



City of Palm Coast Minutes City Council Business

City Hall
160 Lake Avenue
Palm Coast, FL 32164
www.palmcoastgov.com

Mayor Michael Norris
Vice Mayor Theresa Pontieri
Council Member Charles Gambaro
Council Member Ty Miller

Tuesday, March 4, 2025

6:00 PM

City Hall - Community Wing

City Staff

Lauren Johnston, Acting City Manager

Marcus Duffy, City Attorney

Kaley Cook, City Clerk

- Public Participation shall be in accordance with Section 286.0114 Florida Statutes.
- Other matters of concern may be discussed as determined by City Council.
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- It is proper meeting etiquette to silence all electronic devices, including cell phones while Council is in session.
- Any person who decides to appeal any decision of the City Council with respect to any matter considered at this meeting will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose, may need to hire a court reporter to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

A. PROCLAMATIONS - 5:30 P.M.

Mayor Norris opened this section of the agenda.

1. PROCLAMATION - MARCH 3 - 9, 2025, AS FLOOD AWARENESS WEEK

The proclamation was presented to Lynn Stevens, Deputy Director of Stormwater & Engineering.

Ms. Stevens shared comments about flood awareness week and details of the City's stormwater system.

Mayor Norris shared about preparations that are needed as a coastal community and encouraged residents to share issues.

Council Member Miller thanked staff for all of the work that they do and highlighted the ditch and swales in the system to get water out of the neighborhoods.

Council Member Gambaro enjoyed his recent visit to the Stormwater Department and reiterated the message that swales are meant to hold water to allow the ditches and canals to move water.

Mayor Norris highlighted legislative asks to relieve some flooding issues and prepare for future issues.

2. PROCLAMATION - MARCH 2025 AS DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

The proclamation was presented to Terrie Baker, Co-Founder and Vice President, of the Cedar Bridge Foundation.

Ms. Baker shared comments about upcoming events.

Mayor Norris encouraged everyone to attend the event on March 18, 2025.

B. CALL TO ORDER CITY COUNCIL BUSINESS MEETING – 6:00 P.M.

Mayor Norris called the business meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG AND A MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Norris shared about Mr. Stevens health and asked for prayers.

D. ROLL CALL

City Clerk Kaley Cook called the roll. All members were present.

E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public Participation shall be held in accordance with Section 286.0114 Florida Statutes. And pursuant to the City Council's Meeting Policies and Procedures:

- (1) This agenda item has a thirty (30) minute limit.
- (2) Each speaker shall at the podium, provide their name and may speak for up to 3 minutes.
- (3) The Public may provide comments to the City Council relative to matters not on the agenda at the times indicated in this Agenda. Following any comments from the public, there may be discussion by the City Council.
- (4) Public speakers may address their comments to the Council as a whole, the Mayor, or to an individual Council Member
- (5) When addressing the City Council on specific, enumerated Agenda items, speakers shall:
 - (a) make their comments concise and to the point;
 - (b) not speak more than once on the same subject;
 - (c) not, by speech or otherwise, delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of the City Council;
 - (d) obey the orders of the Mayor or the City Council; and

(e) not make any irrelevant, impertinent or slanderous comments while addressing the City Council; which pursuant to Council rules, shall be considered disorderly.

(6) Any person who becomes disorderly or who fails to confine his or her comments to the identified subject or business, shall be cautioned by the Mayor and thereafter must conclude his or her remarks on the subject within the remaining designated time limit.

Any speaker failing to comply, as cautioned, shall be barred from making any additional comments during the meeting and may be removed, as necessary, for the remainder of the meeting.

Members of the public may make comments during the public comment portion of the meeting. Please be advised that public comment will only be permitted during the public comment portions of the agenda at the times indicated by the Chair during the meeting.

Mayor Norris shared the rules and procedures of public comment.

Chantal Preninger wanted to no longer receive the Flagler Pennysaver, sharing that it sometimes ends up in her swale.

Eric Morrisette, with Kolter Land, shared current projects, provided updates on Citation Boulevard and Seminole Trace (Cascades), shared items that will be included in the projects, and invited the Council to drive through the neighborhood.

Marie Summers shared a prayer.

Anna Gibson thanked City Council for their consideration of her City Manager application, discussed the comprehensive financial report, requested for information about the reserves to be shared, encouraged making the pool and golf course more profitable, suggested annual passes at facilities, and wanted the ability to have handouts of the agenda packets for the audience.

Jim Blecken discussed flooding, suggested polyresin to eliminate swale spending, asked if a report is available for canal dredging, discussed developers subdividing land and not having to pay for infrastructure, and shared concerns for speed bumps and building congestion from cars going so slow.

Steve Carr supported the traffic calming efforts on Florida Park Drive and found them to be a tremendous help to residents in the area.

Cliff Brown discussed a newspaper article regarding paint colors and did not support the pending ordinance changes.

Mayor Norris responded to Mr. Brown regarding home colors.

Council Member Miller responded to Mr. Blecken and Mr. Morrisette.

Mayor Norris asked Mr. Blecken to follow up with Mr. Cote.

Vice Mayor Pontieri discussed recent updates on canal dredging and asked for the updates to be shared.

Ms Johnston replied to public comments to inform Ms. Preninger how to request removal from the Pennysaver deliveries, thanked Mr. Morisette for sharing the collaboration on the project, replied to Ms. Gibson that the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report is on the Council agenda for 3/18/2025 for approval before it can be posted on the website, explained where reserve information may be found, highlighted the passholder opportunities that the City has for the Southern Recreation Center, shared a QR code located near the agendas that allows residents to access the full agenda packet for the meeting, shared that staff will review the polyresin suggestion for swales, shared that a future presentation will be scheduled on canal dredging in May, and explained that private communities do have to have a bond to support their infrastructure.

F. MINUTES

3. MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL: FEBRUARY 18, 2025, BUSINESS MEETING FEBRUARY 25, 2025, WORKSHOP MEETING

Pass

Motion made to approve by Council Member Miller, seconded by Council Member Gambaro

Approved - 4 - Mayor Michael Norris, Vice Mayor Theresa Pontieri, Council Member Charles Gambaro, Council Member Ty Miller

G. DISCUSSION

4. DISCUSSION - CITY COUNCIL SEAT 3 VACANCY

Mayor Norris shared comments about Council Members Stevens health and inability to continue serving.

Ms. Johnston mirrored a schedule from the prior vacancy filled last year, as outlined below:

- *Application Period: Open until March 19, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.*
- *Interviews: April 1, 2025, at 3:00 p.m.*
- *Discussion of Applicants: April 8, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.*
- *Appointment Date: April 15, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.*

Mayor Norris encouraged the Council to consider a star interview technique described as having an applicant explain a situation, task, actions taken, and the results.

Council Member Miller asked if staff needs Council to provide any further direction.

Mayor Norris discussed whether or not there is a requirement for the applicant to reside in the district.

Ms. Johnston shared her discussion with the City Attorney's Office and the Charter requirements.

Council Member Gambaro found the process to be fair and equitable and supported the timeline.

Vice Mayor Pontieri asked how this will be advertised.

Ms. Johnston replied that staff will provide Council with a communications plan and mirror the prior process.

Public Comment:

Lisa (no last name provided) sought to clarify if Mr. Stevens' seat is up in 2028.

Mayor Norris responded yes, and that whoever is appointed will hold the seat until the next scheduled election (in 2026) at which point an individual will be elected to serve the remainder of the term.

Lisa continued her comments and hoped most of the residents agree that a successful businessman is needed to help bring in business and attract it.

Marie Summers endorsed Andrew Werner for the vacancy, should he apply, and supported selecting someone with conservative values.

James Deen did not want to see someone who had just moved into the district be considered.

Anna Gibson shared a quote and asked why this is not a special election.

Mayor Norris replied that the City is following the process outlined in the City Charter.

Mike Breaux encouraged getting someone in business, discussed water fees, and asked Council to take a look.

A speaker (no name provided) encouraged having someone with business experience on the Council.

City Council held discussion on the residency requirements outlined in the Charter and asked for details to be shared regarding an appointment versus a special election.

Ms. Johnston shared about the Charter, which is adopted by voters through the years, which dictates the process for filling a Council vacancy.

H. ORDINANCES FIRST READ

5. ORDINANCE 2025-XX UTILITY RATE AMENDMENT

City Attorney Blocker read the title into the record.

Ms. Johnston introduced Mr. Hamilton, with Raffelis, and Mr. Cote, and provided a background of the item.

Mr. Cote presented the following topics to City Council; fund types, utility infrastructure components, details of capacity and understanding its importance, wastewater treatment facilities, wastewater capacity, water treatment facilities, well sites, water capacity, capacity projects, pep upgrades and improvements, pump station upgrades, rehabilitation and renovation projects (R&R), meter reading transmitters, meter replacement program, gravity sewer and manhole lining, and final points on why an increase is needed.

City Council held lengthy discussion with Mr. Cote and Mr. Hamilton on the following topics; alternative scenarios if the rates were not adopted, pep tanks as a major point of water intrusion, the needs of Wastewater Treatment Plant 1, Council Member Gambaro's efforts seeking funding and assistance, impact fees, expansion related projects, information that was updated after the packet was provided, concern for the \$415 million CIP commitment, using other funding sources only after the impact fees have been exhausted, expectation of additional CIP needs, the prior studies not anticipating current needs, prior SRF loans, potential of State funding, and water aesthetic improvements.

Mr. Hamilton provided an executive summary of slides that were covered during previous presentations to City Council.

Topics presented included: existing conditions and major capital needs, summary of major assumptions, proposed capital funding plan and financing alternatives, adequacy of existing monthly service rates, recommended rate adjustments, and next steps to implement rates.

City Council held lengthy discussion with Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Cote, and Mr. DeLorenzo on the following topics: figures for future growth and capital maintenance, scenarios that constitute the lowest cost for the whole debt service, current rates, surcharge, cost recovery, quality control mechanism, accounting practices, changes to fees over the years, yearly review of the fees, City's history of impact fees not keeping up with the rate of growth, prior increases for impact fees, statute limitations, historical perspective, a discussion on shifting to non-ad valorem tax, fees that the City does not have compared to other cities, composition of the bill, moving the bill from one place to another with the proposed shift, thanks for the analysis, concern for delaying action, budgeting steps to billing, future analysis on the billing suggestions, FDEP consent order, over-commitment on water, and potential of the joint legislative auditing committee to address auditing requests.

Public Comment:

Paul Ponze thanked Council for trying to think outside of the box, discussed the national review of expenses and frivolous spending, believed it would be a help to move the charges to somewhere else, and encouraged an audit.

Anna Gibson discussed proposed fees, lack of cost recovery, and did not support moving the fees to the tax roll.

Mr. Cote provided a response to Ms. Gibson's comments to explain that pep tank costs are covered by capacity fees and that the other numbers are preliminary.

Louis Carl thanked the staff for their presentation and hoped to be able to find the presentation after the meeting, discussed water conservation, did not think moving fees to the ad valorem tax roll would help, did not think most residents would be able to apply enough expenditures to qualify for deduction, suggested lobbying the state, shared that new developments will bring in more taxes and revenue, and suggested maybe lowering rates later on.

George Mayo would rather leave the fees as monthly fees and asked if we have to allow developments out of the city to access the infrastructure.

Mr. Cote provided a response on utility boundaries and obligations within the service boundaries.

Jeff Adams, new resident to the area, was interested in knowing how the rate increase came about, suggested going after grant monies, lift stations being put in by developers, and grading on new homes.

Mayor Norris replied that the legislature is discussing establishing more grants with a focus on infrastructure and asked for the resident's contact information.

Ms. Johnston and Mr. Cote provided details of developments putting in lift stations and force mains.

Don Cluff thanked Mayor Norris for thinking outside of the box, discussed more fees and taxes shifted into what you call a utility bill, ad valorem taxes have been going down, but the utility fees are going up, and asked if apartments have water meters.

Annamaria Long, Executive Officer of the Flagler Home Builders Association (HBA), shared about a stakeholder meeting that the HBA was invited to on the topic, different sets of numbers received, the inability of the HBA to support today, but that they do not think it is in the best interest of the residents to put this off.

Jim Blecken asked if we are overbuilding and pondered the potential need to tell developers about the stress on the system, a moratorium, and requirement to put bonds for infrastructure.

Mark Webb shared his history of attending the discussion on this item, was not sure what was going on, discussed line items on a utility bill, asked what the increases apply to, the ultimate question of how much this is going to cost, and encouraged town halls on the topic.

Tony Amaral stated that the Council is in a bad spot, that projects are fully funded through impact fees, discussed funding mechanisms, shared that the

problem has to get solved, if we don't change we will be under an FDEP mandate, that there have been no major updates to Wastewater Treatment Plant 1 since 2006, and that we are at the point where no is not an answer.

Margaret Fisher commended the Council for the stance they are taking, that the data was overwhelming, she believed the most important thing is to not do two increases this year, discussed expediting projects, that there needs to be a different way of solving the problem, and encouraged Council to take another year or two.

Mayor Norris shared that part of the problem is that the City is under a consent order from FDEP to complete these projects by 2028.

Chantel Preninger addressed the City Manager on Pennysaver and asked for additional assistance.

Ms. Johnston suggested the resident work with Ms. Kershaw for assistance.

Ms. Preninger continued her comments to discuss the rate increase, encouraged the hiring of a grant writer, asked how the City plans to handle the increases, and asked if these efforts will be enough.

Ed Fuller thanked the Council for taking on the difficult issue, asked what happens if we don't do the increase, discussed the failure of the system if not addressed, FDEP fines, shared concerns for the Fire Department, lack of choice on the topic, and water as a commodity.

Bruce Stone urged Council to think about the elderly who can't afford the increase.

Theresa Gianpollo urged Council to take a look at other budget allocations for things that are not as important.

Council Member Gambaro stated that we can no longer continue this problem, that we need to tackle the problem, and that he will continue to fight as hard as he can for federal funding.

Council Member Miller echoed the comments of Council Member Gambaro, that none of the Council Members ran for office to raise rates, discussed the consent decree and required improvements, responded to comments on re-election and shared thoughts and discussed construction costs in the future.

Vice Mayor Pontieri requested the information that will be provided to the HBA, supported cost recovery on the charges, discussed rollbacks in previous years to keep costs down, fee increases faced during her tenure, infrastructure projects that need to be addressed, did not agree that the full amount needs to be funded through this increase, was disappointed in an 'all or nothing' approach, stated that the issues faced are with Wastewater Plant 1, believed that something went wrong and the tax payer now has to fix it, was disturbed that we were not collecting miscellaneous fees over the years, believed there are other ways to get this done, and encouraging a prolonged or phased approach.

Mayor Norris outlined the two-phase approach and future council approvals.

Vice Mayor Pontieri asked about the status of the grant writer position.

Ms. Johnston shared that it is currently in the interview process, and we have a consultant helping with a grant strategy in the meantime.

Pass

Motion made to approve by Council Member Gambaro and seconded by Council Member Miller

Approved - 3 - Mayor Michael Norris, Council Member Charles Gambaro, Council Member Ty Miller

Denied – 1- Vice Mayor Theresa Pontieri

I. RESOLUTIONS

6. RESOLUTION 2025-32 APPROVING A FEDERALLY FUNDED SUBAWARD AND GRANT AGREEMENT WITH FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (FDEM) RELATING TO HURRICANE MILTON EXPENSES

City Attorney Blocker read the title into the record.

Ms. Johnston provided a background of the item.

Council Member Miller discussed the issues with debris pickup during the prior storm season and recommended contingencies in future contracts.

Ms. Johnston replied to share that staff will be going out for competitive bid with language that adds the contingency and also allows us to get reimbursed by FEMA.

Vice Mayor Pontieri asked if there are any legal mechanisms to protect from price gouging and asked if the contracts discussed are for all debris pickup or just emergency situations.

Ms. Johnston replied that the contracts are only for emergency situations.

Mr. Mancill provided a response on FEMA reimbursements, market rates, performance bonds to be included, protections for the City, and collaboration with the County.

Council Member Gambaro shared that even though we had pickup issues, the Department of Public Works still took care of our residents.

Mr. Mancill shared the storm response efforts and teams on standby.

Mayor Norris asked if public works utilizes assets from other departments in the City.

Mr. Mancill responded absolutely, and shared efforts from across the City.

Council Member Gambaro asked the City Manager to share the 72-hour checklist in preparation for storms.

Public Comment:

Paul Blecken asked if the City reached out to FEMA for assistance with backups and flooding.

Ms. Johnston responded yes, shared about the FEMA hazard mitigation program, that projects were submitted for Wastewater Treatment Plant 1, pep tanks, and pep panel replacements, and that funds are being received for some of the items.

Council Member Miller discussed legislative priorities, that the State is keying on storms and storm defense, and shared about a grant program revisiting what the City asked for related to these projects.

Mark Webb applauded the creativity of the City for the timing of tree trimming.

Pass

Motion made to approve by Council Member Gambaro and seconded by Vice Mayor Pontieri

Approved - 4 - Mayor Michael Norris, Vice Mayor Theresa Pontieri, Council Member Charles Gambaro, Council Member Ty Miller

J. CONSENT

Ms. Johnston shared that the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report will be presented at the March 18, 2025, business meeting and provided details of item 7.

Public Comment:

There were none.

Pass

Motion made to be adopted on consent by Council Member Gambaro and seconded by Vice Mayor Pontieri

Approved - 4 - Mayor Michael Norris, Vice Mayor Theresa Pontieri, Council Member Charles Gambaro, Council Member Ty Miller

7. RESOLUTION 2025-31 APPROVING THE AUDITOR SELECTION PROCEDURE FOR SELECTION OF AN EXTERNAL AUDITING FIRM

8. RESOLUTION 2025-30 APPROVING PIGGYBACKING THE CITY OF PENSACOLA, FLORIDA CONTRACT #25-002 WITH INFOSEND, INC., FOR UTILITY BILL PRINTING AND POSTAGE SERVICES
9. RESOLUTION 2025-33 APPROVING PIGGYBACKING OMNIA PARTNERS CONTRACT #R240806 WITH KIMBALL MIDWEST TO UTILIZE THE TERMS, CONDITIONS, SCOPE, AND PRICING OF THE OMNIA PARTNERS AGREEMENT MRO SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT AS NEEDED
10. RESOLUTION 2025-35 APPROVING PIGGYBACKING THE STATE TERM CONTRACT NO. 92121500-24-STC WITH GIDDENS SECURITY COPORATION FOR SECURITY SERVICES
11. RESOLUTION 2025-34 APPROVING PIGGYBACKING CITY OF TUCSON (OMNIA PARTNERS) CONTRACT WITH W.W. GRAINGER, INC., TO PURCHASE MAINTENANCE, REPAIR, AND OPERATIONAL SUPPLIES

K. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Remainder of Public Comments is limited to three (3) minutes each.

Ed Fuller shared thoughts and prayers for Mr. Stevens and thanked Ms. Ramos, Community Development Technician, for her assistance.

L. DISCUSSION BY CITY COUNCIL OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

City Council held discussion on recent and upcoming sporting events.

Vice Mayor Pontieri shared prayers for Council Member Stevens and his family.

Council Member Miller shared that Mr. Stevens decision to resign shows what type of person he is.

Council Member Gambaro highlighted Mr. Stevens' career as a public servant and shared prayers from the Knights of Columbus.

Mayor Norris shared that he has been in constant contact with Mr. Stevens' wife, and that he is a strong man with strong character.

Additionally, Mayor Norris shared that he is doing a \$2500 scholarship for STEM, at both Flagler-Palm Coast and Matanzas High School, and shared about the application process.

M. DISCUSSION BY CITY ATTORNEY OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

There were none.

N. DISCUSSION BY CITY MANAGER OF MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Ms. Johnston thanked City Council for talking through hard things and making hard decisions during this meeting.

O. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:46 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by: Kaley Cook, CMC, FCRM
City Clerk*

-----Original Message-----

From: Christine Kraus <rvgflagler@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, February 28, 2025 10:42 AM

To: Theresa Carli Pontieri <TCarliPontieri@palmcoastgov.com>

Subject: Ralph Carter Park

Im writing to you in regards to the issues going on with Ralph Carter Park . My understanding from what I have read is the neighbors are complaining about the light and noise . First with all respect to them I understand what they are saying . However most of them knew when they bought or built at the park was there and the noise ordinance in the City of Palm Coast. If they didn't same on them for not doing their due diligence in collecting all information and checking their surroundings before hand . It's hard enough in this city to find things for these children to do and to shut this down to certain organizations and take away the lights would be absolutely absurd in my opinion. I have read meny articles of residents complaining about the crime rate going up here and the kids stealing from cars and such . So is the solution to take away some of the things that keep them busy and the mentoring from these organizations that actually steer these kids in the right direction? I no longer have my kids in any of these organizations but I do have grandchildren in them and my older son does meet his friends to play night basketball at the park so this upsets me to no end . I'm hoping you all make the right decision here to NOT change Ralph Carter Park and it lights times or noise ordinance. Thank you for taking the time to read my concerns.

Sincerely

Christine Kraus

March 3, 2025

To the Palm Coast City Council

Folks,

I am just a plain citizen of Palm Coast. I have been visiting here for the past 30+ years and have been a resident to the past 15 years. I have seen the city change drastically over those years.

I am against the proposed increase in our utility service charge as it is quite expensive at this time, My wife and I are considered "snowbirds" as we travel a lot in the summer months. We now pay over \$125 per month when we are not here for no services. Please don't burden us with more.

I served my town in Connecticut as the First Selectman (Mayor) for four years and a member of the Board of Selectmen (Town Council) for 16 years. I know the budgetary process and capitol expenditures needed to exist. I believe it is time for the City to look at some agencies as Public Works and Utility closely to save money. This would most likely cover most of the work needed.

I would also like to see the increase of revenue provided by all the new construction being done in the city. That would cover the costs well.

Thank you for your time and I do not hold out much hope that what I have said will make much difference in your decision.

Sincerely,


Tony Palermo
Palm Coast

860-391-1679