

MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
September 14, 2015

The City Commission met this date in regular session in the Commission Chambers. The Invocation was given by Mayor Arnold after which the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. 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.
	:	Joe Morgan
	:	Clark (Tom) Browning, Jr.
City Clerk	:	Tammy Johnson
Police Chief	:	Joe Hart
Fire Chief	:	Mark Norris
City Attorney	:	Hayward Dykes
City Engineer	:	Roy Petrey
General Manger VBCS	:	James Butler
Recorder	:	Beth Millsaps

Others in attendance: (Not inclusive) Mike Matthews (camera), Marcia Sanders (Bay Beacon), Rebecca Koelzer, Thomas Koelzer, Stacey Marks, Matt Marks, Marion Cassell, Tim Tierney, Don Caverly

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.

Mayor Arnold said that both Comm. Hamilton and Mr. Scott would not be attending.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

COMM. STRONG MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM AUGUST 3, 2015. COMM. BROWNING SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.

COMM. STRONG MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM AUGUST 10, 2015. COMM. BROWNING SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.

COMM. STRONG MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM AUGUST 17, 2015. COMM. BROWNING SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.

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

Ms. Marion Cassell, 173 Highland, said she would like to know what had happened with the plants that were being used for the beautification. Comm. Morgan said the plants that have died are looking at being replaced and looking at establishing the best water system for when rain decreases. Ms. Cassell also asked about something for middle school children, fishing at TJ Brooks park or something like that. Comm. Morgan said that is something that is being looked into. Ms. Cassell said she had also asked about code enforcement previously and wondered what was being done. Mayor Arnold said that Mr. Scott is in charge of code enforcement, he is out tonight due to a death in his family. Mayor Arnold suggested Ms. Cassell call Mr. Scott at city hall to discuss.

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

There were no non-resident comments.

1. ACTION ITEMS – Added Agenda Items

Chief Norris said he would like to invite the Commission and public to the open house at the fire department on October 3rd from 9am till 3pm, lunch will be served around noon. He said this is the annual kick off for fire prevention week. Mayor Arnold said he would like to added recognition to the police department and delete engineering projects.

Approval of
Minutes

Citizens'
Concerns
Resident

Citizens'
Concerns
Non Resident

Added
Agenda Item
Fire Dept.
Open House

2. ACTION ITEMS – Resolution No. 09-09-14-15 Increase Water Variable Rate

Resolu-tion
No. 09-09-
14-15
Increase
Water
Variable
Rate

Comm. Strong said this resolution is part of the budget process to increase the variable rate of amounts over 3,000 gallons by 25 cents. COMM. BROWNING MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 09-09-14-15 A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE SCHEDULE OF WATER RATES, CHARGED TO RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL CUSTOMERS AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. COMM. STRONG SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 to 0. Comm. Morgan asked where the shortfall came from. Mrs. Johnson said we did a rate study and put more money in reserve for water, not on base rate look at the variable rate and gave us the money we would need. Comm. Morgan said so we are not at a negative but the reserves are not where they should be.

3. ACTION ITEMS – Proclamation Constitution Week

Proclam-
ation
Consti-
tution
Week

Mayor Arnold read proclamation declaring the week of September 17th through September 23rd as Constitution week, this marking the 238th anniversary of the Constitution. COMM. STRONG MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE SEPTEMBER 17TH THROUGH SEPTEMBER 23RD AS CONSTITUITON WEEK. COMM. BROWNING SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.

4. ACTION ITEMS – Municipal Election Date

Election
Date

Mayor Arnold said this is at the request of the supervisor of elections to move the date of the 2016 elections. He said we would have two vacant seats on the Commission. You would have from January 4th to noon of January 8th to qualify. Mr. Dykes said the issue we have statute can change via ordinance also stating when to qualify dates and times. Comm. Morgan said if it is an ordinance it will need two readings, Mr. Dykes said yes. Mayor Arnold said the question is do we want to do this. Comm. Morgan said yes because his understanding it saves the city significant amount of money to have our elections in line with national elections. Mr. Dykes said it does and also you usually have a larger turn out. Mayor Arnold said so yes we will move forward with the ordinance. Mayor Arnold asked Mrs. Johnson to draft necessary ordinance.

5. ACTION ITEMS – Resolution No. 10-09-14-15

Resolu-tion
No. 10-09-
14-15
Outstand-
ing
Public
Safety

Mayor Arnold read Resolution No. 10-09-14-15 a resolution recognizing and acknowledging the outstanding commitment to public safety and the contributions made to its citizens by the City of Valparaiso Police Department. Mayor Arnold said we wanted to recognize our police department and the essential and dangerous job they do for us every day. COMM. STRONG MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 10-09-14-15 AS READ. COMM. BROWNING SECONDED THE MOTION WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0. Mayor Arnold wants to personally thank Chief Hart and his staff for the effort they do and what a fine leader he is that this staff respects and admires. Chief Hart said it is definitely a team effort and he accepts and will pass along to his squad on behalf of their hard work and effort.

1. OLD BUSINESS – Etc.

Etc.

Comm. Strong wanted to know from Mr. Petrey about the swells. Mr. Petrey said the sod had been placed and confirmed by Mr. Kelley, Mr. Valandingham surveying to build.

2. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – TPO/DOT

TPO/DOT

Comm. Morgan wants to invite the public to the meeting DOT is having in regards to the replacement of the bridge over Tom's Bayou. It will be across the street at the First Baptist Church on September 22nd from 5 pm to 6 pm. He said one side of the bridge is actually older than the other so that is what they are looking to replace, the city has water and sewer under the bridge, this project isn't expected to begin until 2018.

3. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Stormwater

Storm-
water

Comm. Morgan said nothing this evening.

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

Mr. Dyke said the only update he has is on the Willingham case, he has been advised oral arguments should begin soon.

5. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Median Beautification Update**

Comm. Morgan said we had discussed the plant situation earlier.

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

Comm. Morgan said September 19th Emerald Coast Realtors sponsor Soldiers on the Water, for combat wounded veterans one day of fishing to show their appreciation. He said if anyone knew of a combat wounded veteran that would like to participate to get in touch with him or the Emerald Coast Board of Realtors.

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

Mr. Butler said the antennas for the off air channels would be shipped out tomorrow and should be here very soon.

Mrs. Stacey Marks, 375 Jasmine, said she has terrible reception on her TVs for several months, it stops, freezes ever since the upgrade and some channels are gone completely. She said they have a flat screen and that is the only one that is working and it certainly hasn't gotten any better with conversion. She is very close to going somewhere else. Mayor Arnold said that Mr. Butler would personally investigate situation. Mr. Butler said technicians have been to the home on several occasions, Mr. Matthews has stated the house wiring is bad. Mr. Matthews said that the levels at the house are good but the wiring inside is bad. When cable converted to digital it has caused people with RG59 wiring to have bad reception, the city recommends RG6.

Mr. Tim Tierney, 406 Lincoln Avenue, asked who was responsible for the house cable, because they had no problems until the cable went all digital. Mr. Butler said if we installed the outlet we will change if not it would need to be an electrician.

Mr. Don Caverly, 111 Choctaw Cove, said he has trouble with some reception also, but it has improved since the conversion. He said no effort was being made to keep residents informed, we need to make a little more honest effort to communicate. Comm. Strong said there are 22 channels by antenna that will soon be replaced. He said we are doing everything we can to make things better, the alternate is very expensive. Comm. Strong apologized to Mrs. Marks.

Chief Hart said RG59 is going to be in a lot of homes. Mr. Butler said not all RG 59 is bad, copper corrodes and when it goes bad it goes. Mr. Butler said when we had analog signal it would still be a problem but it would be a little fuzzy with digital if it is bad then there will be no picture. Comm. Morgan said every little thing affects a digital picture, digital signal requires a perfect picture.

Comm. Morgan suggested checking at Mrs. Mark's home. Mr. Butler said they have checked all signals at house and at tap. Mrs. Marks said yes they had checked everything they have been very through, the solution is to rewire the house or wrap on the outside of the house. Mr. Butler said we don't fish the walls in homes so we would have to do a house wrap and Mrs. Marks doesn't want that. She agreed.

8. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Budget Hearing Scheduled for September 22nd at 6 PM**

Mayor Arnold said September 22nd at 6pm would be our final budget hearing, he urges anyone with questions to attend. Mrs. Johnson will provide information if needed.

9. **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Public Info Meeting**

Mayor Arnold reminded everyone of the meeting Comm. Morgan spoke about the DOT bridge replacement that will take place at the First Baptist Church across the street on the 22nd of September at 5 PM.

10. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Disbursements Disburse-
ments

Mayor Arnold said everyone had copies of disbursements, any questions see Mrs. Johnson.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS – Pay Plan Pay Plan

Mayor Arnold said the proposed pay plan the change will be between the steps, it will no longer be 4%, we can no longer afford that, which is the reason we haven't had many longevity raises in the last few years. With the new plan we will have 45 steps instead of 12. **MAYOR ARNOLD RECOMMENDS TO ADOPT THE PAY PLAN OR AT LEAST COMPLETE FURTHER STUDY FOR NEXT MEETING.** Mrs. Johnson said what brought the change about is the proposed budget, the Commission approved 1.5% merit increases and letting the department heads decide who and where it goes. Mayor Arnold said he feels we should get the supervisors back into the act of being involved with raises. Mayor Arnold said there wouldn't be a raise for part time employees. Chief Norris said his part time people have participated in pay scale raises before. Comm. Morgan said that is a concern for the fire department guys, they work part time but perform a full time service. Chief Norris said high service with high value rate, he said they had received raises before. Mrs. Johnson said those were COLA raises. Mayor Arnold said no COLA this year just merit. Mrs. Johnson said with COLA everyone receives a raise with this proposed budget, it will be merit and they may not all receive a raise. **COMM. STRONG MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT PROPOSED PAY PLAN. COMM. BROWNING SECONDED THE MOTION.** Mayor Arnold said he feels we have the finest team and recommends the department heads to distribute 1.5% as they see, he said for the department heads to give the percentage to full time people. Comm. Morgan asked if anyone would be interested in a hybrid plan, Mayor Arnold said no. **VOTE OF 4 TO 0 UNANIMOUS BY COMMISSION.**

ADJOURN Adjourn

There being no further business to be brought before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

John B. Arnold, Jr.

Heyward H. Strong, Jr.
Chair, VCA

ATTEST:

Tammy Johnson, CMC
City Clerk

September 14, 2015

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

