

ROBERTA M. CORREA
MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

TAMMIE McCASKILL
COMMISSIONER

JUSTIN R. CAMPBELL
COMMISSIONER

WILL JONES
COMMISSIONER

RUFUS J. BOROM
COMMISSIONER



TROY BELL, ICMA-CM
MPA, MS-Finance
CITY MANAGER

JANE WEST, ESQ.
CITY ATTORNEY

SUNNI L. KRANTZ, CMC
CITY CLERK

MARCIA G. CARTY, CPA
MS-Taxation
FINANCE DIRECTOR

JASON L. SHAW, SR
CHIEF, POLICE DEPT.

CHRIS TAYLOR
CHIEF, FIRE DEPT

MINUTES **CITY OF PALATKA** **July 25, 2024**

The minutes of the proceedings of a special called meeting of the Palatka City Commission held on Thursday, July 25, 2024 at 6:00 PM at City Hall, 201 N. 2nd St., Palatka, FL 32177.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting called to Order at 6:00 PM.

a. Special Called Meeting Notice

The Clerk read the meeting notice.

b. Invocation

An invocation was led by Commissioner Campbell.

c. Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner McCaskill led the pledge of allegiance.

d. Roll Call

Present: Commissioner Tammie McCaskill

Commissioner Justin Campbell

Commissioner Will Jones

Commissioner Rufus Borom

Mayor Roberta Correa

Also Present: Troy Bell, City Manager; Sunni Krantz, City Clerk; Marcia Carty, Finance Director; Virginia Jones, HR Generalist; Peter Willott, Public Information Officer; Eddie Cutwright, Community Affairs Director; Chris Taylor, Fire Chief; Jason Shaw, Police Chief; Tobby Williams, Police Captain; Yul McNair, Airport Manager; Allegra Kitchens, former City Commissioner; Also present: Nicole Grace, Vicki Duke, Sarah Cavacini, Palatka Daily News; Allegra Kitchens, former City Commissioner; Shelley Shancker

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

a. Public Comments - (Speakers limited to three minutes - no action taken on items)

The floor was opened to public comment.

Vicki Duke 105 Carriage Terr., Palatka, FL 32177 - spoke in opposition to disrespect shown to the Mayor and discord during the last Commission meeting.

Hearing nothing further, the floor was closed to public comment.

3. REGULAR BUSINESS

- a. Discussion/Direction Resolution 2024-R-153 authorizing the execution of a retainer agreement with the firm Sniffen & Spellman, P.A. for investigative services and amending the FY 2023-2024 budget accordingly.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PALATKA AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A RETENTION AGREEMENT WITH SNIFFEN & SPELLMAN, P.A. FOR THE PURPOSE OF AN EMPLOYMENT INVESTIGATION; AMENDING THE FY 2023-24 BUDGET; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENER'S ERRORS

Commissioner McCaskill summarized the events leading to the meeting. The City's employment attorney, Ms. Erdelyi of Marks Gray, P.A. has recommended the firm Sniffen & Spellman for investigative services, who has submitted a letter for retainer. She has also recommended an extension to the Manager's probation period to allow for additional opportunity for interviews to be fair and impartial and not rushed. The Manager has not responded as to whether he is amenable to the extension. The cost is not anticipated to exceed \$30,000. The Commission would collaborate at the end of the investigation.

Commission discussion commenced.

Commissioners Campbell and Borom expressed concern regarding the cost of the investigation. Commissioners Campbell and Jones referenced past concerns raised regarding Ms. Erdelyi recommending an investigator. He expressed concern Ms. Erdelyi reached out to see if Mr. Bell was amenable to an extension to his probation. Commissioner McCaskill advised Ms. Erdelyi asked her prior to reaching out to Mr. Bell. Ms. Erdelyi also indicated she would reach out to the Mayor.

Commissioner McCaskill spoke of concern to not easily identify the employees and concern that a price tag should not be placed on the possibility of a difficult work environment having an investigation related to City employees' health.

Commissioner Borom expressed concern Human Resources does not have documents pertaining to an investigation and Human Resources should be leading the contact with external entities. Commissioner Borom expressed he is not friendly to extending Mr. Bell's probation period. Mayor Correa spoke in support of the extension to the probation.

Commissioner Campbell expressed concern Mr. Bell was in the room. Upon inquiry if he would leave the room, Mr. Bell exited the room.

Discussion commenced regarding alternate investigators. Commissioner McCaskill advised she reached out to the City's lobbyist, Yolanda Cash Jackson, to see if Becker & Poliakoff would have a recommendation of an investigator, and has not received a reply. Commissioner Campbell referenced Mr. Bell's contract regarding severance and asked if the Florida Commission on Ethics had been reached out to. Commissioner McCaskill expressed she would be willing to reach out to anyone. Commissioner Jones recommended referring the grievance to the Florida Commission on Ethics. The services of the ethics commission are free and they would have to develop a scope and a timeframe. Commissioner Jones also recommended reaching out to the equal employment opportunity commission.

Discussion commenced regarding understanding the scope of the matter. Commissioner McCaskill advised individuals are willing to write statements, however they want to ensure they are protected she referenced an individual who wanted to file a grievance, but allegedly the manager wanted to have a meeting with the person.

Mayor Correa expressed concern the documents would become public record. Commissioner Campbell asked for an abstract or summary of the employee concerns so the Commission can understand the scope of the matter. Mrs. Jones advised the Commission she has not received a grievance regarding the City Manager. She advised if she did, it would go to the Commission. Mrs. Jones advised she has not received a complaint regarding herself.

The Clerk advised Ms. West and Ms. Erdelyi are at a conference. She advised the City Attorney has referred employment matters to Ms. Erdelyi. Mayor Correa expressed Commissioner McCaskill has had contact with Ms. Erdelyi.

Mayor Correa suggested the Charter Review Committee review who the Attorney who reports to.

Motion by Commissioner Campbell to table items a and b to allow things to carry on as they are. Commissioner McCaskill has received direction to provide a summary of the conversation that was brought to her and make her contact our employment attorney to seek her availability to schedule a meeting to move these items forward. Second by Commissioner McCaskill. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner McCaskill has received a letter from a former employee and provided it as a handout to the meeting. Commissioner McCaskill expressed when an investigation is conducted it falls back on the Commission to say the direction we want to go into.

- b. Discussion/Direction Resolution 2024-R-154 authorizing the execution of an addendum to the employment agreement with the City Manager, upon acceptance by the City Manager

See above.

- c. City of Palatka Strategic Goal-Setting

Mayor Correa expressed the item is to provide measurable goal points or objectives. Commissioner Campbell indicated the Commission should provide what they collectively want to see and he and Mayor Correa has not met one on one with the Manager regarding the goal setting. Mayor Correa spoke regarding the goals set at the workshop from page 29 of the agenda packet. Mayor Correa indicated the majority of the goals are measurable such as establish strategic plan, review policies for equality issues, identify missing policies, written practices, etc. Mr. Bell spoke regarding accomplishments and indicated the existing organization chart is 95% complete, however he plans additional organizational changes. Manager Bell provided an email he sent to the Commission of enhanced details on the goals. Discussion continued regarding matrix tools to measure performance. Manager Bell indicated one can be developed and brought back. Commissioner Campbell recommended that if the measures are yes no or maybe that there be more explanation as to why.

Discussion commenced regarding what the Commission would like to see under "Organizational Management". Mayor Correa asked for an organization goal of creating an environment that fosters interactions between staff members and supervisors. Mayor Correa advised the need to explain to the public how to process things and move forward. Mr. Bell spoke regarding the effort to identify missing written policies. Commissioner Borom spoke in support and Commissioner McCaskill spoke less favorable to remote work. Commissioner Campbell suggested having a pot for remote work within a time period. Mrs. Jones expressed City Staff will be continuing bringing back personnel policies to the Commission for consideration.

Discussion commenced regarding community engagement. Commissioner Campbell and Borom spoke regarding the importance of following up with citizens. Mayor Correa and Commissioner Campbell recommended a citizen's academy as an item under community engagement. Commissioner Borom suggested mini-informational citizen workshops led by Department Heads. Commissioner Campbell spoke regarding the Clerk's efforts to do this with the Youth. (Commissioner McCaskill suggested the Commission be invited to the Youth Ambassador program field trips and Commissioner Campbell referenced a sunshine law concern.) The Manager spoke regarding his efforts to look into citizen engagement platforms Thrill Share and Point-Click-Fix. The Manager is looking into the cost of this and Thrill Share. The Manager advised the present Public Works/Code Enforcement program iWorq is somewhat limited in this regard. Mr. Bell spoke regarding the City Manager's office being

responsive to complaints. Commissioner Borom asked for something that relates to engagement with the community when they come to the establishment. Commissioner McCaskill suggested having a QR code on customer satisfaction for when people come in and Commissioner Borom suggested having it on the website. Mr. Bell spoke regarding the need to hear the input of citizens that do not attend Commission meetings. Commissioner Campbell recommended that bullet point two be changed from "provide input and feedback from typically unheard voices" to "solicit and provide input and feedback from typically unheard voices". Commissioner Campbell asked for more visibility of the departments in the community. Commissioner Campbell asked for a better relationship with the Chamber of Commerce to have City events on their master calendar. Commissioner McCaskill and Mayor Correa spoke regarding the need to showcase our employees more, such as the "in the spotlight" done by St. Augustine.

Regarding the professionalism category, Commissioner Campbell recommended that professionalism development and teamwork be placed under professionalism. Commissioner Borom expressed the need to have a presentable space when other entities use our facilities. Commissioner Campbell spoke regarding the need to uplift the esthetics of City facilities. Commissioner Campbell expressed the need to get the best use out of our facilities and vet City Hall and the annex and provide the Clerk an office due to sensitive things. Commissioner McCaskill suggested looking into doors like HR has for hardening. Mr. Bell and the Commission spoke regarding the need to minimize errors in documents. Commissioners Campbell and Borom expressed the need to have a unified look to department presentations. Commissioner Campbell spoke regarding how we conduct ourselves in our meetings.

Regarding Commission relations, the Commission encouraged receiving weekly updates from the City Manager. Commissioners McCaskill and Campbell spoke regarding the need for team building. Commissioner Campbell expressed the need for refreshers for the Commission.

Discussion continued regarding priorities, Commissioner Jones asked the manager implement quality assurance of our projects, including penalties for being late and subpar work. He asked that it be priority number one or two. Commissioner Borom asked for a monthly budget and spoke regarding projects coming over budget. Commissioner Borom spoke regarding the need to expand the North Tax Increment Fund. Commissioner Campbell asked that projects be put on the calendar.

Discussion culminated with a recap. Commissioner Campbell asked the Manager to break the list down as to what we can obtain in 3 months, 6 months, 9 months, etc. He also asked for a matrix system to be brought back. Commissioner McCaskill recommended bringing back a calendar for workshops with the department heads. Mr. Bell asked the Commission to look at the proposed Mission, Vision and Values and provide feedback prior to August 29 as it would like to be apart of the budget presentation.

4. ADJOURN Adjourn at 8:19 PM

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Campbell. Seconded by Commissioner McCaskill. The Motion Passed unanimously.

NOTICES: ANY PERSON WISHING TO APPEAL ANY DECISION MADE BY THE CITY COMMISSION WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT SUCH MEETING WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS, AND FOR SUCH PURPOSE MAY NEED TO ENSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS IS MADE, AT THE APPLICANT'S EXPENSE, WHICH RECORD INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED. FS 286.0105

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES REQUIRING ACCOMMODATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING SHOULD

CONTACT THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE AT 329-0100 AT LEAST 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE TO REQUEST ACCOMMODATIONS.