

MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING

August 9, 2021

The City Commission met this date in regular session in the Commission Chambers. Comm. Hamilton gave the Invocation. Mayor Smith recited the Pledge of Allegiance. A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM with the following in attendance.

Mayor	:	Hubert B. Smith
Commissioners	:	Catherine Hamilton
	:	Christine Wasdin
	:	Edward Crosby
City Clerk	:	Tammy Johnson
City Administrator	:	Carl Scott
Police Chief	:	Joe Hart
City Attorney	:	Hayward Dykes
Fire Chief	:	Tommy Mayville
VBCS General Manager	:	James Butler
Library Director	:	Hope Willis
Public Works Director	:	Nathan Kelley (camera)
Recorder	:	Beth Millsaps

Others in attendance: (not inclusive) Mike Griffith (Bay Beacon), Jerry Spence, Terry Griffin, Clark (Tom) Browning

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

COMM. HAMILTON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JULY 12TH, 2021 EXECUTIVE SESSION. COMM. CROSBY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.

COMM. HAMILTON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JULY 12, 2021, REGULAR MEETING. COMM. CROSBY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.

COMM. HAMILTON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JULY 26, 2021, BUDGET WORKSHOP. COMM. CROSBY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.

1. CITIZENS' CONCERNS (non-agenda items) Resident

Mr. Jerry Spence, 131 Edge Avenue, said he is here tonight on behalf of the Heritage Museum, he is the newest trustee on the board. Mr. Spence said the museum wanted to celebrate the city's 100 year of incorporation. Mr. Spence said every year they host a Night at the Museum, however they are not doing this year, going to have a dinner, plans are in the works. There will be historical figures courtesy of Stage Masters. Planning for around late October, early November, they are in the process of finding a venue to house it and looking for money. Comm. Hamilton asked if we had any money that we could support for the 100-year anniversary of our city? Mayor Smith said we do support the museum, we pay their electric, power, internet. Mrs. Johnson said we also support the Yule of Yesteryear and Saturday in the Park. Mrs. Johnson said there is money under donations we haven't used. Mr. Spence said they will charge per plate for the event so it will also serve as a fundraiser. Mr. Spence said he would come back before the Commission

1 as things progress. Mrs. Johnson said in September she knew the museum was doing the history of John
2 Perrine.

3 **2. CITIZENS' CONCERNS (Non-Agenda Items) Non-Resident**

4 No non-resident concerns tonight.

5 **1. ACTION ITEMS – Added Agenda Items**

6 There are no items to add to the agenda this evening.

7 **2. ACTION ITEMS – Street Striping Bid Update**

8 Mayor Smith said there had been no bids submitted for the striping project. Comm. Wasdin said she
9 didn't realize we hadn't had any bids until she got her Commission packet. Mrs. Johnson said she knew
10 Mrs. Brant, the city's engineer, was going to reach out to some of the companies that we sent packages to
11 and see what she could find out, but Mrs. Brant is not here this evening.

12 **3. ACTION ITEMS – Resolution No. 04-08-09-21 Reappoint & Appoint Planning Board**

13 Mayor Smith read Resolution No. 04-08-09-21, a resolution reappointing and appointing volunteers
14 to the City's Planning Commission and providing an effective date. Reappointing Planning Commission
15 members Mr. Joseph Cobb and Mr. Les Chambers term expires on August 31, 2026, and appointing Mr.
16 Robert Bachelor whose term will also expire on August 31, 2026. **COMM. HAMILTON MADE A
17 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 04-08-09-21 AS SUBMITTED. COMM. CROSBY
18 SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4
19 TO 0.**

20 **4. ACTION ITEMS – Award CDBG Grant Neighborhood Revitalization**

21 Mayor Smith said in the good news tonight the city has been awarded a \$650,000 CDBG grant
22 neighborhood revitalization. Comm. Wasdin said there will be several more meetings about streets and
23 stormwater, a lot of bureaucracy involved. Mayor Smith said we are using Jordan and Associates as we have
24 in the past to help with the process. **COMM. WASDIN MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE CDBG
25 GRANT NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION \$650,000. MAYOR SMITH SECONDED THE
26 MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0. Mr. Dykes
27 said with acceptance of the grant, he will bring back all legal requirements and documents to the
28 Commission to review.**

29 **5. ACTION ITEMS – Jordan & Associates Administrative Agreement**

30 **COMM. WASDIN MADE A MOTION TO HAVE JORDAN AND ASSOCIATES
31 ADMINSTRATE THE AGREEMENT. MAYOR SMITH SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH
32 PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.**

33 **6. ACTION ITEMS – COVID-19 Policy**

34 Mrs. Johnson brought this up at the last budget meeting, see what the Commission wants to do. She
35 said we do have some employees out now due to COVID-19. Mrs. Johnson said at this time those people are

1 using either sick or vacation. Mr. Scott said several of our sister cities aren't doing anything. He said we
2 have employees asking questions we need to be able to give them answers. Comm. Wasdin said as part of
3 the benefits package, employees have sick time, and they should use it. Mayor Smith said he feels like
4 everyone has had the opportunity to get the vaccine. Chief Mayville said he has folks that are vaccinated, and
5 they have still caught COVID-19. He said there is also sinuses, flu, and a really bad stomach virus. Chief
6 Mayville said he is following the guidelines set by the CDC, have his employees, Niceville and Valparaiso,
7 full and part time, they are encouraged to vaccinate, if they are exposed go home for 10 days, discussion
8 continued. **COMM. CROSBY MADE A MOTION THAT IF YOU ARE EXPOSED AND HAVE TO**
9 **QUARANTEED THE EMPLOYEE WOULD USE THEIR SICK AND OR VACATION TIME OR**
10 **USE UNPAID LEAVE. SHOULD HOSPITALIZATION BE NECESSARY, THAT WOULD BE**
11 **CONSIDERED CATASTROPHIC AND IF ANOTHER EMPLOYEE WOULD LIKE TO DONATE**
12 **THAT IS UP TO THE INDIVIDUAL. COMM. HAMILTON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH**
13 **PASSED BY UNANIMIOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.**

14 **1. OLD BUSINESS – Tom's Bayou Bridge Utilities Update**

15 Comm. Hamilton said the last bridge deck should be poured next Thursday or Friday. She said they
16 also have told her within two weeks a lot of projects will be complete.

17 **2. OLD BUSINESS – City Charter Amendment Discussion**

18 Comm. Hamilton said since the last meeting regarding a charter change, she had spoken with the
19 Supervisor of Elections and if a decision is made to proceed, they would have to have it in writing by
20 November. Comm. Hamilton asked if the attorney would pull back up the charter information from the
21 previous time it was on the ballot, the type of government that has one person as central oversight. Mayor
22 Smith said it has not been the pleasure of the people before but could look at putting on referendum. Comm.
23 Wasdin said we might want to have a workshop, to discuss the possible change, if that is something we want
24 to offer our residents. She suggested having a workshop in October to hash out the particulars. Mayor Smith
25 said there is 80% of the charter that is lined through, that is a lot to digest in a short time. Mr. Terry Griffin,
26 253 Grandview Avenue, said on the last two efforts, citizens have been uninformed. He said if the
27 Commission wants to change the charter it should do it methodically, that has been his number one
28 opposition in previous attempts. Mr. Griffin said if you want to change the form of government have the
29 citizens on board before going to referendum. Mayor Smith said that is also his thought this evening, don't
30 rush into anything, a lot to digest by March vote. He said we need to educate the citizens and have citizen
31 input. Comm. Hamilton agrees having an October workshop to review is a good idea.

32 **3. OLD BUSINESS – Property Foreclosure Update**

33 Mr. Dykes said Mr. Turner's son and daughter have been dismissed, with his wife we are looking to
34 file a summary judgment, the attorney ad litem that had been involved has been dismissed. He said hopeful
35 to have solution by October.

1 **4. OLD BUSINESS – Synovus Bank Building Lease**

2 Comm. Wasdin said this probably caught everyone a little off guard. She said Mr. Huff, owner of the
3 building, offered to lease the bank building for 10,000. Comm. Wasdin said he wants to maintain ownership
4 of the building. Mayor Smith said in his personal opinion as resident Brent Smith he is not interested in
5 paying \$10,000 a month, when the owner does absolutely nothing in the building. Comm. Wasdin said this
6 lease preserves the beauty of Valparaiso, leaving us with two buildings we could lease out, she understands
7 not wanting to be a “tenant” but feels this is a move for the future. Mayor Smith said with this lease he also
8 has the power to put us out whenever he decides he wants to. Mayor Smith said he is speaking from his
9 heart, he was shocked to see this lease and feels it is a slap in the face, but he is only one of five, and he is
10 not for it. Comm. Hamilton said she is not for the lease either but what about rewriting. Mayor Smith that
11 could be an idea because as it is presented, he is totally against as written. Comm. Wasdin said Mr. Huff is
12 not doing this to make a buck, that is the reason he offered at \$10,000, maybe if we were willing to pay
13 more, he would be more involved in the upkeep and changes. Comm. Wasdin said other things to consider,
14 getting a loan or bond to purchase. Mayor Smith said he would be more apt to do that than lease at \$10,000
15 per month. Mayor Smith thinks it would less than \$250,000 to make these two current buildings more
16 presentable. Mayor Smith said as just one person he does not see how this is a win win situation. Comm.
17 Wasdin said our budget went up, and our tax base continues to grow, we can work this into our budget.
18 Comm. Crosby said he doesn’t think it is a good idea to put money into something you don’t own, however
19 if you own the building that is different. Mr. Dykes said contingencies can always be added to the lease to
20 benefit the city. Comm. Hamilton suggested Comm. Wasdin speak with Mr. Huff again see what can be
21 adjusted. Comm. Wasdin said Mayor Smith and Comm. Crosby do not want to lease the building and Mr.
22 Huff isn’t interested in selling the building. Mayor Smith said Comm. Wasdin please don’t think I don’t
23 appreciate the work that you have done because I do. Mr. Griffin said lease the building if we were to build
24 anything attached to the leased building it would belong to owner, not the city. **COMM. WASDIN MOVES**
25 **TO HAVE MR. SCOTT LOOK AT WHAT IT WOULD TAKE TO REBUILD THIS AREA AS AN**
26 **ALTERNATIVE PLAN TO THE BANK BUILDING. COMM. CROSBY SECONDED THE**
27 **MOTION, Mr. Scott said he would look at other areas as well it does not have to be in the location it**
28 **is currently, he believes it would be better on John Sims where we also have land. MOTION PASSED**
29 **BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.**

30 **1. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – TPO/DOT**

31 Comm. Wasdin said there hadn’t been a meeting.

32 **2. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Stormwater**

33 Mr. Scott said everything looks great.

34 **3. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Community Liaison Report**

35 Comm. Wasdin said there is a breakfast on Wednesday.

1 4. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Regional Sewer Update**

2 Comm. Denney is out of town this evening.

3 5. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Planning Commission Update**

4 Mr. Browning said no meeting yet this month.

5 6. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Department Updates**

6 Mr. Butler said network equipment that all the departments are needing (in our FY22 budget) if we
7 order the equipment now, we will be saving 7%. Comm. Hamilton said we have the money in our
8 reserves.

9 7. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Law Enforcement Safety Challenge**
10 **Award**

11 Chief Hart had a brief video presentation. He said FDOT safety challenge, we compete with agencies
12 our size, with fifteen (15) employees, there are twenty-six (26) agencies in our division. Chief Hart's
13 presentation shows Valparaiso as the winner of the challenge.

14 8. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS - Disbursements**

15 **COMM. HAMILTON MADE A MOTION TO PAY THE BILLS AS OUTLINED IN THE**
16 **MONTHLY FINANCIALS. COMM. CROSBY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY**
17 **UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.**

18 9. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Etc.**

19 Mayor Smith recognized two of our employees for their longevity with the city. Mr. James Butler,
20 general manager of the Communications Department has been with the city for 15 years, Mayor Smith
21 presented him with an insulated mug. Ms. Beth Millsaps, Administrative Department, has been with the city
22 for 20 years and presented her with an insulated mug. Mayor Smith thanked them for the service with the
23 city.

24 **ADJOURN**

25 There being no further business to be brought before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:48
26 PM.

27
28 _____
29 Hubert B. Smith
30 Mayor

31
32 _____
33 Catherine Hamilton
34 Chair, VCA

35 ATTEST:

36 _____
37 Tammy Johnson, CMC
38 City Clerk

39
40 ***A recording of the August 9, 2021, Commission meeting will be kept on the City's secure file
41 server as a permanent part of these minutes.***