azula said this probably won't be the last time something like this comes up, and they need to devise a protocol on this for use in the future. He feels comfortable with this and feels the community will benefit as a whole. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unopposed.

**PLANNING BOARD APPOINTMENTS – Interviews –** The Clerk noted that Mr. Harden is sick with the flu and is unable to attend tonight, but would like to be considered for reappointment to this Board. Mr. Earl Wallace, Mr. Ezekiel Johnson and Mr. Rudolph Peshera were present for interviews. Commissioner Brown moved to reappoint incumbents Nick Harding, Earl Wallace and Ezekiel Johnson to the Palatka Planning Board for three-year terms ending December 31, 2006. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

**PUBLIC HEARING – Annexation of 2933 Browns Landing Road (WWTP) -** The Clerk read an ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, ANNEXING INTO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA CERTAIN ADJACENT TERRITORY IN SECTION 24, TOWNSHIP 10 SOUTH, RANGE 26 EAST, PUBLIC RECORDS OF PUTNAM COUNTY, FLORIDA, CONTIGUOUS TO THE BOUNDARIES OF THE CITY OF PALATKA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Brown moved to adopt the ordinance as presented. Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion.

Askew Vickers, Browns Landing Road, asked what this entails; he lives on Browns Landing Road. Mayor Flagg said they are annexing property the City already owns with the WWTP sitting on it. They are doing this to receive grant funds. There being no further discussion, a roll-call vote was taken with the following results: Commissioner Azula, Brown, Norwood, Sanders and Mayor Flagg, yes; nays, none. Ordinance #03-24 was declared adopted.

ORDINANCE – Administrative Law Judge – The Clerk read an ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, RECOGNIZING THE OCCASIONAL NEED FOR AN ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE TO PRESIDE OVER PROCEEDINGS HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE OPERATION OF THE CITY; AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SECURE THE SERVICES OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES WHEN SAID SERVICES ARE NEEDED BY CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF FLORIDA, DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS AND SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Azula moved to pass the ordinance on 2<sup>nd</sup> reading for adoption. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. Mayor Flagg asked if this will leave room for Commission concurrence, or take anything away from Mr. Bush. Mr. Holmes said normally an ordinance would be amended on a first reading. This is in response to appeals filed by former city employees. He suggests any amendment be done by ordinance at a future meeting. Any hearing before a judge would be requested by Mr. Bush; there are certain levels of decisions that require that certain people hear certain issues. If Mr. Bush fires someone, there is no one higher to hear an appeal, and the City Commission does not want to put themselves in that position. This is the purpose of the ordinance. There are two appeals pending that need to be addressed. There being no further discussion, a roll call vote was taken, with the following results: Commissioner Azula, Brown, Norwood, Sanders, and Mayor Flagg, yes; nays, none. The Ordinance was declared adopted.

ORDINANCE REGULATING ALARM SYSTEMS – The Clerk read an ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, ESTABLISHING REQUIREMENTS FOR PRIVATELY OWNED ALARM SYSTEMS; PROVIDING FOR DEFINITIONS; PROVIDING FOR REGISTRATION OF ALARM SYSTEMS; ESTABLISHING DUTIES OF ALARM USERS AND ALARM COMPAINES; PROVIDING FOR FEES AND PENALTIES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Norwood moved to pass the ordinance on first reading for adoption. Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion.

Commissioner Brown said it was her understanding that this was to be discussed further before an ordinance was brought to them. Mr. Alexander wanted to see if an education program would affect the numbers, and there has not been time for that. There are no provisions for senior citizens. Mayor Flagg said they were going to set a future date for actual enforcement of the code, which will give ample time for education. They want people to be responsible and to be held accountable. Article 2, Definitions, Alarm Review Board, needs to consist of five individuals. On the following page, Paren. 1, Registration, he feels should be modeled after occupational licensing and all expire at a uniform time such as July 1. Article 4, Registration – Duration of renewal, they should also utilize a uniform date for that. As to his review of Article 21, they talked about a one-time perpetual registration fee for senior citizens, with no further fees required for renewals, unless the homeowner changes homes or systems. They should have a zero fee, in lieu of \$10, if there have been no false alarms. Under fines and fees, the only fee should be an initial fee, and no other fees would apply unless there is a need for a reinstatement or a violation. Commissioner Azula said a \$25 registration fee is too high. Many citizens in Palatka are on a very limited income. He believes registration is a good thing, but yearly registration is just a tax. They need to charge whatever covers the cost of the sticker. Mayor Flagg said if an officer keeps having to respond to false alarms, that is a much higher cost. 9-1-1 addresses are one thing, but a decal with numbers on it gives more detail. Consumers are being duped by questionable alarm system distributors. Commissioner Azula said he agrees with registration, he just believes \$25 is too high. The average income in Palatka is much lower than surrounding counties. Mayor Flagg said he is also concerned about people with income issues, but you can't exempt people from certain processes. They are enhancing the services of the PPD, and this is a tool for them to use. Per the question, Chief Getchell said they put together a focus group to put this ordinance together. It was made up by all sectors of the community. They took into consideration a model ordinance from the Florida Alarm Association, and ordinances from other communities, along with information from FPA and Florida Alarm Association. They picked it apart and put together what they thought was reasonable for Palatka. The fee is comparatively low and represents a minimum cost. The stickers

alone cost \$7 – 8. The cost is high due to the numeric number. If an officer is dispatched to a house with a numeric number, they have information available as to who owns the system. If they whittle away at this fee, there is nothing to absorb the cost in his budget. If the City's General Fund wants to absorb those costs, that is fine. Most of the costs of this do not fall on private users; they fall on commercial users.

Commissioner Sanders said training is the responsibility of the alarm company. Customers are trained to begin with, or should be. Commissioner Brown said if the majority of false alarms are coming from businesses, they should pass along the cost to them and lower costs to citizens. Their decisions impact all citizens. Numbers can be skewed any way you want to skew them. In the past they have made decisions that have negatively impacted people. Per the question, Mr. Bush said they don't know how many \$25 fees the City would have to pay to absorb the cost of implementing this program. Commissioner Sanders said there is a cost to registration, and this sticker will identify who owns the system to the officer. This is an added service and protection, and worth the investment. Commissioner Azula said they are providing this service now. Mayor Flagg said this will enhance the service the PD provides.

Marcia Lane – 210 E. Forest Park Drive, asked for clarification as to the number of false alarms in 2003. She has a security system to feel more secure. Hers may have gone off once and an officer came to her house because she couldn't remember the security code. She believes she is due that service because she lives in the City and pays for police protection. She expects them to come if the alarm goes off. The police are only called after the security company has called you. She feels she should not have to pay a fee to own an alarm system. Mayor Flagg said this fee is in place to protect taxpayers of this City; this is to protect taxpayers without alarms against those who do own alarms. Mrs. Lane said they all pay for City services. If the high numbers are due to schools or businesses, they should have to pay the fee, but not private citizens.

Askew Vickers – 207 N. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, agreed with Commissioner Brown that they are moving too hastily in the adoption of the ordinance. Mr. Alexander has not been given an opportunity to implement his program. Alarm companies call the PD with the information on who lives in that home when they are dispatched. 9-1-1 is on everyone's phone bill, whether you use it or not. Citizens pay taxes for police protection. Citizens should not be charged to own an alarm system. Mayor Flagg said he can't walk into Mr. Vickers' establishment and get services without paying for them; this is the same concept.

Betsy Scarlett – citizen, said she does not have an alarm system. She asked why commercial users can't pay more for registration and fees if they are the big users. Mayor Flagg said this is an intensive educational program as well as registration process. There is a cost associated with this. Mrs. Scarlett asked how many people have alarm systems. The City should be able to find out who in Palatka has an alarm system from the people who sell them. Chief Getchell said there are over 70 alarm providers in the City. You don't need a license to install alarms in the city, so they don't know who is here installing systems if they don't have a physical location here. Mrs. Scarlett asked what happens if she gets an alarm system but doesn't register it. Chief Getchell said she would be subject to a fine after a 'grace period.' If the ordinance is adopted next month, there will be a 'grace period' of three to six months for people to register their systems. They won't know if an alarm is installed until it goes off. If it goes off and is unregistered, it will cost her \$100. Mrs. Scarlett said they need to come to a compromise; if commercial alarm systems are the problem, they should have to absorb most of the cost.

Chief Getchell, in reference to an earlier question, said this does not apply to medical alert systems. This is only panic and burglar alarms. As a community they need to decide how to better manage public resources. They can't hire more officers; the reality is that it takes the equivalent of three full-time officers 365 days a year to answer false alarms. Today there was a traffic fatality that needed to be worked, and at the same time there were false alarms going off all over town. He either has to have more people or manage the resources better. He sought public input at the focus group level, but none of the people who are speaking against this ordinance tonight were there. If he can't get this

ordinance passed, he will continuously be asking to increase officers. In two more years, the three officers will increase to four. There is no way they can increase the millage rate to get enough revenue to hire three more officers, because they will be over the cap. Police services are decreasing because of false alarms.

Per the question, the Clerk verified that the motion is to pass the ordinance as presented on first reading. Commissioner Norwood moved to table the vote on passage of this ordinance on first reading. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion. Mr. Holmes said in this state, governmental agencies are faced with this same dilemma time after time. It boils down to whether the users are going to pay for the services, or if all the taxpayers are going to pay for it. Either the majority pays for what the few enjoy, or the few pay for what the few enjoy. Either everybody pays for the PD to answer false alarms, or the alarm users pay for the PD to answer false alarms. There is no escaping that reality. Increasingly, people who use these services are being asked to pay for the service they receive. Commissioner Brown said the people with the most false alarms should pay the fees. Just fine users for their false alarms. Mayor Flagg said there is consensus that they need an ordinance; it just needs to be fine-tuned.

Len Freeman – 422 River Street, said he supports Chief Getchell's attempt to create an ordinance to help with the dilemma he faces. In reading the ordinance, problems come to light. He would like to see compliance on how this will be enforced. Who writes the citations, collects the fines? Where does the money go? If someone was breaking in but is not there when the officer arrives, is it still a false alarm?

Askew Vickers – 207 S. 18<sup>th</sup> Street, said if alarm companies pay for a permit to install an alarm, that is paying twice for the same thing -- charging installers once to install it and the owner again to decal it. Mayor Flagg said there are a lot of things involved, and all these questions deserve answers. It seems that they will be sending this ordinance back to workshop mode. Per discussion, consensus to ask the City Manager to set up a Commissioner Workshop prior to Christmas. There being no further discussion on the motion to table, a roll call vote was taken with the following results: Commissioners Azula, Brown, Norwood, Sanders, and Mayor Flagg, yes; Nays, none. Motion passed.

ORDINANCE – Police DROP Plan – The Clerk read an ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, REVISING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 2, DIVISION 7, THE POLICE OFFICERS' RETIREMENT PLAN, TO INCLUDE A SECTION ENTITLED DEFERED RETIREMENT OPTION PLAN (DROP); PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Norwood moved to pass the ordinance on second reading for adoption. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with the following results: Commissioner Azula, Brown, Norwood, Sanders, and Mayor Flagg, yes; Nays, none. The ordinance was declared adopted.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

City Manager Allen Bush said he has an emergency item. At an earlier meeting he asked to piggyback a bid off a county job to pave some streets; however, the contractor came back with a price that was too high. He needs to take it out for regular bid. The cost to re-pave River Street is \$79,000, much of it due to the underground utilities. The County has agreed to split the cost 50/50 with the City. He would like the Commission to take action tonight to appropriate \$40,000 from Better Place Transportation Funds to address this. Commissioner Norwood said the Better Place Committee should have scheduled meetings to discuss these items. Mr. Bush said the Better Place Committee only looks at the intent of the Commission's wishes and whether or not the expenditures meet the criteria, not to decide how to spend the funds. Commissioner Azula moved to add an item to the agenda to discuss appropriation of \$40,000 of Better Place Funds to repave River Street. Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion, which passed unopposed. Commissioner Azula then moved to authorize the City Manager to set aside \$40,000 in Better Place Transportation Funds to address the re-paving of River Street. Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

COMMISSIONER AZULA:

Funding for Babe Ruth Baseball Association: Commissioner Azula said this organization deals without about 400 kids per season and is run by volunteers. The volunteers work hard to run this program and it keeps these kids off the streets. They talk about helping kids, and this is an excellent program. The City needs to fund this program at \$1,500, which he feels is an appropriate amount. He hopes the City can find money to fund them; he does not make this type of request often. Mr. Bush said he discovered that Babe Ruth did make a request earlier in the year for funds, but it was pulled from the agenda. The City already funds them at approximately \$750 per season when they let them use the city ball fields. He can identify another \$750 for funding. In the future, they need to get their requests in prior to budget workshops, at least by April of 2004. Commissioner Brown moved to appropriate \$750 to Babe Ruth Association for 2003/04 budget year. Commissioner Azula seconded the motion. Commissioner Norwood said they are opening the floodgates for other youth organizations to come in and ask for funds. They need to set up criteria for this type of request. Commissioner Azula said this is a good door to open. There are around 40 volunteers running this program, taking care of 400 other people's children and teaching them values twice a year. Mayor Flagg asked Mr. Bush to set a 'window of opportunity' for these requests, and this Commission should stick to it. Commissioner Brown said if they can commit money to a program that keeps 400 kids busy for two seasons a year, that is a good thing. There being no further discussion the motion passed unopposed.

COMMISSIONER BROWN:

- Said she would like to see an item placed on the next agenda to create a Welcome Wagon or other system of welcoming people to the Community. This is something that is needed in the community.
- Said she gave them a memorandum on the FAST Committee's lobbying trip to Washington, DC.
- Said the FLC is starting an award program for member cities. They plan to award outstanding Mayors, Managers, Commissioners, Clerks, and Finance Directors, and she would like to submit several names from Palatka for this award. They have outstanding employees and Commissioners to nominate.
- Asked for clarification of the next meeting date; clarified as December 11.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m. upon a motion by Commissioner Norwood.

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CITY CLERK

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MAYOR