



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

2/24/2026

Melissa Mason, Director of Community Engagement for Early Learning Coalition of Flagler and Volusia Counties, presented a plan for a learning and study trail in Riverside Park. The trail will include author signings and books which will be changed quarterly.

Volusia County Coastal Division Director, Jessica Fentress, gave a detailed presentation on county projects designed to rehab our beaches and improve our waterways. Some of the items discussed were the off-loading of Rattlesnake Island, the completion of sand to the 17th Avenue area and the planting of sea oats, inlet shoals and easier navigation and offshore sand search. It has been determined that the sand to the north and south of New Smyrna's beaches is very different which causes a variation in shoreline encroachment and erosion rates. Hiles starts a more reddish sand and Silver Sands south is a more critical area for rehabilitation.

A number of solutions have been suggested—do nothing, relocate structures, elevate houses, add sea walls where possible, near-shore sand replacement, break waters and near-shore reefs. 2006 was the last major sand replacement. Noteworthy—95% of visitors go to the beach with there being 61 million day trips per year, all of which provides significant revenue. The last week in April should see the end of sand placement. If turtles start nesting, plant placement will skip marked areas.

FDOT is working with the city to make improvements to Hwy 44. Crawford Ramp is now designated for use by pass holders only. A long discussion took place regarding the request for the removal of three historic trees on South Myrtle. The commissioners gave the OK to remove two dead or dying historic trees but voted to request that everything possible be done to save the one healthy tree.

The city is working to comply with SB 950 which pertains to recovery facilities. A process is in place to have clearly defined criteria which will include having an administrator live on the premises and the proper certification which will be regulated by the state.

Lisa Martin spoke about a program named Police Care. It includes the ability for senior citizens to call between 8 am and 1 pm to speak with someone in person about how they are doing. If there is no call, then the police department will do a wellness check.

Mayor Cleveland suggested moving the date for the Art Festa further away from Images.



03/10/26

Thanks to the NSB police for setting up a command center on Flagler from March 12-22, both for traffic and people. As per City Manager Cowper, there will be a Strategic Planning Workshop on March 26 at 9 am to 4 pm at the Brannon Center. April 7 Mayor Fred Cleveland will deliver the State of the City at 5:30 pm in the Brannon Center. April 9-12 will be the Mike Martin Pro/Am Surf and Skate Festival in town.

During public input, the City Commission was asked to send a letter to the Volusia County Council supporting the efforts of Volusia Forever.

Adjustments are being made to area park hours so it is recommended that you check online or call before coming. An application is being prepared that would allow for shared expenses with the county of \$11,000 in order to four lane Old Mission Road.

The South Village residential developers requested a city ordinance that would provide for a CDD (Community Development District). The project will be done in seven stages and cover 770 acres with 1277 homes. The city will bring in property taxes similar to collecting HOA dues. It will be the first CDD in New Smyrna Beach. The CDD will be secured by debt levied on the individual parcel owners. As I understand it the CDD will take over costs that are normally born by the developer. The request for the CDD passed by a vote of 4-1.

The city is addressing water management in the historic West Side. Project needs have been identified but the city is working to get money (\$6 million) from the county to help make this happen.

Regarding Tallahassee, the session is now over but there may be a special session called to create an acceptable budget, look at property tax issues and redistricting. No 'antidote' for SB180 has been approved.