

MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
December 14, 2015

The City Commission met this date in regular session in the Commission Chambers. The Invocation was given by Commissioner Morgan after which the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by Mayor Arnold. A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM with the following in attendance.

Mayor	:	John B. Arnold, Jr.
Commissioners	:	Heyward H. Strong, Jr.
	:	Kay Hamilton
	:	Clark (Tom) Browning, IV.
	:	Joe Morgan
City Clerk	:	Tammy Johnson
Police Chief	:	Joe Hart
Fire Chief	:	Mark Norris
City Attorney	:	Hayward Dykes
City Engineer	:	Roy Petrey
City Administrator	:	Carl Scott
General Manager VBCS	:	James Butler
Recorder	:	Amber Elledge

Others in attendance: (Not inclusive) Amber Elledge(camera), Marcia Sanders – Bay Beacon, Marion Cassell, Joe Cobb, Joseph Pascarella, Tom Veinote, Louise Graham

Mayor Arnold welcomed the audience and stated that the Commission was interested in hearing their thoughts and welcomed any comments. He asked that anyone wanting to make any comments should raise his/her right hand to be recognized and use the microphone at the podium to address the Commission.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

COMM. STRONG MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 9, 2015. COMM. BROWNING SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.

Minutes

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

Marion Cassell, 173 Highland, said she had two questions. To Mr. Morgan she asked, "If chickens are allowed, how would we prevent bird flu?" He responded that that is one of the many concerns that are being considered as an ordinance is drafted. To Chief Norris she stated that her friend lives near Cadillac and Muskegon and could not hear Eglin's tornado warning on the day we had bad storms. She asked him if we could add a tornado siren to our current fire siren. Both Mayor Arnold and Norris responded that they were aware that the fire siren cannot be heard throughout the whole City. Mr. Arnold stated that its projection is also dependent upon wind direction. Norris referenced the Okaloosa County Code Red system which sends automated voice messages in the case of inclement weather. He said these warnings will also go to land line phones. Mrs Cassell asked if that information could be published in the newspaper and Tammy Johnson stated we had put it in our newsletter previously.

Citizens' Concerns

Tornado Warning

Backyard Chickens

Joseph Pascarella, 196 Chicago, wished to voice his disapproval of allowing chickens in Valparaiso. He referenced the noise nuisance they may cause and asked how the City could possibly enforce how many chickens each home would have on a given day. He stated that an ordinance does not prevent mites or predators.

Tom Veinote, 37 Kelly Way, voiced his disapproval of allowing chickens in Valparaiso. He stated that chickens belong in rural areas such as the poultry farms which can be seen from Interstate 10. Mr Veinote stated the City of Niceville had problems when they tried to accommodate chicken coops and ultimately did away with that allowance.

Louise Graham, 410 Brooks, stated she was also against having chickens in Valparaiso. She stated the way her home sits she has more neighboring yards than the usual home and she would rather not have to deal with that many potential chickens due to smell, noise and uncleanliness. She said the idea of owning a chicken coop did not seem cost effective since there is no way of knowing how many eggs you will get, if any, throughout the year.

Joe Cobb, 4 Quail, spoke on behalf of the City of Valparaiso's Visioning Committee when he said they had all five discussed the chicken issue and were unanimously against it.

Mr. Pascarella asked if there were any rules about slaughtering the chickens. Mr. Morgan stated that in its current form, the ordinance does not prevent slaughter. He compared it to skinning a deer or preparing a quail for a meal, both of which are allowed in Valparaiso. He said the Commission's job was to listen to all sides of the issue and try to find a balance for those for and those against it. He said as of now, they would only be allowed in R2 zoning districts. Mayor Arnold reiterated that there are still two formal readings to be made before the ordinance, if ever fully drafted, has the potential to be approved.

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

There were no non-resident comments.

1. ACTION ITEMS – Added Agenda Items

There were no added agenda items.

2. **ACTION ITEMS – Proclamation City Election**

THE TERM OF OFFICE OF TWO (2) CITY COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF VALPARAISO WILL EXPIRE AT 12:00 NOON ON MARCH 22,2016, NECESSITATING A GENERAL ELECTION TO FILL THE SAID VACANCIES.

3. **ACTION ITEMS – Proclamation Referendum Property Tax Exemption**

The mayor stated that Nathan Sparks and his team met with Tammy Johnson and others in regards to vacant spaces such as the failed car lot. He said a recommendation was made to grant property tax exemptions for a number of years. A PROCLAMATION OF THE VALPARAISO CITY COMMISSION SCHEDULING A REFERENDUM TO BE HELD AT THE MARCH 15, 2016 ELECTION FOR THE PURPOSES OF AUTHORIZING THE GRANTING OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS TO NEW BUSINESSES AND EXPANSIONS OF EXISTING BUSINESSES THAT WILL CREATE NEW FULL TIME JOBS IN THE CITY OF VALPARAISO, AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. COMM. MORGAN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE PROCLAMATION. COMM. HAMILTON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION, 4 TO 0. Attorney Dykes pointed out that we can only do this once every twelve (12) months and it would take involvement of the City of Valparaiso, the EDC, and a Chamber partner. The Mayor advised that the cities of Fort Walton Beach, Destin, and Crestview had utilized this. Comm. Morgan said he thought it was a great idea since Valparaiso has a bad rap in terms of businesses. Louise Graham asked, as written, how many years this would allow for. Mr. Dykes said the state statute allows for no more than ten (10) years. Mr. Arnold said the City had sent out letters to businesses on how to reach out to the EDC and obtain information. Joe Cobb spoke on behalf of the City's Planning Commission. He said taxes seem to be a limiting factor in the development of at least five (5) different properties around town, regardless of zoning. He mentioned obtaining a deal with Eglin Air Force Base to either trade land or allow us to use some of theirs. Comm. Browning asked if the Eglin Liaison had been attending planning commission meetings. Mr. Cobb said no and Comm. Browning said that we need that liaison in attendance.

4. **ACTION ITEMS – Resolution No. 15-12-14-15 Board Reappointment NV Regional Sewer Board**

COMM. STRONG MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 15-12-14-15, A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING VOLUNTEERS TO THE CITY OF NICEVILLE/VALPARAISO REGIONAL SEWER BOARD, AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE. COMM. BROWNING SECONDED THE MOTION WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION, 4 TO 0.

1. **OLD BUSINESS –**

There was no old business to address.

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

Comm. Morgan stated there was nothing new to report.

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

Comm. Morgan said he met with the Florida DEP and stated they were working on stormwater projects as well as sewer projects. He said they had had some very productive meetings and that Legislator Matt Gaetz is moving forward with submitting three (3) of the projects for sewer and stormwater which will directly affect water quality in our area. Morgan predicted we will be getting money from grants or matching funds to help improve our infrastructure. He thanked City Engineer Roy Petrey for helping to provide the data needed to accomplish this.

3. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Legal Activities**

Mr. Dykes stated there was nothing new to report.

4. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Cable Update**

Cable Manager James Butler advised that we now carry 43 HD channels in our basic television level of service which consists of 87 channels. He said there are an additional 14 more found outside of this level.

He stated City Hall had been connected to a fiber optics network, with a few networking kinks to work out. In regards to system CPE (Customer Premise Equipment) performance he said we have not yet integrated with ZCorum but that ball is rolling to do so. This means better inventory control by integrating the cable billing system with a network monitoring system because we will then be able to provision modems and keep a more detailed database of cable modems on the system.

He unveiled plans for a whole home DVR system which would provide the opportunity for a 6 tuner DVR, which will record up to six programs at once, and contain approximately one terabyte of memory. He informed us that leading competitors like Cox are providing one box free for one year and then a rental fee thereafter and explained that they do not allow third party equipment such as TiVos.

In regards to home networking he said while we currently do not support home networking, we plan on doing so in the future. This means we would bring and install routers and maintain them.

Proclamation
City Election

Proclamation
Referendum
Property Tax
Exemption

Resolution
No. 15-12-14-
15 Board
Reappointme
nt NV
Regional
Sewer Board

TPO/DOT

Stormwater

Cable Update

He introduced plans to upgrade current VESPER security system equipment with Honeywell equipment, as it is cheaper and parts are more readily available. This type of security system would transmit via IP to the police department and to the cable department's head end warehouse. It would allow for home automation including video cameras, etc.

5. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS** – **Community Liaison Report**

Comm. Hamilton said there was nothing new to report although she had been contacted by a PE teacher from Lewis School who was trying to obtain playground equipment. She asked for any help anyone could provide to rejuvenate equipment so the smaller children could have a real playground.

Community Liaison Report

6. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS** – **Community Development Block Grant**

CDBG

Comm. Strong said we will be resubmitting, since we had gotten close recently but had not been successful. Carl Scott advised there would be a meeting tomorrow to keep the ball rolling.

7. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS** – **City Christmas Party December 17th at 6pm**

Mayor Arnold informed us that all City workers, retired employees and family, Commissioners, our Engineer, and our Attorney were invited.

City Christmas Party

8. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS** – **Disbursements**

Mayor Arnold stated that everyone had copies of disbursements.

1. **ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS** – **Employee Bonuses**

The Mayor stated they would be as they have been in past years; regular, full time employees would receive \$100, part time or on call employees would receive \$50, and those employed for less than six months of service would receive \$50.

Employee Bonuses

ADJOURN

There being no further business to be brought before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 6:56 PM.

Adjourn

John B. Arnold, Jr.
Mayor

Heyward H. Strong, Jr.
Chair, VCA

ATTEST:

Tammy Johnson, CMC
City Clerk

December 14, 2015

The DVD labeled December 14, 2015 contains the audio and video of this meeting and will be kept as a permanent part of these minutes.