ROBERTA M. CORREA
MAYOR - COMMISSIONER

TAMMIE McCASKILL
COMMISSIONER

JUSTIN R. CAMPBELL
COMMISSIONER

WILL JONES
COMMISSIONER

RUFUS J. BOROM
COMMISSIONER

CITY of Palatka FLORIDA

MARCIA G. CARTY, CPA, CGFO
INTERIM CITY MANAGER
FINANCE DIRECTOR

JANE WEST, ESQ.
CITY ATTORNEY

SUNNI L. KRANTZ, CMC
CITY CLERK

JASON L. SHAW, SR
CHIEF, POLICE DEPT.

CHRIS TAYLOR
CHIEF, FIRE DEPT

MINUTES
CITY OF PALATKA
September 30, 2024

The minutes of the proceedings of the regular meeting of the Palatka City Commission held on Monday, September 30, 2024 at 6:00 PM at City Hall, 201 N. 2nd St., Palatka, FL 32177.

1) CALL TO ORDER The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

A) Special Called Meeting Notice

read by the Clerk

B) Invocation

led by Chaplain Mulberry.

C) Pledge of Allegiance led by Commissioner Borom

D) Roll Call

Present:
Commissioner Tammie McCaskill
Commissioner Justin Campbell, Sr.
Commissioner Will Jones
Commissioner Rufus Borom
Mayor Roberta Correa

Also Present: Marcia Carty, Interim City Manager/Finance Director; Jane West, City Attorney; Sunni Krantz, City Clerk; Virginia Jones, HR Generalist; Joe Verrecchio, Public Works Operations Manager; Peter Willott, Public Information Officer; Eddie Cutwright, Community Affairs Director; Chris Taylor, Fire Chief; Alonzo Mulberry, City Chaplain; Matt Newcomb, Assistant Police Chief; Yul McNair, Airport Manager; Allegra Kitchens, former City Commissioner; Terrill Hill; Elizabeth van Rensburg; Vicki Duke; Tarence Clark; Alice Cooper; Sam Deputy; Marlene Lagassee; Scott Lagassee; Renee Brown, Planner I, Chad Branford, and Greg Rossman, present via telecommunications technology

2) CITY MANAGER AND ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS Ms.Carty thanked the Department Heads and Public Works for their collaboration in hardening City Hall and adding some improvements, which the Commission expressed a need for. There are additional hardening measures planned. Commissioner McCaskill spoke regarding the need for active shooter training.

A) Update: Riverfront Park Phase II Revitalization Projects

Ms. Carty spoke regarding improvements at the Riverfront Park project, primarily for a splash pad. The City is pursuing a grant in the amount of $200,000. Of that, $158,000 would go towards a splash pad and $12,000 would go towards other riverfront projects and $30,000 administration cost. Commissioner Jones spoke regarding potential donations from investors. Mayor Correa and Commissioner McCaskill spoke regarding concerns of the costs to maintain the splash pad.

B) Update: St. Johns Avenue Reconstruction/Resurfacing Project led by County.

Mr. Verecchio updated the Commission regarding a situation where rain washed out the sidewalks. He advised the work has been finished. While there has been some conversations regarding whose fault the situation was, Mr. Verecchio advised it was not the City's fault.

C) Update: St. Johns River Environmental Center - Port Consolidaded properties land swap

Ms. West provided an update the closing to swap the Port Consolidated property (102 Reid St.) with St. Johns River Environmental Center (102 N 1st St.) has occurred and the funds have been received. Blue Crab Development Group LLC has been working with the City to retrieve all City possessions out of the River Center. Ms. Carty asked the Commission to (at a future meeting or workshop) provide direction to Staff regarding the future useage of the Port Consolidated property. Blue Crab Development Group previously provided a rendering of what the Port Consolidated property would look like if it were renovated to be utilized as a Commission Chambers.

3) PUBLIC COMMENTS

A) **Public Comments** - (Speakers limited to three minutes - no action taken on items)

Elizabeth van Rensburg 310 N. 3rd St., Palatka, FL 32177 - spoke in support of changes at City Hall, especially the City team coming together; and spoke regarding the City Manager selection process. She spoke in opposition to Terrill Hill becoming City Manager.

Mary Jane Rosa, Palatka, FL - spoke regarding moving Palatka forward.

Vicki Duke, Palatka, FL - spoke regarding the tar that needs to be removed on certain brick intersections and she asked concerning signage that businesses are open along St. Johns Avenue.

Sam Deputy, Palatka, FL - spoke in support of the cleanup at Oak Hill cemetery and of the professional appearance of City Hall. He offerred a City employee luncheon.

Tavarence Clark, Palatka, FL - advised on October 12th the City Commission apologized for a scrivener's error. He alleged the Mayor violated the Sunshine law by trespassing him from City Hall, alleged the City committed fraud, alleged his business tax receipt was expunged. He called for the Mayor's resignation and spoke regarding difficulty in getting on the City Commission's agenda.

Tarsha Givens, Palatka, FL - asked for the status of the investigations, the results, and whether the Commission will continue to look for more findings. She asked if the federal government or FBI will be invited. She spoke regarding difficulty in getting on the City Commission's agenda.

B) **Commission and Staff Response**

Discussion commenced regarding the agenda request process. Ms. West advised the agenda request form can be filled out by a citizen to be placed on the City Commission's agenda, it is not a right. The Manager approve agenda requests. In the case of Mr. Clark and Ms. Givens the City Manager did not approve the agenda request. Commissioner Campbell advised he has concerns regarding the process to be placed on the agenda. The Clerk spoke on the general process for being on an agenda. Commissioner McCaskill asked if Mr. Clark and Ms. Givens can be placed on the agenda. Ms. West advised the situations have been on the agenda in the past and/or have spoken several times during public comment. Ms. Carty asked if she can meet with the individuals and agenda the items for a future meeting. Ms. Carty advised one of the items referenced is on this agenda. Commissioner Campbell asked that the Commission have an agenda item to further discuss an agenda request process. Commissioners Borom and Jones spoke of concerns that the Mayor attends pre-agenda with the Department

Head team, and they do not. Commissioner Borom advised any Commissioner can add something to the agenda.

Commissioner McCaskill spoke regarding signage. Ms. Carty advised signage will be put up saying that businesses are open. Commissioner Campbell suggested A-frame signs that have velcro that would allow them to be able to flip the sign that says closed when they are closed and provide for more personalization.

Commissioner Campbell advised Grace Catering would like to do something for City employees.

4) CONSENT AGENDA Commissioner Jones asked to pull item 4 A and a citizen requested to comment on item 4 G.

Motion to approve except A and G by Commissioner Campbell. Seconded by Commissioner McCaskill. The Motion unanimously.

A) ADOPT RESOLUTION 2024-R-184 approving of a utility easement from the City of Palatka Kay Larkin Airport property to the Florida Gas Transmission Company for the installation and operation of an interstate natural gas pipeline system to be regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ("FERC") for consideration in the amount of $75,000 to the City of Palatka.

Ms. West advised Florida Gas Transmission (FGT) is seeking an easement on airport property and has offered $75,000 (fair market value is $56,000) for the easement. Mr. McNair advised providing them an easement allows them to service their line without the Airport giving up the property. They have made a submittal to the Federal Aviation Administration.

Beth Porter with Florida Gas Transmission advised 0.86 acres will be a permanent easement and 2.185 will be a temporary easement.

The floor was opened and closed to public comment.

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

B) ADOPT RESOLUTION 2024-R-185 granting extension to Mullis Lawn Service for turf maintenance at Kay Larkin Airport

C) ADOPT RESOLUTION 2024-R-198 awarding ITB 2024-18 Airport Obstruction and Tree Removal and authorizing the execution of the contract with Precision Development Group, LLC in the amount of $256,617.38. (100% grant funded)

D) ADOPT RESOLUTION 2024-R-183 authorizing the submission of an application for the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for State of Florida FY 2025-2026 in the amount of $200,000 for Riverfront Park Phase II.

E) ADOPT RESOLUTION 2024-R-191 granting a special events permit to Cindy Bear for NFFN Fall Folk Festival to be held on October 12, 2024.

F) ADOPT RESOLUTION 2024-R-187 granting a special events permit to Tobby Williams for the 2024 Fall Festival/Annual Pink Walk to be held on October 19, 2024

G) ADOPT RESOLUTION 2024-R-188 granting a special events permit to Sam Deputy for Boo-on-the-Ave to be held on October 31, 2024.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, GRANTING A SPECIAL EVENTS PERMIT TO SAM DEPUTY FOR BOO-ON-THE-AVE; SETTING FORTH THE PROVISIONS OF THE PERMIT; GRANTING PERMISSION FOR ROAD CLOSURES; AND PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENER'S ERRORS

The floor was opened to public comment:
Vicki Duke, Palatka, FL - expressed concern in years past St. Johns Avenue has not been closed to traffic during Boo on the Avenue.
Hearing no further requests to comment, the floor was closed to public comment.

Commission discussion commenced regarding safety of the citizens.Commissioner Campbell expressed similar concerns. Mr. Cutwright responded the proposal is to close St. Johns Avenue from 2nd Street to 11th Street.

The applicant, Sam Deputy advised if he has to pay the Police Department to close the road, they will not have the event, as the merchants cannot afford the fee on top of the cost of the candy given out at the event. Mayor Correa, Commissioner McCaskill and Commissioner Campbell advised they would be willing to provide special event funding from their lines for Commissioner events.

Motion to approve item G and giving permission for Commissioners to utilize events funding to offset some of the City's costs by Commissioner Campbell. Seconded by Commissioner McCaskill. The Motion unanimously.

H) ADOPT RESOLUTION 2024-R-190 granting a special events permit to Robin Robinson at Hope FM for Trot for Hope to be held on November 28, 2024.

I) ADOPT RESOLUTION 2024-R-196 to execute Florida Commerce Technical Assistance Grant Agreement #P0510 for Comprehensive Plan Update in the amount of $75,000. (100% grant funded)

J) ADOPT RESOLUTION-R-197 approving the Vision Plan of the City of Palatka as prepared by the NorthEast Florida Regional Council

K) ADOPT RESOLUTION 2024-R-199 to execute Florida Commerce Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant Agreement #P0511 for the development of a 5-Year Downtown Strategic Action Plan in the amount of $40,000 (100% grant funded)

5) REGULAR BUSINESS

A) Recess for 10 minutes at 7:30 PM.

B) PRESENTATION/DIRECTION incorporating a policy regarding the acceptable use of City-owned IT equipment into the City's e-mail and internet policy (Appendix 19 of the Personnel Policy)

Meeting recessed at 7:14 PM. Meeting resumed at 7:24 PM

Ms. Jones advised the internet and email usage policy is vague. Inspired Technologies, the City's contracted IT provider, has provided additional language to enable us to safeguard the City from cyberattacks. She explained in the packet what is in yellow is current policy in Appendix 19. Ms. Jones advised we are not using two-factor authentication, however, the policy will require the employees to use strong passwords and requires only City devices on the City network. She advised SHRM guidelines are similar to what has been recommended by IT. Commissioner Borom advised he will share anything he would like added.

C) DISCUSSION/DIRECTION - Shrimping and Fishing on City Docks

Assistant Chief Newcomb advised there has been confusion over recent weeks on where one can fish and shrimp. The past City Manager had asked the Police Department to enforce the City's Ordinance concerning shrimping. Since that time, Ms. West has reviewed the City's Ordinance and the contract with Palatka Boathouse Marina to determine where shrimping is permitted and where it is not permitted along the Riverfront and the docks. Ms. West and Asst. Chief Newcomb provided a graphic that showed green in areas where fishing and shrimping are permitted and red in areas where it is prohibited. He spoke regarding additional signage to be erected to reflect where you can and cannot shrimp and fish. Ms. West advised contact information for the Lagassee's Palatka Boathouse Marina will be placed on the sign.

D) DISCUSSION/DIRECTION Investigation of former employees

Ms. Carty advised the prior City Manager was in the midst of conducting an investigation regarding a former employee. Ms. West advised if there is a perceived conflict of interest, the procedural course in the State of Florida is to file a complaint with the Florida Commission on Ethics and she spoke regarding the process typically undertaking by the Ethics Commission.

Gregg Rossman who is conducting the investigation regarding the former employee spoke. He advised it is not strange to hire someone not within the area to investigate a situation. He advised he is looking into 3 - 4 topics, including the Crill Avenue project (Azalea Place), the Riverfront project, and procurement of office furniture from Wattles Office Furniture. He advised he does not feel it is a wise use of taxpayers dollars to continue looking into a project that has been accepted by the Commission (Azalea Place). Ms. Carty advised the present invoice from Mr. Rossman is $8,350. If the issues are referred to the Commission on Ethics, there would not be additional cost. On September 11 he provided an interim report to the City. Ms. West advised the report presently provided by Mr. Rossman is not a public record at this time as the investigation is ongoing. Mr. Rossman advised the City can refer the situation to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the State Attorney's office. If they find no probable cause, nothing would come of it. He spoke regarding the cost of his investigator and himself.

Commission discussion commenced regarding internal controls.

Motion by Commissioner Campbell to move forward with having Mr. Rossman go with the recommendation that he ended the initial report with in order to bring this thing full circle (that he share the information with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement). Second by Commissioner McCaskill. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Campbell clarified the motion was to go through the three items and make the reference.

Next, Ms. Carty asked for guidance on the investigation into former City Manager, Mr. Bell. Ms. West expressed the nature of the complaint concerning Mr. Bell and the other former employee are very different. The first complaint is concerning ethics. The second complaint stems from a hostile work environment.

Commission discussion commenced. Commissioner Jones advised it is fair to continue the investigation so as there is no preferential treatment. Commissioner McCaskill advised alot of the work has been completed and the complainants will be able to be interviewed via zoom and telephone. The company is willing to provide points of increments. Commissioner McCaskill said the amount will not exceed $30,000.Commissioner McCaskill advised the hourly rate is $375 not to exceed a total of $30,000. She advised the investigation can be discontinued at $10,000. Commissioner Jones expressed the Equal Opportunity Commission could have been contacted. Commissioner Borom expressed concern the former employee may not be willing to participate in the investigation. Commissioner Campbell asked about returning the matter to Human Resources.

Meeting recessed at 8:20 PM. Meeting resumed at 8:22 PM.

Ms. West advised nothing prohibits Human Resources from handling the matter. In the past the HR Generalist did not handle the matter as she reported to the person being investigated. The Commission asked Human Resources to handle the portion of the matter that Commissioner McCaskill was handling.

Discussion commenced regarding team building. Commissioner Campbell indicated a morale builder/facilitator would be beneficial. Commissioner McCaskill advised in the past there were four quotes for team building, the Commission indicated that they did not want to go forward with the firm previously used for team building. Commissioner McCaskill provided quotes from the other three. Commissioner McCaskill asked that a team building item be placed on the next City Commission agenda.

E) ADOPT RESOLUTION 2024-R-195 setting salary for Marcia Carty, CPA, CGFO while serving as Interim City Manager

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, SETTING THE SALARY OF MARCIA G. CARTY WHILE INTERIM CITY MANAGER OF THE CITY OF PALATKA; AND PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENER'S ERRORS

Ms. Jones advised the current practice is to add $1,000 per month to a current employee's salary while serving as Interim City Manager. Our current personnel policy says that an administrative employees who are called out to work in another position should be paid their normal base pay at straight time. Therefore, the hours that Ms. Carty works outside of the finance director role should be paid at the rate she performs. Practices in other areas would give a different amount, also. Mrs. Jones recommendation is to follow the current policy. She calculated additional hours a week for the Interim City Manager role.

Commission discussion commenced. Commissioner McCaskill expressed concern about overworking the Finance Director. Ms. Carty expressed she is comfortable with the challenge. Commissioner Borom suggested setting a timeline. He expressed concern regarding bringing in a new City Manager and of having not performed an evaluation for a City Manager. Mayor Correa spoke regarding the need to set groundwork and expectations. Commissioner Campbell asked Ms. Carty to keep a log on how many hours she spends at work. Commissioner Borom indicated we can revisit the log.

Commissioner McCaskill and Borom and Mayor Correa asked the City Manager search remain on the agenda.

Motion to accept recommendation and pay Ms. Carty as recommended by Commissioner Jones. Seconded by Commissioner Borom. The Motion unanimously.

6) PUBLIC HEARINGS

A) ORDINANCES 2024-13, 11, 14 land use changes 6201 St. Johns Ave and parcel on McLaury Drive - applicant Roberts Land and Timber Company PB Case 24-10

Mr. Aghemo expressed the application is to annex one parcel and to rezone the other parcel. The parcels are combined. Mr. Aghemo advised all of the requests are consistent with the Future Land Use Map and zoning code.

Shalene Estes with Four Star, St. Johns County, spoke on behalf of the applicant. She began with the background of her company. They are a majority-owned subsidiary of DR Horton. She provided a presentation, which showed some of the developments that Four Star is presently working on. McLaury Cove is the current name of the project. It is directly next to the hospital and south of the airport. It is an enclave as the southern parcel is still in the County. They vacated McLaury Road while in the County. She spoke regarding the benefits of the development to the City, including community reinvigoration and economic opportunities. The 248 individual townhome unfits will bring almost $400,000 annual tax base. She provided a schedule for development with a grand opening in March 2026.

Discussion commenced with the applicant and Mr. Aghemo. Commissioner Borom spoke of concern regarding having assurance that the development would move forward. (Commissioner Borom asked about the Cottages on St. Johns, Mr. Aghemo advised an ownership change caused a delay in building permitting. He asked regarding Silver Bay development which Mr. Aghemo advised is coming.) Ms. Estes advised she provided background on their company to show their ability to follow through. Commissioner Jones spoke of concern regarding leap frogging. Mr. Aghemo advised this is an existing enclave that will be reduced. He advised he cannot tell whether any staff members have a conflict, however Staff must verify that the applicant has control of the land and verify that the applicant has clear ownership. Ms. West advised she can look into the corporate entities involved. Ms. Carty suggested in the future having the applicant sign something indicating any conflicts of interest.

I) ORDINANCE 2024-13 amending the official zoning map 6201 St. Johns Ave. parcel: 10-10-26-0000-0060, from Commercial Neighborhood (C-1) to Residential Multifamily (R-3) (first hearing)

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA PROVIDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA BE AMENDED FROM COMMERCIAL NEIGHBORHOOD (C-1A) TO CITY OF PALATKA MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-3) WITH A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY FOR THE FOLLOWING PROPERTY LOCATED AT 6201 ST. JOHNS AVENUE, PALATKA, FL 32177, PARCEL NO.: 10-10-26-0000-0130-0060, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENER'S ERRORS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The floor was opened to public hearing. Hearing none, the floor was closed to public hearing.

Motion to approve by Commissioner McCaskill. Seconded by Commissioner Borom. The Motion Passed unanimously.

II) Annexing, Amending the Future Land Use Map, and Rezoning Parcel: 10-10-26-0000-1030-0010 on McLaury Drive

a) ORDINANCE 2024-11 annexation of the above-referenced parcel (25.23.+/- acres) into the city limits; amending the Future Land Use Map from Putnam County Urban Service to Palatka Residential Medium Density

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA ANNEXING INTO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA CERTAIN ADJACENT TERRITORY IDENTIFIED AS PARCEL 10-10-26-0000-0130-0010, LOCATED AT MCLAURY DRIVE, PALATKA 32177, CONTIGUOUS TO THE BOUNDARIES OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, AND AMENDING THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP WITH RESPECT TO SAID PARCEL OF LAND FROMPUTNAM COUNTY URBAN SERVICE (US) TO CITY OF PALATKA RESIDENTIAL MEDIUM DENSITY, PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENERS ERRORS

The floor was opened to public hearing. Upon hearing nothing further, the floor was closed to public hearing.
Motion to approve by Commissioner Borom. Seconded by Commissioner McCaskill. The Motion Passed unanimously.

b) ORDINANCE 2024-14 amending the official zoning map of the above referenced parcel from Putnam County Residential Single Family (R-1) to City of Palatka Multifamily (R-3) with a Planned Unit Development (PUD) Overlay.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA PROVIDING THAT THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA BE AMENDED FROM PUTNAM COUNTY RESIDENTIAL SINGLE FAMILY (R-1) TO CITY OF PALATKA MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-3) WITH A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY FOR THE FOLLOWING PROPERTY LOCATED AT MCLAURY DRIVE, PALATKA, FL 32177, PARCEL NO.: 10-10-26-0000-0130-0010, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENER'S ERRORS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The floor was opened to public hearing. Upon hearing nothing further, the floor was closed to public hearing.
Motion to approve by Commissioner Campbell. Seconded by Commissioner Borom. The Motion Passed unanimously.

B) ADOPT ORDINANCE 2024-10 combining Sections 30-214 and 30-215 concerning the registration of vacant structures and foreclosed blighted, unsecured, or abandoned structures and amending the City's fee schedule (Appendix A) (second reading)

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE PALATKA MUNICIPAL CODE COMBINING SECTIONS 30-214 VACANT STRUCTURE REGISTRATION AND 30-215 FORECLOSED, BLIGHTED, UNSECURED, OR ABANDONED STRUCTURE REGISTRATION; AND AMENDING APPENDIX A (FEE SCHEDULE) OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF PALATKA AS IT PERTAINS TO FEES AND OTHER CHARGES RELATING TO: CHAPTER 10. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, CHAPTER 30 REGISTRATION OF VACANT, BLIGHTED, UNSECURED OR ABANDONED STRUCTURES, CHAPTER 50. PARKS AND RECREATION, CHAPTER 54. PLANNING, CHAPTER 62. SIGNS, CHAPTER 74. SUBDIVISIONS, CHAPTER 78. TAXATION, CHAPTER 94. ZONING; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT, SEVERABILITY, EFFECTIVE DATE, AND SCRIVENER'S ERRORS.

Commissioner Jones asked regarding the change to the alcohol fee. The Clerk advised the fee for "Alcohol beverage license administrative review fee" is proposed to increase from $50 to $100.

The floor was opened to public hearing. Upon hearing nothing further, the floor was closed to public hearing. **Motion to approve by Commissioner McCaskill. Seconded by Commissioner Campbell. The Motion unanimously.**

C) Second Public Hearing - Adoption of the Millage Rate and Budget for fiscal year 2024-25 .

I) ADOPT RESOLUTION 2024-R-190 setting the FY 2024-2025 Millage Rate at 6.4000 Mills

The Mayor convened the final public hearing of the millage rate and budget for FY 2024-25.

The millage rate (6.4000 mills), rolled back rate (6.1271) and percentage change over rolled back rate (4.45%) wereannounced. The FY budget is $75,985,566.

The floor was opened to public hearing. Hearing none, the floor was closed to public hearing.

The Mayor asked the Commission if there were any adjustments to be made to the budget. Commissioner Jones advised he was under the assumption the Commission would be able to roll back the millage. Ms. Carty advised the prior year millage rate was 6.4000. She prepared the DR420, and the rollback rate was 6.1271. In July 11, 2024 the Commission voted to accept the rate at 6.4000 as the prior year. We held several budget workshops. If the rate accepted is greater than the rollback rate, that is considered a property tax increase. To not increase the rate, the Commission could have voted to keep the rollback rate, which means to not have a property tax increase. The percentage of increase is only 4.45% greater than the rollback rate. Commissioner Jones expressed County taxes and the School District's referendum on top of the City taxes causes difficulty for the tax payers. Ms. Carty advised if the City voted to take the rollback rate now, we may miss deadlines with the Department of Revenue. The new fiscal year starts tomorrow. We extended our final public hearing date due to the recent hurricane. Commissioner Borom advised the need to know timeframes on when is the last opportunity to adjust the millage rate. Ms. Carty spoke regarding the City reducing the fire assessment. She advised she will contact the Department of Revenue to look into finding how we can revise the budget. Commissioner Borom suggested looking at something creative to assist the taxpayers with ARPA funds and other leverage mechanisms. Ms. Carty advised she can bring that back also.

Resolution 2024-R-190 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PALATKA, PUTNAM COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE FINAL OPERATING MILLAGE RATE FOR THE PURPOSE OF LEVYING OF AD VALOREM TAXES FOR THE CITY OF PALATKA, PUTNAM COUNTY, FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025; AND PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENER'S ERRORS

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

II) ADOPT RESOLUTION 2024-R-192 adopting the Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-25 in the amount of $75,985,566.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PALATKA ADOPTING THE FINAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENER'S ERRORS

The floor was opened to public hearing. Upon hearing nothing further, the floor was closed to public hearing. **Motion to approve by Commissioner McCaskill. Seconded by Commissioner Campbell. The Motion unanimously.**

7) COMMISSIONER COMMENTS Commissioner Campbell thanked Staff for work during the storm and other recent events and communication provided by Ms. Carty.

Discussion commenced regarding recent violence. Commissioner Jones spoke regarding recent violent incidents and the need to break down the communication with the Police. He spoke regarding doing something to show cohesiveness for a comm-unity day. Commissioner Campbell recommended the City issue a statement that we do not accept violence and are committed to creating solutions to end violence. Commissioner Borom expressed the need to bring in churches, the County and every agency in the City/County to partner to drive violence down. He suggested using ARPA funding to assist the officers. Ms. Carty advised the City is putting together a list of churches and non-profits. Commissioner McCaskill spoke regarding Mt. Tabor First Baptist Church and First Baptist Church of Palatka holding a 5th Sunday unity event at their churches. Asst. Chief Newcomb advised the Department of Justice notified them today that they will be receiving a grant that they applied for additional officers (next week they will know what the award will be). He spoke regarding three recent shootings and the biggest fear in the community is retaliation and the biggest hurdle is getting people to say what is going on. The Commission directed a Press Release to be sent out regarding standing in unison against violence.

Commissioner Borom spoke regarding the grant associated with a swimming program of Governor DeSantis.

8) ADJOURN Motion to adjourn at 9:48 PM by Commissioner Jones.

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.