

Commission Meeting Minutes
February 20, 2024
5:30 pm

Mayor Roberts said before we begin the official meeting of the City of Starke Commission, there'll be a time for voluntary prayer and pledge of allegiance. Those willing to do so are asked to stand and I will lead us in a prayer and the pledge.

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

This was the second regular meeting of the month. Members in attendance included Mayor Scott Roberts, Commissioner Janice D. Mortimer, Commissioner Danny Nugent, Commissioner Andy Redding and Commissioner Shannon Smith. Also present were Executive Assistant Cathy Bradley, Zoning & Planning Office Manager Lance Campbell, City Clerk Jimmy Crosby, Deputy Clerk Lisa Heeder, Finance Director James Hughes, Police Chief Jeff Johnson, City Manager Drew Mullins, Bradford County Sheriff Gordon Smith and Attorney Scott Walker.

Mayor Roberts said first on the agenda is changes, additions or deletions to the agenda. Okay, I hear none. With that, I will ask for the approval of the agenda with no changes. Commissioner Redding said Mr. Mayor, I make a motion to approve the agenda. Mayor Roberts said I have a motion by Commissioner Redding. It was seconded by Commissioner Smith. The motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Roberts said moving on to the consent agenda. I will ask the commissioners to look that over. The consent agenda consisted of the minutes of the February 6, 2024 Commission Meeting, the Emerald Transformer for the wastewater treatment plant and the commissioner bill review. Mayor Roberts said if there are no questions about that, I will entertain a motion to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Smith said Mr. Mayor, I make a motion to approve the consent agenda. It was seconded by Commissioner Nugent. The motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Roberts called for old business. There was none.

Mayor Roberts called for emergency items. There were no emergency items.

Mayor Roberts said I'll move on to citizens request. He reminded everybody to fill out a form and get it up here to the front. Mayor Roberts said 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 and when you're called, speak into the microphone and state your name and address for the record. Please also limit your comments to not more than three minutes. Your participation is

welcome. I do not see any forms up here. Does anybody want to turn one in. There were no citizens requests.

Mayor Roberts called for public hearings. There were none.

Mayor Roberts called for quasi-judicial hearings. He turned it over to Attorney Walker. Attorney Walker said for anyone who anticipates talking about either 9A or 9B on the agenda this evening. If you will, stand up and raise your right hand. Attorney Walker administered the oath to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth to Lance Campbell, Robert Holihan and Ryan Holihan. Attorney Walker said, Mr. Mayor the witnesses have been sworn and when you come to the podium if you'll state your full name and your position and who you're representing when you get there. At this stage under our quasi-judicial procedure the first thing that we do is go down the line with the commissioners to ask if they have any ex parte communications. Commissioner Nugent said no. Commissioner Smith said no. Commissioner Mortimer said no. Commissioner Redding said no and Mayor Roberts said no. Attorney Walker said the next thing is that our staff makes a presentation, and then the applicant has time to make his presentation, and we'll go through the procedure from there. Attorney Walker asked for Mr. Campbell. Mr. Campbell stated his name and said he is with Planning and Zoning. He said this is the second hearing for ordinance number 2024-05. We have no new notes on this one at this time. The applicant is here if you have any further questions. Attorney Walker read Ordinance Number 2024-05 amending the future land use plan map of the comprehensive plan pursuant to application S231201A by title. The appropriate motion is to pass ordinance 2024-05 as read by title only. Mayor Roberts said I've heard the reading of ordinance number 2024-05 for second reading. If there are no further questions, I would entertain a motion to approve Ordinance Number 2024-05. Commissioner Redding said Mr. Mayor, I make a motion to approve ordinance number 2024-05 by title only. It was seconded by Commissioner Smith. The motion passed 5-0. Mayor Roberts said moving on to Ordinance Number 2024-06. Attorney Walker said Mr. Mayor, that was the land use part of the comprehensive plan. Next is the companion zoning part of the process, and I'll read this by title only as well. Attorney Walker read Ordinance Number 2024-06 amending the zoning map of the Land Development Code pursuant to Application Z 23-07 by title. He said the appropriate motion would be to pass Ordinance Number 2024-06 as read by title only, and of course, Mr. Campbell's report will be part of the record of the proceeding this evening. Mr. Campbell said this is just the counterpart to the previous, as he stated, the same report as the first hearing. The applicant is here if you have any further questions. Mayor Roberts asked if anybody had any questions or would like to speak on it. No one responded. Mayor Roberts entertained a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 2024-06. Commissioner Nugent made a motion. It was seconded by Commissioner Redding. The motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Roberts said moving on to the city clerk's report. Clerk Crosby said I have nothing to report, except that everything is going well, sir.

Mayor Roberts said moving on we have the city manager's report. Mr. Mullins said the Jarmon property the property you we're looking at buying here on the corner at the railroad in front of the Downtown Grill. Based on our assessment, my recommendation is if you want to buy the building, is to offer \$175 ,000 for it if you choose to buy it. Mayor Roberts asked if there are any further questions. Commissioner Mortimer asked about the size of the property. Mr. Mullins said a little less than an acre. Commissioner Nugent said he would make a motion to offer \$175 ,000 due to the fact that we have to do some stuff to it. It was seconded by Commissioner Redding. Clerk Crosby said just to make sure we are clear so it is right in the minutes. The motion is for the city to offer to purchase at that price. They have not offered that to us. Mayor Roberts said we have a motion and a second. Do we have any more questions. Commissioner Nugent asked how much parking do you think we could get there. Mr. Mullins said I have no idea. Commissioner Smith said we should look at the cost of demolition and the parking lot. He thinks we should look at something different. Commissioner Mortimer asked Mr. Mullins if the plan is to make it a parking lot. Mr. Mullins said that is up to you to decide. Commissioner Redding said so we don't have any plans for it. Do we have any other properties in the area. Mr. Mullins said nothing we can discuss. Commissioner Redding said he would like to see futher studies on it. Mayor Roberts said it has a lot of potential. The motion passed 3-2. Commissioner Mortimer and Commissioner Smith opposed the motion.

Mayor Roberts said moving on to the PUD presentation. Mr. Mullins said Sandra Joseph from the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council wanted to educate you all on exactly what a PUD is real quick. Our current land development code calls for ten acres for a PUD and we see a benefit of going from ten to five. Mayor Roberts said so this is a presentation for informational purposes. We're not looking to get a decision on anything or whatever is presented tonight. Mr. Mullins said the only thing I would ask after this is to approve you all going out to make the application to change the amendment from ten to five if you agree. Ms. Joseph went through the presentation. Ms. Joseph asked if there were any questions. Attorney Walker said you covered it very well. He said PUDs allow developers a great deal of flexibility, planning and control in the development process and gives the city a great deal of control going into the process. Mayor Roberts said it was a great presentation and you went over it very well. Mayor Nugent said he does not want to go from ten to five. He is concerned about it increasing traffic in the city. Ms. Joseph said this particular tool can be used for small to large developments. Commissioner Mortimer asked Ms. Joseph to give an example of what a PUD is. Ms. Josphe said are you familiar with Haile Plantation. Commissioner Mortimer said yes. Ms. Joseph said so that is a huge master plan, and as you know I was speaking earlier about how they can range in sizes. A development that's roughly five acres in a downtown or urban area that wants to for example wants to develop townhomes. Commissioner Mortimer asked if five acres is the minimum. Ms. Joseph there is no minimum per se they can vary in sizes. We offered that up as an option. It was just a number that seemed to work for this area. So that's why it's being proposed, but it can be whatever you want it to be. Commissioner Mortimer

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thanked Ms. Joseph. Commissioner Redding said thank you for your presentation. You did a really good job. And what I like in this and what I see is that it's planned, it's scaled, it's managed and you actually have something that you can hold the developers to. The scene doesn't change from plan to plan. It can be done in phases. It's not overly labor intensive for the planners and everybody else. Once we get the wheels set in motion, you set those standards, you have the rules to play by, and we manage it. So I like it. Thank you. Mayor Roberts said I think if we used it to our advantage we always have a concern with development and traffic and congestion and all of that. That's going to be true with any development so the point taken with Commissioner Nugent I think we can probably address that in the process. I see us able being to manage this. Now the ten acres is just something that was on the books. The final PUD would come to us. All of this is going to be handled through the Zoning Board. Is that correct? Ms. Joseph said are we talking about the text amendment or the actual design because the first text amendment would have to go through a regular land development regulation text amendment that goes before the Planning and Zoning Board first for recommendation and then it comes before you all and we have two readings and then if an applicant chooses to submit a PUD, then it would go through the process that I was just describing where it would be a zoning application along with the preliminary development plan because it's two things that you're submitting at once because you're actually changing the zoning on the map from say for instance R-2 to PUD. When it's brought before you, you'll have the zoning map amendment along with that plan, and that plan has all the detailed development standards for that area. So, this enables them to basically customize and create a site plan that helps them achieve the overall aesthetic and style of product that they're trying to bring to the market to provide a variety of housing options to that particular community. Commissioner Nugent asked if it would go by the residents. Ms. Joseph said with any rezoning application it is a publicly advertised hearing that goes before The Planning and Zoning Board and there is a certain amount of notification that is made to surrounding property owners and they have an opportunity to come up and speak either for or against the proposed development to basically address their interests. Keep in mind that the overall density is controlled by the land use. Attorney Walker said the density of the PUD still has to meet the compatibility of the surrounding areas. There's a lot of control on the front end that you have with a PUD compared to straight zoning but it is different than traditional zoning types. Mr. Mullins said the direction I need is am I going with the text amendment from ten to five. If that is the wishes of the board. Mayor Roberts said are we voting. Mr. Mullins said I just need consensus. Mayor Roberts said I don't have a problem bringing it back.

Mayor Roberts said moving on to the transition update report. Mr. Mullins said so as part of the transition team, the sheriff and I and the chief we all agreed. I passed out my recommendation on this. Our recommendation as we're entering the last week of the transition course, and we feel it's necessary to go ahead and close the operation and the daily activity of the police department. So, before you I've got four different items there for the recommendation on this process. Have y

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ou all had a chance to read those yet. Do you have any questions. Sheriff Smith said I think it's all worked well. We are just at a spot where you can't get anything else because the officers have to take the next step. They've already got the equipment so we can't gather the other remaining stuff. FDLE is there doing their audit we're hoping they're done by Thursday or Friday moving through that process and right now we're just out of a standstill like we've got the cars. The cars are done but it's getting the rest of the equipment the guns, the laptops, those kind of things and I just think it would move well to give the other employees a chance to do what they need to do because we've already taken over all the calls. Mr. Mullins said this also includes having the last actual working day for the officers as February 21st but going ahead and paying those out from now until February 29th, which would be their last day anyway. Mayor Roberts said this was passed out and you have it in front of you. Are there any questions. Commissioner Mortimer said how many officers are left. Chief Johnson said eleven. Mayor Roberts said are there any other questions on this memo the commissioners have in front of us. Clerk Crosby said would you please make sure that we get in the clerk's office any contracts or agreements that are out there, so we can start sending letters to the appropriate people. Mr. Mullins said yes. Commissioner Nugent asked how the police pension is going to be affected. Mr. Mullins said we are still looking into that. Mayor Roberts said we're waiting on a report back. There's going to be probably two to three options that the city has. And we're going to, you know, adhere to whatever plan we can do and it'll be brought to us to make that decision. Chief Johnson said there is only one over the ten-year mark. Commissioner Smith made a motion to move forward with steps one, two, three and four listed in the memo to the commissioners. It was seconded by Commissioner Nugent. The motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Roberts said moving on to the law enforcement report. He asked Chief Johnson if he had anything to add. Chief Johnson said the next meeting is March 5th and the ribbon cutting for the fair is at 5:00. Chief Johnson said I have one other thing for consideration due to the circumstances. I only have three officers with excess hours and would like to pay them in full if that's possible due to circumstances. Mayor Roberts said get with the clerk's office and let's crunch the numbers and see what we're looking at. Okay, let's look at the policies of what is normal, and kind of look at the situation and it can be brought back to us to see what we really want to do. Chief Johnson said that sounds good. Commissioner Mortimer said I'd like to know what is the standard. Chief Johnson said five years is two hundred forty, over five and under ten is three hundred twenty and anything over ten is four hundred. Mayor Roberts asked to bring this back to us. Sheriff Smith asked if Kevin Mueller could give a report. Captain Mueller said I love talking about the work product that we push out because we're proud of it. We're here to serve every day. Captain Mueller went over the report. Mayor Roberts thanked Captain Mueller. Commissioner Nugent asked to have more patrols on Wilson Road. Captain Mueller said absolutely.

Mayor Roberts asked for the city attorney report. Attorney Walker had nothing to report.

Mayor Roberts asked for the mayor and commissioner reports. Commissioner Nugent said I want to thank all the commissioners and all elected officials and guests who appeared at the Florida League of Cities we hosted last Thursday and I also want to give a special thanks to Ms. Bradley and her staff who volunteered to go out of their way and do an excellent job to make us shine with the League of Cities.

Commissioner Smith had left.

Commissioner Mortimer said she wants to echo the sentiment and appreciation for how our staff, Mr. Mullins and Ms. Bradley and Mrs. Heeder for making us shine so brightly last Thursday. It was absolutely fabulous, one of the best that I've ever attended and so thank you guys for all of that. I know it was a lot of work. I know you had to put up with a lot of stuff. But I think you guys shined very well. And I appreciate that. I think you all got a copy of this flyer about the prayer walk on Saturday, March 9th at 8:00 am. Commissioner Mortimer reached out to the sheriff's office and they contacted the organizer about traffic control. It starts at Greater Allen Chapel Church on Pine Street. I'll see you there.

Commissioner Redding asked Mr. Mullins to follow up on the grant. Sheriff Smith you and your command staff, thank you for the hard work that you're putting in. Chief Johnson thank you for helping them out and facilitating everything that they need and make that go smoothly. And as we march forward, let's all make Starke better. Thank you.

Mayor Roberts I'll just echo I was sick and unable to make the League of Cities dinner, but I heard it was great. I appreciate everybody stepping up and Commissioner Redding taking my part in it and I understand I've heard all good reports. Thank you for the transition.

Mayor Roberts entertained a motion to adjourn Commissioner Redding made a motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 pm.