

Commission Meeting Minutes  
July 27, 2021  
5:30 pm

Mayor Shannon Smith said before we begin the official meeting of the Starke City Commission, there will be a time of voluntary prayer. Those willing to do so are asked to stand and Commissioner Waters will lead us in prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

This meeting was the second regular meeting of the month. Members attending included Mayor Shannon Smith, Commissioner Tommy Chastain, Commissioner Janice D. Mortimer, Commissioner Danny Nugent and Commissioner Wilbur Waters. Also present were Director of Operations Scott Anaheim, City Manager John Holman, Police Chief Jeff Johnson, City Attorney Clay Martin and City Clerk Ricky Thompson.

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Mayor Smith asked for agenda changes. Clerk Thompson asked to add item 9.E. Florida League of Cities Annual Conference. Clerk Thompson asked to add recognition of Raymond Jones after the consent agenda and to add item 9.F. Chrissy Allen representing the Downtown Merchants. Mr. Holman asked to add item 10.E. extension of time with the Suwannee River Water Management District for Alligator Creek and item 10.F. request to close two streets. Mayor Smith entertained a motion to approve the agenda with changes. Commissioner Mortimer made a motion to approve the agenda with changes. It was seconded by Commissioner Nugent. The motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Smith entertained a motion to approve the consent agenda. The consent agenda consisted of the minutes of the July 13, 2021 Commission Meeting. Commissioner Waters made a motion. It was seconded by Commissioner Chastain. The motion passed 5-0.

Clerk Thompson called Raymond Jones up front. He said Mr. Jones has been a loyal employee for 25 years. Clerk Thompson said Mr. Jones will accomplish any task asked of him. He presented the plaque to Mr. Jones for 25 years of dedicated service. Commissioner Mortimer said Mr. Jones has been an outstanding employee and has made her proud.

Mayor Smith asked for any emergency items. There were none.

Mayor Smith read the statement for citizen requests "The City of Starke welcomes you to this meeting. This time is set aside for our citizens and general public to address the city commission. This is not a question or answer time. It is not a political forum, nor is it a time for personal accusations or derogatory remarks to or about city personnel. If you would like to address the commission, please complete a form, come to the podium when you are called, speak into the microphone and state your name and address for the record. Please also limit your comments to not more than 3 minutes. Your participation is welcomed." There was no citizen participation.

Mayor Smith called for old business. Attorney Martin said four candidates were interviewed but Mr. Powell has withdrawn his name from consideration which leaves Michael Foote from Pennsylvania, Drew Mullins from Virginia and Paul White from Gainesville. Attorney Martin asked the commissioners to rank the candidates on ranking sheets. Clerk Thompson passed out pictures of the warehouse before the destruction of documents. He said a few years ago it cost \$6,000 to shred about one-third as many documents as were destroyed at no cost. Commissioner Mortimer asked if the documents were stored in the cloud prior to destruction. Clerk Thompson said yes. Attorney Martin said Mr. Foote received four first place rankings and one second, Mr. Mullins received three second place rankings and one third and Mr. White received one first place ranking and three third place rankings. Attorney Martin asked the commission how they would like to proceed. Commissioner Nugent made a motion to proceed with negotiations with Michael Foote. It was seconded by Commissioner Waters. The motion passed 3-2. Mayor Smith and Commissioner Mortimer opposed the motion. Mayor Smith opposed the motion because he wanted to have two candidates.

Mayor Smith called for public hearings. There were none.

Mayor Smith asked for the city clerk report. Clerk Thompson said Commissioner Chastain reviewed the bills. Commissioner Chastain made a motion to approve paying the bills. It was seconded by Commissioner Waters. The motion passed 5-0.

Clerk Thompson said item 9.B. has already been covered.

Clerk Thompson addressed the increase in cost for employee health insurance. He said the reason for the increase is COVID and might be able to be recouped by the American Recovery Act. Mayor Smith entertained a motion to approve paying the increased cost for employee health insurance. Commissioner Waters made a motion. It was seconded by Commissioner Chastain. The motion passed 5-0.

Clerk Thompson addressed Resolution Number 2021-62 the State Highway Lighting Agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation. Attorney Martin read the resolution by title. Mayor Smith entertained a motion to approve the resolution as read by title. Commissioner Chastain made a motion. It was seconded by Commissioner Mortimer. The motion passed 5-0.

Clerk Thompson addressed the Florida League of Cities Annual Conference. He said he would like to invite the incoming City Clerk Jimmy Crosby to attend. Commissioner Nugent said he would like to invite incoming Commissioner Scott Roberts as well. Mayor Smith entertained a motion to approve inviting Jimmy Crosby and Scott Roberts to attend the conference. Commissioner Waters made a motion. It was seconded by Commissioner Nugent. The motion passed 5-0.

Clerk Thompson asked Chrissy Allen with the Downtown Merchants to come forward. Ms. Allen asked to use the square on August 28, 2021 for a BBQ cookoff from 8:00 to 12:00 am with all proceeds going to Shop with a Cop. Mayor Smith entertained a motion to approve the square

use. Commissioner Nugent made a motion. It was seconded by Commissioner Mortimer. The motion passed 5-0. Ms. Allen said the berries from the palm trees need to be cleaned up. She said Christmas on Call Street will be December 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> and the Downtown Merchants are asking for sponsors. Ms. Allen said the Christmas tree lighting will be on Friday the 10<sup>th</sup>. She asked the commissioner for money to purchase a new Christmas tree. Mayor Smith entertained a motion. Commissioner Mortimer made a motion to approve \$8,000 toward the purchase of a Christmas tree. It was seconded by Commissioner Waters. The motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Smith asked for the city manager report. Mr. Holman addressed resolution number 2021-63 budget amendment to recognize ARA funds for Orange Street. Attorney Martin read the resolution by title. Mayor Smith entertained a motion to approve the resolution. Commissioner Waters made a motion. It was seconded by Commissioner Chastain. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Holman addressed the work session for the fiscal year 2022 budget on August 3, 2021 at 5:30 pm. Mayor Smith entertained a motion. Commissioner Mortimer made a motion to approve the workshop on August 3, 2021 at 5:30 pm. It was seconded by Commissioner Nugent. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Holman addressed the water and sewer rate review. He said this is for direction not a motion to approve. Mayor Smith said he would like to go with scenario 4. Commissioner Nugent asked Mr. Holman to have Dyana Stewart with Florida Rural Water come back to answer questions.

Mr. Holman addressed the American Recovery Act. Mayor Smith asked if there will be a section for this is the budget. Mr. Holman said yes.

Mr. Holman addressed the extension of time with the Suwannee River Water Management District. He said the altitude valve has been replaced but other parts are taking longer to get. He is asking for an extension until the end of August. Mayor Smith entertained a motion to approve the extension. Commissioner Nugent made a motion. It was seconded by Commissioner Water. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Holman addressed the request to close streets. He said the request is from Strickland's Scoops to close Jefferson Street and Bay Street on August 5, 2021 from 3:00 to 9:00 pm. Mayor Smith entertained a motion to approve the street closures. Commissioner Nugent made a motion. It was seconded by Commissioner Chastain. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Holman said there are no road closures scheduled due to construction. He said there have been issues with COVID and thanked Clerk Thompson for his efforts during this time.

Mayor Smith asked for the police chief report. Chief Johnson said there may be traffic delays due to construction.

Mayor Smith asked for the city attorney report. He said the documents are being finalized for the properties needing to be demolished.

Commissioner Chastain asked for a timeframe for the demolition of the houses across from Southside Elementary. Attorney Martin said they are seeking a warrant to be allowed to enter the property.

Commissioner Mortimer asked about the North Street property. Attorney Martin said the owner of the property is deceased and the niece is not opposed to demolishing the property.

Commissioner Chastain asked about the sprayfield lease. Mr. Holman said the lease is up on August 17<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Mortimer asked for a status on the work needing to be done at Thomas Street Park. Mr. Holman said he will provide an update by Friday.

Mayor Smith said the Starke Dance Academy is having a grand opening on August 4<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm.

Mayor Smith entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Waters made a motion to adjourn. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:07 pm.