

KARL N. FLAGG
MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

MARY LAWSON BROWN
VICE MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

ALLEGRA KITCHENS
COMMISSIONER

VERNON MYERS
COMMISSIONER

JAMES NORWOOD, JR.
COMMISSIONER



Regular meeting 2nd and 4th Thursdays each month at 6:00 p.m.

ELWIN C. "WOODY" BOYNTON, JR.
CITY MANAGER

BETSY JORDAN DRIGGERS
CITY CLERK

RUBY M. WILLIAMS
FINANCE DIRECTOR

GARY S. GETCHELL
CHIEF OF POLICE

MICHAEL LAMBERT
CHIEF FIRE DEPT.

DONALD E. HOLMES
CITY ATTORNEY

MINUTES
CITY OF PALATKA
October 23, 2008
Price-Martin Community Center

Proceedings of a regular meeting of the City Commission of the City of Palatka held on the 23rd day of October, 2008.

PRESENT:

Mayor	Karl N. Flagg
Commissioner	Mary Lawson Brown
Commissioner	Allegra Kitchens
Commissioner	Vernon Myers
Commissioner	James Norwood, Jr.

ALSO PRESENT - City Manager Elwin C. Boynton, Jr., City Attorney Donald E. Holmes, City Clerk Betsy Jordan Driggers, Assistant City Clerk Karen M. Venables, Finance Director Ruby Williams, Police Chief Gary Getchell, Fire Battalion Chief Randy Porter, Planning Director Jim Lee, Assistant Planning Director Debbie Banks, and Parks Supt. Jeff Norton

SPECIAL AGENDA: STUDENTS IN GOVERNMENT – CITY GOVERNMENT WEEK 2008

CALL TO ORDER: Student Mayor Phoenicha Hires called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

INVOCATION - The Reverend Ben Tippett, Founding Pastor, Victory Christian Fellowship

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Student Commissioner T’Keara Watson

ROLL CALL:

Mayor	Phoenicha Hires	Present
Vice Mayor	Mary Norwood	Present
Commissioner	Joseph Boynton	Present
Commissioner	Jordan Driggers	Present
Commissioner	T’Keara Watson	Present

PUBLIC RECOGNITION

PROCLAMATION – Florida City Government Week, October 19 – 25, 2008 – Student Vice Mayor Mary Norwood joined Student Mayor Phoenicha Hires in presenting a proclamation to Mayor Flagg and Vice Mayor Brown designating the week of October 19 – 25, 2008 as Florida City Government Week 2008.

SPECIAL BUSINESS

It was moved by Student Commissioner T'Keara Watson to make October 31 a student holiday at all Palatka area schools. Vice Mayor Mary Norwood seconded the motion. There being no discussion, the motion was voted upon and passed unopposed.

Student Mayor Hires announced that this concluded the Special Agenda, and returned the gavel to Mayor Flagg at 6:40 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Flagg called the 10-23-08 Palatka City Commission meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 10-9-08 – Commissioner Brown moved to adopt the minutes as read. Commissioner Myers seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

1. **PUBLIC RECOGNITION**

PROCLAMATION – Family Week – November 16 – 22, 2008 – Mayor Flagg read and presented a proclamation declaring November 16 –22, 2008 as Family Week to Ruth M. Carrin, Director of Public Affairs, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints; Mr. William J. Herrington, Bishop, Palatka 1st Ward, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and Melanie Taylor Wells, Scoutmaster, Boy Scouts of America, St. James Methodist Pack. Mr. Herrington said it is great to be part of a community that recognizes and celebrates the family, and that there is a need to strengthen families throughout the nation.

STUDENTS IN GOVERNMENT - Mayor Flagg presented Good Citizenship Awards to “Mock” Student City Commission members Phoenicha Hires, Mary Norwood, T'Keara Watson, Jordan Driggers and Joseph Boynton for their participation in City Government Week activities.

CITY OF PALATKA VETERANS OF ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL RECOGNITION - Mayor Flagg was joined by Commissioners Myers and Norwood in recognizing City of Palatka personnel who are Veterans of Armed Services. Mayor Flagg read off the names of those employees by department. All veterans in the audience were recognized while Commissioners Norwood and Myers presented them with Veterans' Pins provided by Hospice of the Lakes.

PUBLIC RECOGNITION – CST Environmental, Inc. – Robert Taylor, Project Manager, Downtown Building Demolition Project, joined Mayor Flagg in presenting a plaque to John Jenkins and Cameron Martin of CST Environmental in recognition of the superior manner of workmanship by CST Environmental personnel in removing asbestos, demolition and removal of demolition material, much of which was recycled, from the demolition of the Frank George Apartments and Audio Shop buildings. Mr. Taylor noted during the demolition, the only casualty was one broken window at the nearby First Presbyterian Church. Mayor Flagg saluted City Manager Boynton and the members of the City Commission for their vision in moving this project forward, and stated they have all received many positive comments regarding the new Downtown skyline. The Plaque also recognized Max Duran, Fernando Badillo and Fernando Torres of CST Environmental, and was presented in grateful recognition of superior performance during the Downtown Palatka Building Demolition & Beautification Project, from the Palatka City Commission, Staff and Citizens.

STUDENT OF THE MONTH – October, 2008 – Mayor Flagg & Vice Mayor Brown presented certificates of recognition to the following students for academic excellence, leadership, citizenship and attendance at their respective schools:

Angelica Morris	Beasley Middle School
Amber Sturdivant	Browning Pearce Elementary School

Heather Smith	Children's Reading Center Charter School
Shawn Sapp	E.H. Miller School
Laura Vickers	James A. Long Elementary School
Francina Kummer	Jenkins Middle School
Carter Hayes	Kelley Smith Elementary School
Zyeasha Hudson	Mellon Elementary School
Kenneth Neely	Moseley Elementary School
Whitney Miller	Palatka High School
Lucas Chapman	Peniel Baptist Academy
Kiana Cleveland	River Breeze Elementary School

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – There were none.

3. **CONSENT AGENDA:**

- a. **Accept Ranking Recommendation of CDBG CATF and authorize City Manager to begin negotiations with top-ranked engineering firm to provide engineering services on CDBG E08, Putnam Lanes Project**, per results of RFQ – City Manager
- b. **Adopt Identity Theft Prevention Program** into Palatka Employees Policy & Procedures Manual, in compliance with the Federal FACT Act (2003), Identity Theft Red Flag Ruling – Finance Director
- c. **Appoint Roberta Correa as S. Historic District Property Owner Rep.** to the Historic Preservation Board to fill a partial term to expire June, 2010 (sole applicant)
- d. **Adopt final Budget Amendments to FY 2007-08 Budget** – Finance Director

Commissioner Kitchens moved to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion, which passed unopposed.

4. **REQUEST FOR APPROVAL** of Downtown Riverfront Development Conceptual Plan – Andrew Ham, VP of Finance & Development, Community Development Partners, Inc., 1904 San Marco Blvd, Jacksonville FL, presented CDP's concept plan for the waterfront site, saying the Memorandum of Understanding entered into between CDP and the City of Palatka during the summer was a six-month agreement. Per that agreement, they set out to put together a "Plan of Development" for the waterfront parcels covered under the agreement. The first step of doing any plan is to come up with a concept for the main uses for the parcels subject to the agreement. They didn't go into details on traffic, street closures, etc. Where the green is seen on the renderings noted as green space, that is architectural license and nothing more. They believe these three "schemes" depict the uses the market can absorb. Although there are three schemes, they really blend together, and it depends upon the intensity or density that make up any one of the schemes. If there is consensus on the use, they will cost out the uses and different density options, and will come back with a "development financing plan," which will tell them what the cost of the development and financing will be. Mr. Ham provided copies of Scheme A, B, and C depicted on the boards, which were distributed to each member of the Commission (filed).

Mr. Ham said Scheme "C", the first concept, is the most basic of the schemes. It shows the Reid Street 100 Block buildings retained as retail use. It also shows St. Johns Avenue open, and retail along the 100 block of St. Johns Avenue. The three major uses depicted are a 120-room hotel, including a 9,000 sq ft conference center, surface parking for 100 cars and a major waterfront restaurant, with room for additional retail and commercial uses. This theme is carried forward in the other boards. This is a mixed-use development that takes advantage of the waterfront on a scale compatible with downtown. They show a buffer walkway between the hotel and 1st Presbyterian Church. The hotel will be elevated with sleeping rooms on the 2nd and 3rd floor. The ground floor contains lobby and conference center space. The entry to the hotel comes off 2nd

street. Retail is shown along St. Johns Avenue and with reuse of the 100 block buildings. The hotel would be built in phase I, and the major restaurant would be phased in subject to acquisition of an anchor tenant.

Mr. Ham said the Scheme B concept shows the 120-room hotel, retail and a major restaurant. The major distinction is a large conference center containing up to 30,000 sq ft with a parking deck above, for a total of three layers, on the Reid Street 100 Block. This scheme retains the exterior façade of the historic buildings and retains the oldest building on the block. The parking deck is extended into the historic buildings. 30,000 sq ft is the total number of square feet that fits on that site, but they will build whatever the market will absorb. The hotel development could not afford to pay the debt service on a conference center that may be more publicly used. That large of a space could be used by regional conferences, seminars, festivals and tournaments. Whatever is built there, they must be able to pay the debt service. They could build it, and if the community were to be interested in this size conference center/exhibit hall, they would look for some public entity to lease and operate it to pay the debt service. It could be built by a public entity. This is being shown as an opportunity. The conference center at the hotel shown at approximately 9,000 sq ft accommodates a 400 – 600 seat banquet center. The conference center will drive the hotel traffic. The larger the conference center, the more hotel traffic it will drive. The large conference center may call for additional hotel rooms. They will determine that later; these are just basic concepts and their recommendations.

Mr. Ham said Scheme A is a variation of the first two schemes. They show the reuse of the 100 Block buildings historic façades with a parking deck, and retain the integrity of the oldest building. The parking deck is above the 100 Block retail, and the conference center is in the hotel. One particular use they propose for the 100 Block retail space is an “outfitter’s center.” They probably won’t get a Bass Pro or Gander Mountain, but can get an outfitter store that may locate here and find a good market. They understand Putnam County is big on fishing, hunting and boating. Visitors interested in these opportunities will come for a hotel stay in a waterfront venue, and this presents an opportunity for an outfitters store.

Mr. Ham noted in all three schemes they show Memorial Drive open between St. Johns Avenue and Reid Street. These are the uses they believe have a good chance at success on that waterfront site. Additionally, if a parking deck or large conference center were built, those would benefit the ongoing festival traffic present now. They could do festival events there. Even though private development is shown in two of the schemes, the uses lend themselves well to being used by the various festivals and tournaments. They aren’t focusing on any of these schemes, but will look at cost and financial feasibility. They want to know if this is the right direction to take to determine the next level of detail they will seek.

Commissioner Myers asked as to the size and capacity of the convention facilities. Mr. Ham confirmed the scheme for the facility in the hotel is 9,000 sq ft and accommodates a 400 to 600-seat banquet facility. The other could be up to 30,000 sq ft and could accommodate three times as many diners. Commissioner Myers asked how big the conference center at Ravines Gardens is. An audience member said it is 4400 sq ft. Commissioner Brown said when they went to the FLC convention in Tampa this year, they had to walk over to the convention center. It rained most of the time they were there, and people were not happy with that. As to parking, some may not be able to afford valet parking, so nearby parking is important. Mr. Ham said the surface parking would include some valet. The parking deck would have around 150 spaces per deck for two decks. These schemes are subject to architectural engineering. Commissioner Brown said the Chamber contends that a small convention is around 250 people, and asked him to keep that in mind. Mr. Ham said the conference center would be planned by national consultants who are experts at determining what size center to build.

Regarding festivals' use of the conference rooms, Commissioner Norwood asked if they are considering entering into some type of agreement with those festivals. Mr. Ham said they could accommodate their uses or functions, but would not seek a formal agreement.

Mr. Holmes said as he understands it, Mr. Ham is asking the Commission to approve this or some other general concept before doing the feasibility studies. Mr. Ham said the process is to get some consensus on the direction they are taking. Then they will "cost out" the construction and financing costs for the different uses, and will bring that back to the Commission. That is covered under the MOU. After this is done, they will propose to enter into a Developer Agreement. Under the developer agreement, they would hire the national consultants to do the market studies. To date, Three Oaks Hospitality has met with Chamber of Commerce staff to talk about the proposed hotel and the need for a larger conference facility, and they have done their own study here. For a national marketing study, they would hire a firm to substantiate their research; this is like having an appraisal done. Mr. Holmes said the only variables he sees are the size of the conference center and the existence of an outfitter retail store, and noted Mr. Ham has stated the market will determine what is feasible. Mr. Ham said, based on their experience, these are the uses they think will work. They would not propose uses they don't think would work in this market. Commissioner Myers said an element common to all schemes is the hotel and retail on St. Johns Avenue adjacent to the hotel. The rest is the development of the Reid Street 100 Block, concerning the location of the conference center, multi-level parking and preservation of more than the facades of most of the historic buildings.

Mr. Boynton said they are not picking a concept tonight; CDP will come back with information on all three of them. Economics will play a part in what is presented at the end, but the Commission will be presented options in December. From his perspective, they aren't picking any one scheme tonight but are being asked to look at the overall concept, and to go with this or some combination of these options, or something different. CDP wants to know if this is the concept to go with, or with something else like a condo project. Commissioner Kitchens said all three concepts look good; she favors Scheme "C" which shows saving the historic buildings and surface parking for festivals. She knows the Commission wants the hotel, conference center and mixed retail. She looks forward to Mr. Ham's visit in December.

Frank Walker, 100 Cheffy Road, Palatka, said he is a county resident but considers himself a Palatka resident. He grew up in Miami in a simpler time, in the 1950s and 60s. Biscayne Park on the waterfront was a magnet and had been there for many decades. It was a common focal point of interest. It was filled with people at all times. Originally, he understands there was a lot of commercial traffic around Palatka's waterfront. City parks are where people congregate; they draw people into the City. If they develop this property as high-rises close to the water, this will forever change the flavor of downtown Palatka. There is plenty of space away from the River for retail space and hotels/convention centers. They need to think hard about this. By expanding the park and leaving the area open, it will bring people into the City. He's gone to Jacksonville Landing many times, and understands it has had financial problems for many decades. They sacrificed the ambience of the open space at the water's edge. The problem they have is that it is now all concrete, glass and steel right up to the water's edge. Please give thought to expanding the park area and making use of existing retail space.

Linda Little Crabill, 601 S. 14th Street, said this looks much closer to an acceptable concept. As a member of the Blue Crab committee, Historic Preservation Committee, and other clubs and committees that use the waterfront venue, she believes this is on the right track. She likes the scheme wherein all the historic buildings are retained and includes the surface parking.

Christy Sanford, 312 Dodge Street, asked if they have to have retail space to make this go? Mr. Ham said they don't know at this stage of the planning work. They can't say a conference center will help make the hotel go. They will know better in December. The whole concept is envisioned as around three stories to keep it within the scale of buildings downtown. If the community/commission favors a large conference center, it could drive more hotel rooms and they may add another floor to the hotel. They would try to take advantage of the river view for the restaurant; he doesn't see going three stories on that. Restaurants are typically one story with a mezzanine or deck on the 2nd floor. Ms. Sanford said she hopes the retail space shown will be parkland. She'd like more green space. Mayor Flagg said they aren't going to pick this apart tonight, but will have more specifics in December. Ms. Sanford said there are many more variables than just two. Mr. Holmes clarified his statement saying there is a hotel, retail and conference center in all three schemes, and a third variable is how much of the historic buildings are left, but those are the only ones.

Angela Murtagh, 726 St. Johns Avenue, said a movie theater would help bring more traffic downtown. Movie theaters attract a large variety of ages. They could make the large conference center area smaller and include a movie theater. Mr. Ham said they didn't envision a movie theater, because hotels typically need the conference center to drive hotel rooms. In many communities movies are shown in venues that are not movie theaters. They need the conference center to drive the hotel economics. Ms. Murtagh said the retail is good, and said if they decide to do retail stores on the waterfront, they should put in pocket display windows to show what is offered in other retail businesses on St. Johns Avenue so they don't doom the other retail businesses. Mr. Ham said a "destination" draws traffic. They look forward to being part of the Downtown Merchants Association and local retail community. In many waterfront locations you find will kiosks that feature lists of merchants as well as maps. Any development here will help local retail and the rest of downtown.

Commissioner Brown moved to approve Community Development Partner, Inc.'s conceptual plan. Commissioner Myers seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was requested and taken, with the following results: Commissioners Brown, Kitchens, Myers, Norwood and Mayor Flagg, yes; Nays, none. The motion was declared passed. Mr. Ham said they look forward to coming back before the Commission in December.

5. **REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION** to amend the Municipal Code to suspend the collection of Fire, Police, Transportation and Parks Impact Fees - Follow up to the 9/30/08 Impact Fee Options Workshop at Price-Martin Center – Planning Director Jim Lee said during the 9/30/08 work session, three issues were discussed relating to suspending impact fees. One was the time frame for suspension; at the workshop Staff suggested 18 months. There was much discussion on this and it was felt that 18 months may not be sufficient time, given the current economic environment and considering the time it takes to move a development proposal to actual construction. They would be excluding sewer, water and school impact fees from this suspension. Second, they originally recommended suspension of fees within the Downtown TIF District and reductions of a percentage of impact fees for the remainder of the City. Many comments were related to not limiting the economic incentive to the Downtown TIF area. Third, they discussed looking at the future impact if growth occurs during this time, what the costs would be to the City, and how it would impact police, fire, parks and capital purchases. They met with the Fire and Police Chiefs and Parks Director concerning these issues, and have concluded in the short term they have to balance potential impact fee losses with potential tax base increases and economic development. They are cognizant of looking to the future. This is an economic incentive. The economic environment has not improved since this workshop took place.

Mr. Lee said there are four parts to their recommendation to consider. The first is the suspension of fees for two years. The second is to suspend the impact fees in all areas of the City. The third is to hire the law firm of Nabors, Giblin and Nickerson, PA to prepare the ordinance to make these changes, as they wrote the original impact fee ordinance. Last, they have issued three permits under the new impact fee ordinance that has been in affect since April 1, and recommend refunding the impact fees collected on these permits, which total \$8,724.63.

Mayor Flagg noted the request is to authorize putting these changes in motion. Commissioner Kitchens asked if they have to hire the original firm, or if Mr. Holmes could do the ordinance. Mr. Lee said he's certain Mr. Holmes is capable of drafting the ordinance, but impact fees are subject to litigation, and that's why the Commission previously hired a firm that has written and defended many impact fee ordinances. They want no gaps to allow someone to challenge this in court. This is only a suspension, not a removal of fees, so they don't want to provide any potential litigation opportunities to those opposed to impact fees altogether.

Commissioner Kitchens read a passage from the last paragraph of their recommendation, and asked if Mr. Lee can guarantee her that other taxes and fees won't be put on the citizens to make up for the losses this suspension will cause. Mr. Lee said when he wrote this he was considering revenues from sales taxes, gasoline taxes and bed taxes.

Commissioner Myers moved to approve the four recommendations made by Planning & Zoning Staff to suspend Fire, Police, Transportation and Parks Impact Fees as presented. Commissioner Norwood seconded the motion. Commissioner Brown said at Regional Planning Council, Baker County, who has taken a similar action, was asked if this action helped them, and they said it hadn't. They need to encourage people to come to Palatka. Mayor Flagg said they need to be proactive leaders and make this happen. Commissioner Norwood said this is the best course of action to take to promote long-term economic development. They need to do business more efficiently than they are doing now. This is not a permanent fix and this moratorium will some day be lifted. Mayor Flagg said they need a provision built into the ordinance for a review at 12 months, 18 months and 24 months. He commended Mr. Lee, Mrs. Banks and Mr. Boynton for hearing what businesses were saying during the workshop. This is the right thing to do. Commissioner Norwood said in the future they should look to see if there is way to put some type of indicator in the ordinance to monitor unemployment and/or growth. Mayor Flagg said they can speak with Nabors, Giblin about this. There being no further discussion, a roll-call vote was taken, with the following results: Commissioners Brown, Kitchens, Myers, Norwood and Mayor Flagg, yes; Nays, none. The motion was declared passed.

As to a time line, Mr. Lee said they intend to put this in motion soon. They look to get a draft of the ordinance late next week and to hold a first reading in November. Commissioner Brown said other government entities should follow their example. Commissioner Myers said the County is following suit and asked if it would be appropriate to approach the School Board about a similar suspension. Mayor Flagg said the Planning Staff is going to speak with the County's Staff and School Board after the change of leadership takes place. Commissioner Kitchens said this should be up to the School Board, and she is not in favor of the City getting involved in that. Mayor Flagg noted the request is to advise them of the actions the City has taken and nothing more.

6. **ORDINANCE** amending the General Employees Pension Plan DROP Program to provide an option for member earnings and to amend employee eligibility to remove years of service restrictions – 1st Reading - The Clerk read an ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, REVISING CHAPTER 2 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, ENTITLED GENERAL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT PLAN, BY

AMENDING SECTION 212(a)(2), ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DEFERRED RETIREMENT OPTION PLAN (DROP); AND BY AMENDING SECTION 212(b)(2), AMOUNTS PAYABLE UPON ELECTION TO PARTICIPATE IN DROP; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Norwood moved to pass the ordinance on first reading as presented. Commissioner Myers seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken, with the following results: Commissioners Brown, Kitchens, Myers, Norwood and Mayor Flagg, yes; Nays, none. The ordinance was declared passed on first reading.

7. **ORDINANCE** amending the Firefighters Pension Plan DROP Program employee eligibility to remove years of service restrictions – 1st Reading – The Clerk read an ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, REVISING CHAPTER 2, SECTION 250-136(a)(2) OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, ENTITLED FIREFIGHTERS' RETIREMENT PLAN, BY AMENDING PROVISIONS RELATED TO ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DEFERRED RETIREMENT OPTION PLAN (DROP); PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Norwood moved to pass the ordinance on first reading as presented. Commissioner Kitchens seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken, with the following results: Commissioners Brown, Kitchens, Myers, Norwood and Mayor Flagg, yes; Nays, none. The ordinance was declared passed on first reading.
8. **ORDINANCE** amending the Police Officers' Pension Plan DROP Program employee eligibility to remove years of service restriction – 1st Reading - The Clerk read an ordinance entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, REVISING CHAPTER 2, SECTION 250-371(a)(2) OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, ENTITLED POLICE OFFICERS' RETIREMENT PLAN, BY AMENDING PROVISIONS RELATED TO ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DEFERRED RETIREMENT OPTION PLAN (DROP); PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. Commissioner Kitchens moved to pass the ordinance on first reading as presented. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion. . A roll-call vote was taken, with the following results: Commissioners Brown, Kitchens, Myers, Norwood and Mayor Flagg, yes; Nays, none. The ordinance was declared passed on first reading.
9. **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**
City Manager Boynton said the reuse pipe-laying project's drilling contractor has experienced problems while drilling under SR 19; the auger is stuck and has to be extricated. They've had to close down the westbound lane on St. Johns Avenue at Mission Road up to SR 19. They've just completed installing well points to dewater the hole, and the contractor will return to remove their auger tomorrow morning. Afterwards they will lay pipe using the traditional method, and traffic will be rerouted for an additional 24 to 48 hours. Police have been on-site redirecting westbound traffic. They hope to be able to remove the auger in the morning. There is a significant detour on St. Johns Avenue between Weaver Road and SR 19, so that stretch should be avoided. All businesses can still be accessed from Hwy 19. The police will remain there overnight.
10. **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**
Commissioner Brown said the City has several properties around town that need upkeep. She spoke to the City Manager about putting gardens in those lots that would feed people, and to ask organizations to adopt a lot as a project. She'd like the Commission to give the City Manager permission to look into this.

Commissioner Norwood said during a recent FLC Administrative Policy committee meeting, they learned that Senator Lynn recently sponsored a bill concerning public comments. As a result of this pending legislation, the League is encouraging municipalities to develop policies regarding public comment. Per the question as to whether or not the City has such a policy, the Clerk replied that the City follows open meeting laws and statutes. The public is always given time to speak. Most times the norm is three minutes, but she has never seen an instance where someone was cut off at three minutes. Public Comment is included at the beginning of every meeting and allowed on each agenda item. Mayor Flagg asked if Mr. Holmes could look into drafting such a policy. Mr. Holmes asked what sorts of factors and rules should be incorporated into this type of policy. Commissioner Norwood said this is to limit speaking so as to not allow people to take over meetings, and a formal policy needs to be put in place for this. During discussion, debate took place as to when to allow public comments during the meeting, and the recommendation was to set a time certain for public comments. As to a three-minute rule, once people go over three minutes, a policy should be put in place to address this. Mr. Holmes said the statute gives the public a basic guarantee that they can speak, but does not address time limits. He's seldom seen the Commission limit a speaker to three minutes unless there is a long agenda. They could put something together that allows for flexibility. Commissioner Norwood said the Legislature is going to address this in the next Legislative session. Commissioner Brown said the people that sponsored this bill said they did so due to some commissions that wouldn't allow the public to speak. They could send tapes from Palatka's meetings to legislators to see how meetings are conducted. They do need to address this. There was consensus to have the City Attorney look at this, and to discuss this issue with other municipalities and entities at the upcoming LOGIC meeting as an agenda item. It was noted that sometimes during meetings people need more than three minutes, and they need that flexibility. Commissioner Kitchens said they treat their citizens very well. The Constitution guarantees citizens the right to free speech. She would never do anything to prohibit a citizen's right to speak.

11. **ADJOURN** – There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m. upon a motion by Commissioner Brown.

ANY PERSON WISHING TO APPEAL ANY DECISION MADE BY THE CITY COMMISSION WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT SUCH MEETING WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS, AND FOR SUCH PURPOSE MAY NEED TO INSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS IS MADE, WHICH RECORD INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED. FS 286.105