LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF VOLUSIA COUNTY

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

9-22-26

Kevin Cowper, City Manager, gave an extensive report including a reminder that on 9-23-26 the second and final public hearing will take place regarding the budget for the coming year. On September 29th there will be a community forum on the use of e-bikes in the city. On October 1st the city will change trash service. Over 12,000 96-gallon trash cans have been delivered to homes and businesses. Anyone wanting a smaller 64 gallon one must apply and will need to show a letter from a doctor if requesting help with moving the can to and from the street. The city will no longer provide recycling, but citizens have the option of dropping off material at three locations:

1) 27th Ave. Beachfront Park (3701 S. Atlantic)
2) Sugar Mill Trail Head (433 Sugar Mill Dr.)
3) Public Works Complex (124 Industrial Park)

The service will be available 24/7 and glass will be included. Check the city website (City Waste) if you have questions.

Work is ongoing along SR 44 and includes adding sidewalks, a stop light, multi-use paths, turn lanes, resurfacing, etc.

I-95 is being closed overnight for six days (Sept. 23-28), three nights in each direction from 9:30 PM to 6:00 AM in order to work on the Pioneer interchange bridge. Cars will be routed through Venetian Bay and along Airport Road to Port Orange. A lower speed limit was requested for the area but denied by FDOT.

In regard to concerned citizens in the Bay Drive area, the city acquired land for conservation use. At this time there are no plans for any public use. The Turnbull Creek Land Preservation Committee will meet to talk about what would be appropriate terms for public access.

Ron Nibert, assistant city manager, is retiring after 40 years of service in government.

Public Participation:

- Walter Bone, a certified landscape architect, feels that the cost of the city's planning services are extremely high. He requested that the city attorney review the schedules and ask for resubmits. He is also concerned that companies being considered are far from New Smyrna Beach.
- Citizens on Saxon Drive are concerned about speed on the street. They want to see some type of traffic calming measures such as physical barriers, raised

crosswalks, speed reduction to 30 mph (working on this since 2022) and an emergency signal by Fire Station 52.

- Concerns were expressed regarding the downtown Farmers' Market. Papers pertaining to the market have no attorney signature. The City indemnifies the market and is proposing a change from a 2 to a 5-year contract. Comments were made about a monopoly regarding vegetable stands
- A list of comments and questions was turned in to the Clerk from the citizens living in the Bay Drive area.
- An ask was presented regarding the city's responsibility for cleaning up the growth at the dead end of Cherry Street.
- Tom Desamone introduced himself as a candidate for the Planning and Zoning Board.

Consent Agenda—(7C) Those not pulled covered the Farmer's Market Memorandum of Understanding for five years without discussion. A lease renewal with Epic Aviation, Inc. was approved with the addition of a requirement that any extension be brought before the Commission for a vote at a public meeting.
(7E) Companies are asked to submit a list of costs and a scope of services relating to consulting services. (Ex. North Causeway work)
(7G) Beachside Baptist Church's Fall Festival to be held on October 30th. An objection was brought forward by Lisa Martin, who is concerned about the number of participants. Valli Perrine felt that private property should be open for parking for the event. Rob Salazar (Leisure Services) listed some of the efforts made by the church and the city last year to address possible problems. Jason McGuirk suggested that the event be monitored more closely this year. The event was approved.

The city is recommending that a raised pedestrian crosswalk be installed on Saxon Drive and is to include a flashing light. Manager Cowper pointed out that Saxon is a major collector street and thus causes conflict between residents and other traffic. The speed can be lowered but expect high use to continue. Focus is currently between A1A and 11th. 100% of the residents along that stretch want a change. The first crosswalk will go in at 8th and will be removable, have curb cuts and display signage. The recommendation was unanimously approved.

The negotiations with the police union went well and their three-year contract was unanimously approved. Discussion of the agreement with the firefighters will be moved to a later date.

Second Reading

- Ordinance No. 36-26 Permits and Inspections was moved to the October 13th meeting.
- Motions were approved for Ordinances No. 45/50 -26 and 52/54-26, all pertaining to annexations, a small scale comprehensive plan amendments, rezoning and the revision of charges for household and commercial solid waste a non-exclusive franchise agreement to Waste Pro of Florida, Inc. The first reading

of an amendment to the Personnel Policies and Procedures of the City of New Smyrna Beach also took place.

Board Appointments

- Planning and Zoning reappointments—Jon Hall and Thomas Bien along with new member Tom Desimone
- Turnbull Creek Land Preservation Commission—Lauren Sullivan
- Building and Trades Examining Board—one opening

In final remarks, Lisa Martin asked Kevin Cowper about the progress on the review of data center information. Jason McGuirk thanked the Ellison family for the Turnbull Bay land which the city can now preserve. Mayor Cleveland reported on the Elected Officials' Roundtable. A program for Second Chance Offenders is being added to Volusia County jails. There is a dashboard on stormwater initiatives throughout the county. The owner of the former K-Mart is interested in renovating part of the building and demolishing the remainder.