



OBSERVER CORPS REPORT
New Smyrna Beach City Commission
Reported by Rice S. Wagner

November 11, 2025

An Open House for the review of the New Smyrna Beach Comprehensive Plan was held before the regular City Commission meeting. Charts and written material were available for preview but no formal talks were given.

Public Participation showed a dislike regarding the proposed Peddle Pubs which would allow patrons to 'drive' in the Flagler Avenue area. The main issues seemed to be drinking and loud noise. Further discussion will take place at the December 9th meeting.

People continued to speak out against the charter special election and there were several who were in opposition to a zoning change which would allow an RV and storage facility to be built in the middle of land reserved for homes. Residents of Coastal Woods asked that more attention be paid to their drainage problems.

Two members were appointed to the Housing Authority Board and the Turnbull Creek Land Preservation Board will appoint one member at the next Commission meeting. Commissioner Valli Perrine continues to work with the First Step Shelter for the homeless.

Commissioners from around the county met with our elected state officials, expressing their opposition to SB180. It is hoped that the county lawyer will put forth an amendment which will address the concerns relating to county home rule. The 5th Economic Development Summit Conference will be held on Oct. 23 in the Brannon Center in New Smyrna Beach from 8:00 to noon. It is open to the public and will include city officials from New Smyrna Beach-Edgewater-Oak Hill as well as Volusia County. Main topics will include discussions on storm water management, transportation-infrastructure and growth.

City Manager Kevin Cowper reiterated that there will be a special election regarding 7 issues on the City Charter on November 4th. Information can be found on the NSB City website. In addition, fliers have been sent in utility bills.

General activities

- The Citizens' Academy has begun and there are 19 participants.
- The work on parking spaces on Sapphire will begin soon.



- At least 19 city residents spoke out against Ordinance 6525 which would allow a church on Pine Street to expand its facility. The concerns centered around the vast expansion of parking needs, safety, congestion and the change it would bring about regarding the nature of the area, including but not limited to the distance of the building from the city road. At the next meeting City Manager Kevin Cowper will give a presentation on the ordinance during the second reading.

The Board is still discussing the regulations regarding signs, both pole, feather and electronic. And dogs will now be able to accompany their owners to outdoor dining facilities with a strict list of does/don'ts within the city. Citizens were appointed to the following boards—Building Trades Examining, Fire Pension and Police Pension. Not voted on were the Planning and Zoning Board, the Turnbull Creek Land Preservation Commission and the Housing Authority.

Continuing with flooding concerns, Commissioner McGuirk requested that there be a concerted effort to find a better way of getting the facts out to the public rather than allowing social media to control the narrative. Apparently, there are several older areas in NSB that do not have a storm water design.

November 4th Special Election

The two Charter amendments that passed were related to making cultural arts a priority and reviewing the charter at least once every 10 years. Those that failed—increasing the mayor's and city commissioners' pay, the election of a candidate in a primary, changing the City Clerk from a Charter Officer to falling under the City Manager, dropping 'mandate' when referring to the city's historic preservation, and increasing the term limit of the mayor from 2 to 4 years. Citizen participation was in the 25% range.

October 28, 2025

The meeting started with the postponement until March 10th of a discussion on the expansion of Beachside Church on Pine Street. The request was made by the members of the church in hopes that a compromise can be worked out with the residents of the area. At the last commission meeting at least 19 people spoke against the change in zoning.

Kevin Cowper, City Manager, reminded everyone to vote in the special election on November 4th on seven proposed City Charter amendments. Members of the Citizens Academy will have their graduation on November 18th. There will be an update on Capital Projects on December 9th.

During public participation citizens expressed ongoing concerns about flooding and stormwater control.



A fire assessment study (\$80,970) is needed to help with the 2027 budget. The data collected will help to diversify the city's revenue, ease pressure on the general fund and align costs with benefits.

The Commissioners elected Deb Denys and David McKenna to the Planning and Zoning Board, Palmer Wilson to the Police Pension Board and Randy Hartman to the Fire Pension Board. Openings remain for the Turnbull Creek Land Preservation Commission and the Housing Authority.