

MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
July 10, 2023

The City Commission met this date in regular session in the Commission Chambers. Mayor Smith 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
	:	Clark T. Browning IV
City Clerk	:	Tammy Johnson
City Attorney	:	Hayward Dykes
City Engineer	:	Beth Brant
City Administrator	:	Carl Scott
Police Chief	:	Joe Hart
Fire Chief	:	Tommy Mayville
Public Works Director	:	Nathan Kelley (camera)
VBCS General Manager	:	James Butler
Recorder	:	Beth Millsaps

Others in attendance: (Not Inclusive) J D Cameron, Grant Williams, Daniel and Kelly Irwin, Bonnie and Dave Nichols, Bob Webb, Bryan Griffin, Terry Griffin, Robin Helmer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

COMM. BROWNING MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 12, 2023 EXECUTIVE SESSION AS SUBMITTED. COMM. CROSBY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE 5 TO 0.

COMM. HAMILTON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JUNE 12, 2023, REGULAR MEETING AS SUBMITTED. COMM. CROSBY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 5 TO 0.

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

No one had anything to add.

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

No non-resident concerns tonight.

A. VALPARAISO LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD – Chris Taulbee

Mr. Taulbee could not attend the meeting this evening, he is with his son out of town for a baseball tournament. Mayor Smith said that the city does not have a lease for the field anymore. Comm. Hamilton said from her understanding Mr. Taulbee is requesting the city continue to pay for the utilities and electricity at the field. Mayor Smith said that field doesn't belong to the city anymore.

1. ACTION ITEMS – Added Agenda Items

Nothing to add to the agenda this evening.

2. ACTION ITEMS – FLOC Voting Delegate

1 Mayor Smith said he would like to volunteer to be the voting delegate for the 97th Annual
2 conference voting delegate in Orlando at the annual business session which will be held August 12,
3 2023. He said Comm. Wasdin had represented the city for the last few years and did a wonderful job.
4 **COMM. BROWNING MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE MAYOR SMITH AS THE CITY'S**
5 **VOTING REPRESENTATIVE AT THE 97TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN ORLANDO,**
6 **FLORIDA FOR THE ANNUAL BUSINESS SESSION. COMM. WASDIN SECONDED THE**
7 **MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 5 TO 0.**

8 **3. ACTION ITEMS – Support Development of a Regional Aquatic Facility**

9 Mayor Smith said he recommends the Commission support this Interlocal Cooperation
10 agreement between Okaloosa and Walton Counties to establish a regional aquatic sports and training
11 complex to serve the area's needs for competitive water sports and aquatic training. He said the City
12 of Niceville is leading this movement and is asking for support from our city and other Okaloosa and
13 Walton cities and the counties so they can move forward in looking for funding. **COMM.**
14 **HAMILTON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE SIGNING THE INTERLOCAL**
15 **COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES IN OKALOOSA**
16 **AND WALTON COUNTIES TO ESTABLISH A REGIONAL AQUATIC SPORTS AND**
17 **TRAINING COMPLEX TO SERVE THE AREA'S NEEDS FOR COMPETITIVE WATER**
18 **SPORTS AND AQUATIC TRAINING. COMM. BROWNING SECONDED THE MOTION,**
19 **WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 5 TO 0.**

20 **4. ACTION ITEMS – Resolution No. 10-07-10-23 Appoint Planning Commission Members**

21 Mayor Smith read **RESOLUTION NO. 10-07-10-23 A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING**
22 **AND APPOINTING VOLUNTEERS TO THE CITY'S PLANNING COMMISSION AND**
23 **PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. MS. ROBIN HELMER AND MR. ROBERT**
24 **WEBB WITH TERMS EXPIRING JULY 31, 2028.** Mrs. Johnson said Ms. Helmer is a
25 reappointment that will be retroactive to April 1, 2023, and Mr. Webb is a new appointment whose
26 term will be effective upon resolution adoption. **COMM. WASDIN MADE A MOTION TO**
27 **APPROVE RESOLUTION NO 10-07-10-23 AS READ. COMM. HAMILTON SECONDED**
28 **THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 5 TO 0.**

29 **5. ACTION ITEMS – Resolution No. 11-07-10-23 Sale of Surplus Property**

30 Mayor Smith read **RESOLUTION NO. 11-07-10-23, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE**
31 **THE SALE OF SURPLUS PROPERTY FROM THE CITY OF VALPARAISO AND**
32 **PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.** Mayor Smith said afternoon looking over the age of the
33 equipment we will be lucky to sell. Surplus property 2010 John Deere Gator, 2011 E32 Bobcat
34 excavator, unknown year Trencher tractor attachment and 1997 John Deere 520 tractor. **MAYOR**

1 **SMITH MADE THE MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 11-07-10-23 AS WRITTEN.**
2 **COMM. HAMILTON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS**
3 **VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 5 TO 0.**

4 **1. OLD BUSINESS – Update New City Hall Renovation**

5 Comm. Hamilton said that she and Mr. Scott had considered, as they are both licensed builders,
6 and he a building inspector that they will avoid paying a contractor as much as they will hire
7 subcontractors contractors we are starting with the demo and we are receiving three quotes on the cost
8 of the demolition, doing the process in steps. Lowest quote should be under \$25,000. **COMM.**
9 **HAMILTON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE LOWEST QUOTE AND GET**
10 **STARTED ON THE RENOVATION OF THE NEW CITY HALL BUILDING. COMM.**
11 **BROWNING SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE**
12 **COMMISSION 5 TO 0.** Mr. Dykes said this would be the approval needed, once approved bring
13 back to the Commission for informational purposes. Mayor Smith said that Comm. Hamilton and Mr.
14 Scott are overseeing the project, they are not being paid.

15 **2. OLD BUSINESS – Litigation Update**

16 Mr. Dykes said with the information from the executive session in June, the minutes were
17 approved this evening, the city had given direction to mediate the matter regarding Dr. Harris's
18 business and Gator Boring. Mr. Dykes said Mr. Scott was appointed to represent the city and given a
19 limited amount to approve in the negotiation for the mediation. Mr. Dykes said the matter was settled
20 under mediation for less than the amount the Commission had approved, and we are waiting on monies
21 to be exchanged. Mr. Dykes said at this time it is "pending litigation" but should soon be complete
22 with the city having no more work to be done on the property.

23 **3. OLD BUSINESS – New/Revised Position City Manager/City Administrator**

24 Mr. Dykes said he had worked with Mrs. Johnson, and they brought back the ordinance that
25 was submitted some time back for the city manager/administrator position. He feels this would be a
26 good starting point. Mr. Dykes said this would not change the form of government but establish this
27 position. He said this is modeled from the City of Freeport as they have a similar government, not
28 Commission based but close to. Mr. Dykes said for informational purposes. Mayor Smith said we
29 would have to investigate and come back with pay scale, duties and so forth. Mr. Dykes said yes, this
30 is just a starting point, start work whenever Commission is ready, probably need to workshop it. Mr.
31 Dykes said it is good to start now as budget season is beginning, City of Niceville has just hired a
32 manager. He said need to discuss what powers this position would have. Mr. Dykes said in this
33 version the city manager has hire and fire personnel approval, this is one of assorted items to decide
34 and make sure it stays square with the charter. Mayor Smith said he doesn't believe that the city

1 manager position should have hire and firing capabilities. He said the police department is an
2 example, he believes Chief Hart is best to hire his staff because he works day in and out with his
3 personnel and should be the one to hire them and fire them if necessary. Comm. Hamilton said she
4 agreed that responsibility should be left to the department heads, they know what they need and what
5 works best in their departments. Mr. Bob Webb, 106 Choctaw, would like to add the description for
6 the city manager to have three years city administrator/manager experience, might be better to look for
7 someone with one to two years' experience, give more freedom to find someone. The Commission
8 discussed it for a few more minutes and decided to hold a workshop before the regular August
9 commission meeting at 5pm on August 14, 2023. The Commission also needs to begin budget
10 workshops, scheduled for July 24th and July 31st at 6PM.

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

12 Comm. Wasdin said nothing new. Mayor Smith asked about the gentleman that came before
13 the Commission last month with the water line through his property? Comm. Wasdin said that has
14 been taken care of. Mr. Scott said it has been done and he is building his home on the property.

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

16 Mr. Scott has nothing to report this evening.

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

18 Mayor Smith said Mr. Chambers isn't here this evening, he has been under the weather.

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

20 Comm. Crosby said the meeting is tomorrow at 3PM.

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

22 Mr. Bachelor, chairperson of the Planning Commission, said that Mayor Smith had tasked the
23 Planning Commission to produce some options on the clear zone, so he has an overview this evening
24 of the Planning Commission's clear zone home purchase and strategy options. Mr. Bachelor said there
25 are nine topics in the summary. He said that five homes have been removed from the eighteen that
26 were identified in the clear zone, although he wasn't sure why because those five homes do have parts
27 of their property in the clear zone. Mr. Bachelor has outlined summary of DOD instructions on clear
28 zone properties, clear zone property information and Air Force property list, current utilities on Air
29 Force property, possible order of activities for property exchange, potential offer options for clear zone
30 property, two way left turn lane on John Sims Parkway, questions which may be part of city's strategy
31 department, actions and things to discuss with Air Force. Mr. Bachelor detailed his presentation. Mr.
32 Bachelor said the DoDI's state this is an Air Force problem, not ours.

33 Comm. Wasdin said from the presentation it sounds like the two way left turn lane on John
34 Sims Parkway is something we need to make a decision on now, instead of later. Mr. Bachelor said

1 this October planned paving from Tom's Bayou South to Eglin Air Force Base, both sides repaved, he
2 called and spoke with DOT about doing a left turn lane while they are paving there. Mr. Bachelor said
3 the gentleman he spoke with said he would run it up the flagpole, which he did but was turned down.
4 Mr. Bachelor said the next paving project highway 190 to Niceville, engineering effort to start in
5 December, could see if we could add two ways left turn if the city gets a letter out to the DOT. Mr.
6 Bachelor said with the paving there is generally 20% wiggle room and feels that the turn lane could be
7 in that amount, it would solve problems for today's homeowners and would help others in the future, if
8 the Air Force land is exchanged and the city has homes built there. Mayor Smith said he mentioned
9 Mr. Bill Smith, who is over the Okaloosa County school maintenance facilities, and Mr. Bill Smith
10 said they would be willing to do anything they could to help us receive the two-way lane turn.

11 **COMM. WASDIN MADE A MOTION TO HAVE MAYOR SMITH SIGN A LETTER**
12 **REQUESTING FDOT TO ADD THIS TWO WAY TURN LANE PROJECT BE ADDED TO**
13 **AN UPCOMING PROJECT BY DOT. COMM. BROWNING SECONDED THE MOTION,**
14 **WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 5 TO 0.**

15 Mr. Bachelor also said that the Planning Commission is reviewing the comprehensive plan,
16 they have reviewed chapters 1 through 5 and have sent to Mr. Scott and the attorney to view to make
17 sure all consistent with state regulations. The Planning Commission will soon be reviewing chapters 6
18 through 10, had to put to the side a bit in order to complete the clear zone strategy.

19 **6. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Community Center Update**

20 No members are present this evening.

21 **7. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Department Updates**

22 Comm. Hamilton said we have been having some issues with Cox. As they are running their
23 wires and they are cutting into some of our existing wires, Mr. Butler is trying to head this problem off
24 before it gets worse. She said we are working to have better communication with Cox. Mr. Butler said
25 he has had numerous reports of Cox representatives are going to resident's home telling citizens we are
26 going out of business in October and there will no longer be Valparaiso television, which is completely
27 inaccurate we will be here Valparaiso Communications will be here, with IPTV. Mr. Butler said he is
28 aware the salespeople are paid based on commission and that is why they are pushing this idea. Mayor
29 Smith asked Mr. Dykes if we could stop this. Mr. Dykes said the best idea would be to have on our
30 bills each month that Valparaiso Communications will continue. Mr. Butler said he knows of three
31 incidents that Cox has dug up the pipe, in one such incident the homeowner was home and went out to
32 ask the Cox people what would be done to repair it and they said they would fix it, they have not done.
33 Mr. Butler said the city will most likely repair the damage and bill Cox. He said the Live Oak Fiber
34 have had similar situations and they will fix the problem and bill Cox for the work and equipment.

Chief Hart said he would like to let the Commission know that two of the boats have been removed and the third one is a work in progress. He said that boat was actually at twin cities and Niceville’s jurisdiction, but Valparaiso is handling for them.

8. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS – Disbursements

COMM. BROWNING MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE PAYING THE BILLS AS OUTLINED IN THE FINANCIALS. COMM. HAMILTON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE 5 TO 0.

9. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENT – Okaloosa County League of Cities Dinner Mtg. July 20, 2023

Mayor Smith said the Okaloosa County league of cities dinner will be held July 20th in Destin and asked everyone to RSVP with Mrs. Johnson before the 14th of July.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to be brought before the Commission, the meeting adjourned 7:06 PM.

Hubert B. Smith
Mayor

Catherine Hamilton
Chair, VCA

ATTEST:

Tammy Johnson, CMC
City Clerk

A recording of the July 10, 2023, Commission meeting will be kept on the City’s secure file server as a permanent part of these minutes.