

MINUTES  
CITY COMMISSION MEETING

August 14, 2023

The City Commission met this date in regular session in the Commission Chambers. Comm. Wasdin gave the Invocation. Mayor Smith recited the Pledge of Allegiance. A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:05 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)
Library Director	:	Hope Willis
Recorder	:	Beth Millsaps

Others in attendance: (Not Inclusive) : JD Cameron, Kelly Irwin, Bob Webb, Matthew Webster, Patrick Palmer, Julia Weitzel, Mike Wherrett, Shayne Betts, Derek Sanchez, Ben Rossell, Christy and Chris Shields, Chris Talubee

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**COMM. CROSBY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JULY 10, 2023, AS SUBMITTED. COMM. HAMILTON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE 5 TO 0.**

**COMM. BROWNING MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE BOTH JULY 24, 2023, AND JULY 31, 2023, MINUTES AS SUBMITTED. COMM. HAMILTON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF 5 TO 0.**

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

**A. Derek Sanchez**

Mr. Sanchez, 312 Michigan Avenue, said he has lived here for over 10 years and loves this city so much. He would like to turn homesteading into a common thing. Mr. Sanchez said in March he voting on chicken ordinance hopes everyone says yes. Mr. Sanchez also has a running group that he has established. They meet at Doc's Oyster bar every Thursday at 6pm. Mr. Sanchez had wondered if maybe we could use Lincoln Park to promote a run, a fight, or a bar-b-que contest. Comm. Hamilton asked that Mr. Sanchez talk to her as she is the parks commissioner, and we see what can do.

Mr. Ben Rossell, 68 Eastview, said he is a 10 year resident and the pastor of the Presbyterian church. Mr. Rossell lives catty corner to Lincoln Park, he said he and his wife with their three sons. They park on the street and have done it ever since they have lived there, it is a very broad street, however they had an officer, give them tickets and warnings for overnight parking. He has researched and found the ordinance in the city code, but he is asking for an exemption. Mayor Smith said he

1 could talk to Chief Hart and Comm. Wasdin, as she is over streets. Chief Hart said it is a wide street  
2 because it was the original main street in Valparaiso in the 1900s. Chief Hart said he has the officers  
3 use their discretion about the parking ordinance, because most of the streets in Valparaiso are not wide  
4 enough for street parking. Chief Hart said they do warnings and tickets for safety, it is up to the  
5 Commission if they wish to change, if they do it will be for everyone. Chief Hart said maybe the  
6 attorney can come up with something to change the ordinance by the width of the street. Comm.  
7 Wasdin said she agreed though there were a few streets that were plenty wide enough for side parking.  
8 Chief Hart said we would also need to work with the engineer to make sure of ingress and egress,  
9 which will limit the number of streets that qualify. Mayor Smith said there is work to be done, doesn't  
10 want to set a precedent. Mayor Smith said because if it is done for a select few and not city as a whole  
11 then it shouldn't be done.

12 Michael Wherrett, 317 Ohio, said he moved into home around 2011. He has a background in  
13 plumbing and HVAC. He said up until about six months ago they had really good water pressure, but  
14 in the last six months it has gone down. It has gradually gotten worse, he called the city thought might  
15 have leak, a public works employee came out and checked and it was 50psi in the morning, then 40 psi  
16 in the afternoon. Comm. Hamilton asked if he had spoken with his neighbors? He said everyone  
17 talked about issues in their area. Mr. Wherrett said he posted on Facebook about the problem, he said  
18 one person said they had 26psi. Comm. Hamilton said we have been looking into this for some time.  
19 Mayor Smith said we are working on several things at this time.

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

### 21 **A. Valparaiso Little League Field – Chris Taulbee**

22 Mr. Taulbee apologized for not attending the past few meetings for which he was scheduled.  
23 He said they have had an outstanding year in girls' softball, baseball not so much. Mr. Taulbee said he  
24 inherited the job of president, he was elected as vice president, but when the president stepped down  
25 that made him president. Mr. Taulbee said he is concerned because they cannot pay for the electricity  
26 and water, can't sustain it. He said realistically they plan to use the field from June to February.  
27 Mayor Smith said he spoke with Mr. Bill Smith of the school board and was told by Mr. Smith that the  
28 school board is the one who has a contract with the little league, Valparaiso does not. Mayor Smith  
29 said since it was in the condition that it was, Mr. Smith told him that the school board would take care  
30 of it. Mr. Taulbee said he would contact Mr. Bill Smith. Mayor Smith said that from speaking with  
31 Mr. Smith they won't get any money from the school board. Comm. Hamilton said she had spoken to  
32 Mr. Smith as well and was basically told the same thing. Mr. Taulbee said in Niceville they pay the  
33 city to use the fields there, \$20 a kid for inside city, \$25 for outside city. Last year they had eight  
34 teams with twelve kids on each team. He said they could've had ten teams but there wasn't enough  
35 space. Mayor Smith said we want to be civic minded; the city has to mow and maintain, and he

1 doesn't think that is our responsibility, and we do it without anything in return. Comm. Wasdin said  
2 maybe this is a decision to be made a budget meeting. Mayor Smith said as the steward of the city  
3 finances we have to look out for the best for the city. Chief Mayville said the girls went all the way to  
4 Washington, first team in our area to go. He said the City of Niceville is doing a proclamation to  
5 acknowledge them, would like the City of Valparaiso to do the same. Mayor Smith said that could be  
6 worked out, he will work with Mrs. Johnson.

7 **1. ACTION ITEMS – Added Agenda Items**

8 Nothing to add to the agenda this evening.

9 **2. ACTION ITEMS – Community Center Use for Council on Aging**

10 Mayor Smith has received a letter from Elder Services of Okaloosa County Council on Aging, he read  
11 the letter, basically requesting usage of the senior center. Mrs. Johnson said at this time, Okaloosa  
12 Walton Council on Aging uses the facility. Ms. Shaney Betts, with the Okaloosa Walton Council on  
13 Aging, said she stepped in 2020, which was a very difficult year, we are still coming back from that  
14 year. Ms. Kimberly Fraley from Elder Services Okaloosa County is who wrote the letter, and it  
15 involves a grant the Older Americans Act RFP. Ms. Betts said that her organization is going out for  
16 the RFP also. Ms. Betts said the RFP decision will be made around September 4<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Betts said the  
17 RFP will be scored, only one will win, and multiple agencies are bidding. Ms. Betts said once the RFP  
18 is concluded, should know the results by the end of September. Mr. Dykes said so as far as use of the  
19 building the Commission can wait to vote on the matter until after RFP is awarded. Ms. Betts said yes.

20 **COMM. BROWNING MADE A MOTION TO POST PONE VOTE ON WHO USES THE**  
21 **SENIOR BUILDING UNTIL AFTER SEPTEMBER ONCE RFP IS AWARDED. COMM.**  
22 **HAMILTON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF**  
23 **THE COMMISSION 5 TO 0.** Mr. Dykes said postpone vote until October meeting.

24 **1. OLD BUSINESS – Update New City Hall Renovations**

25 Mr. Scott said the inside has been demolished, elevator to frame out. He hates the city's  
26 purchasing policy, the demo was completed for \$13,000. Mayor Smith said that was a good price. He  
27 wants to take his hat off to Mr. Scott and Comm. Hamilton, both builders, who are volunteering their  
28 time and service for this project. Mayor Smith asked what could be done in regard to the purchasing  
29 policy. Mr. Dykes said he has discussed the policy with Mr. Scott, and we could provide a resolution  
30 to change it. Comm. Hamilton agreed that it is limiting us. Mr. Dykes said we could update policy by  
31 resolution while also making sure to stay within the outlines of the Florida Statutes. Mr. Dykes said  
32 we can change with resolution, which would be not only for this project but for others that may come  
33 down the road. Mr. Dykes said he could get with Mr. Scott, and they could present something  
34 reflecting the recommendations on changes. Comm. Hamilton said that would be great. Mrs. Johnson

1 said she can add to the August 21<sup>st</sup> budget meeting, have this issue first and then the budget meeting.  
2 Everyone agreed.

3 **2. OLD BUSINESS – Legal Update**

4 Mr. Dykes said the city hall bond closed on the John Sims Parkway property and City of  
5 Valparaiso are the listed owners. Mr. Dykes also said the property at 363 Washington had some  
6 matters pending, may have updates with that property soon.

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

8 Comm. Wasdin said nothing for this evening.

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

10 Mr. Scott has nothing to report this evening.

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

12 Mr. Chambers said he is working with the new Command Chief at Eglin, he would like to  
13 request a meeting with Mayor Smith and Chief Hart in the near future.

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

15 Comm. Crosby said nothing new to report, all going well.

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

17 Mr. J D Cameron is here to represent the Planning Commission tonight. We only had three  
18 members present at the meeting so there was no quorum and they were unable to vote on the variance  
19 at 315 Kelly Rd, so that has been pushed to the September meeting. He said even though it was only  
20 him, Chair Bachelor and Mr. Webb they did have a refresher course in Sunshine Law provided by Mr.  
21 Dykes. Mr. Cameron said in September the Planning Commission will be going over shipping  
22 containers. Chair Bachelor has done a lot of research and they hope to have a quorum in September.

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

24 Mr. Patrick Palmer, 266 Edge Avenue, said he is still waiting for an estimate of what it would  
25 cost to paint the inside of the building. He said he is in dire need of board members, implores anyone  
26 who is interested to get involved. Mr. Palmer said they are hopeful of having the new signage up by  
27 the end of the month.

28 Mr. Palmer said they really need volunteers, only three board members and too small to do it  
29 all. He said they have done away with the food trucks for now, too many complaints, doesn't think  
30 they should resume until the center itself is more viable. Mr. Palmer said, including himself, there are  
31 three members not even enough to have a quorum to vote. Mr. Dykes said the Community Center  
32 Board could discuss things and bring any recommendations to the Commission for their approval or  
33 denial. Mr. Palmer said there is an issue in the back room, today it was 92 degrees. He said he spoke  
34 with Fran from Public Works, he believes it should be a priority, so we don't roast this week. Mr.

1 Scott said he texted someone who will be at the property tomorrow. Mr. Kelley stepped out of the  
2 video booth to let the Commission know he has it and will take care of it.

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

4 Ms. Willis, Library Director, said the library’s summer program was a success. She said over  
5 4,000 visited the library, over 300 people participated in the reading challenge. Comm. Hamilton said  
6 the library is continuing to grow. A lady in the audience said that our library is amazing, people  
7 coming from Ft. Walton Beach and Niceville.

8 Chief Mayville said we have some paramedics in place we hope to start a program up that we  
9 are going to go Advanced Life Support (ALS) to benefit the citizens of both cities sometimes EMS is  
10 10 minutes or longer and our paramedics will be able to push different drugs really quick. He said he  
11 also needs to get with Mrs. Johnson because the fire station took a hit from lightning, and he needs to  
12 file a claim. Chief Mayville said lately they have been dealing with lightning issues, heat issues and  
13 the COVID calls have increased.

14 **8. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENT – Disbursements**

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

18 **9. REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENT – Budget Workshop August 21,**  
19 **2023, at 6PM.**

20 Mayor Smith announced the budget meeting for next week. Mrs. Johnson said it will not be a  
21 special meeting with the discussion of changing the purchasing policy to come before the budget  
22 meeting.

23 **ADJOURN**

24 There being no further business to be brought before the Commission, the meeting adjourned  
25 at 7:39PM.

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28  
29 \_\_\_\_\_  
30 Hubert B. Smith  
31 Mayor

32  
33 \_\_\_\_\_  
34 Catherine Hamilton  
35 Chair, VCA

36 ATTEST:

37  
38 \_\_\_\_\_  
39 Tammy Johnson, CMC  
40 City Clerk

41 \*\*\*A recording of the August 14, 2023, Commission meeting will be kept on the City’s secure  
file server as a permanent part of these minutes.\*\*\*