CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Regular City Commission Meeting
Monday, October 28, 2024

The City Commission met in formal session Monday, October 28, 2024, at 5:00 P.M. in the Alcazar Room at City Hall. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Nancy Sikes-Kline, and the following were present:

1. Roll Call: Nancy Sikes-Kline, Mayor/City Commissioner
Roxanne Horvath, Vice Mayor/City Commissioner
Barbara Blonder, City Commissioner
Cynthia Garris, City Commissioner
Jim Springfield, City Commissioner

Also Present: David Birchim, City Manager
Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney
Darlene Galambos, City Clerk
Meredith Breidenstein, Assistant City Manager
Reuben Franklin, Assistant City Manager
Stephen Slaughter, Director, Public Works & Utilities
Amy Skinner, Director, Planning and Building
Melissa Wissel, Director, Communications
Jennifer Michaux, Police Chief
Carlos Aviles, Fire Chief
Elyse Wiemann, Recording Secretary

MOMENT OF SILENCE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Sikes-Kline requested a moment of silence and Commissioner Horvath led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

2.A. Modification and Approval of Regular Agenda

MOTION

Mayor Sikes-Kline MOVED to approve the Regular Agenda. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Horvath and APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.

3. Special Presentations, Recognitions and Proclamations
(None)

4. General Public Comments (3 minutes per individual)

The Commission heard from the following members of the public:

- Chris Fullmer
- Nancy Murphy
- BJ Kalaidi

5. Consent Agenda

David Birchim, City Manager, read the Consent Agenda.

Preview of upcoming Commission meetings.
THE FOLLOWING ORDINANCES ARE TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR SECOND READING ON DATE: NONE.
Reminder of Upcoming Meetings:
• November 12, 2024, 5:00PM, Regular City Commission Meeting

- December 2, 2024, 7:30PM, Special City Commission Meeting
- December 9, 2024, 5:00PM, Regular City Commission Meeting

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PRIOR COMMISSION MEETINGS: NONE. RELEASES OF LIEN FOR UNIT CONNECTION FEE MORTGAGE(S): NONE. PROPOSED PROCLAMATIONS, CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION/RECOGNITION. (COMMISSION APPROVAL REQUIRED). (TO BE READ AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING). NONE. NOTIFICATION OF PROCLAMATIONS/CERTIFICATES OF RECOGNITION ISSUED: NONE.

End Consent Agenda

5.A. Additions, deletions or modifications to Consent Agenda

(None)

5.B. Approval of Consent Agenda

MOTION

Mayor Sikes-Kline MOVED to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Springfield and APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.

6. Appeals

(None)

7. General Public Presentations, Items of Great Public Importance, and Other Items Requiring Public Hearings

7.A. General Public Presentations

(None)

7.B. Items of Great Public Importance

(None)

7.C. Other Items Requiring Public Hearing

(None)

8. Ordinances and Resolutions – Public Hearing Required.

8.A. Ordinances – Second Reading

8.A.1. Ordinance 2024-31: Amends the terms of members of the Board of Trustees of the St. Augustine Police Officers' Retirement Trust Fund. (I. Lopez, City Attorney)

Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney, presented Ordinance 2024-31.

Public hearing was opened; however, there was no response.

MOTION

Commissioner Horvath MOVED to pass Ordinance 2024-31 on second reading. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Blonder.

Mayor Sikes-Kline said by allowing the change in term limits it would allow the Board members to be educated and was in support of the change.

Ms. Lopez read the title as follows:

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-31

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 20 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE; AMENDING SECTION 20-223 EXTENDING THE TERM LIMITS FOR MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE ST. AUGUSTINE POLICE OFFICERS' RETIREMENT TRUST FUND; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

VOTE ON MOTION:
AYES: Horvath, Blonder, Garris, Springfield, Sikes-Kline
NAYES: NONE
MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

8.A.2. Ordinance 2024-32: Clarifies the enforcement of public encampment regulations to conform with state law. (I. Lopez, City Attorney)

Isabelle Lopez, City Attorney, presented Ordinance 2024-32.

Public hearing was opened, and Commissioners heard comments from the following member of the public:

- BJ Kalaidi

MOTION

Mayor Sikes-Kline MOVED to pass Ordinance 2024-32 on second reading. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Springfield.

Ms. Lopez read the title as follows:

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-32

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 22 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE; AMENDING SECTION 22-12 TO CLARIFY THE ENFORCEMENT OF PUBLIC ENCAMPMENT REGULATIONS AND TO CONFORM WITH STATE LAW; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

VOTE ON MOTION:
AYES: Sikes-Kline, Springfield, Garris, Blonder, Horvath
NAYES: NONE
MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

8.A.3. Ordinance 2024-33: Creates a new street, closes a section of Spanish Street to vehicular traffic, and reverses a section of Cuna Street traffic from East to West. (R. Franklin, Assistant City Manager)

Reuben Franklin, Assistant City Manager presented Ordinance 2024-33.

Questioned if signage was present if passed signage would be added

Public hearing was opened, and Commissioners heard comments from the following members of the public:

- Scott Kennelly
- Scott York
- Chris Fulmer
- Virgina Whetstone
- Bruce McGuire
- Ronald Mickler
- Martha Mickler
- Zack Lemke
- Gloria Lelaidier
- Burry Gowen
- Charles Pappas
- Ginny Bullard

Commissioner Horvath felt the residents had praised the closure of the street. She said the increase of pedestrian traffic due to the closure was an added benefit as it was also about livability for the residents, which was a milestone for the Vision Plan. She said it was a balance between businesses, tourist, and residents. She said the real estate business mentioned could have signage on the north side of the building, which could help the visibility and adding signage could be at Cordova Street to list the businesses in the area. She said it was safer, livability had improved, and pedestrian traffic had increased due to the closure of the street. She said she was in support of keeping the street closed.

Commissioner Garris felt the area attracted many pedestrians and thought the businesses benefited from the increase in people. She thought the real estate business would succeed as many people used online for this type of business and foot traffic would be another benefit. She noted some additional parking for this business was provided. She said opening and closing a street could interfere with the safety of the street. She said the Commission was in favor of having a walkable City and this was a move in the right direction. She agreed the street should remain closed.

Commissioner Blonder agreed with her fellow Commissioners and the positive attributes of the redirection. She said the business impact statement noted "redirect vehicular traffic". She said they were not preventing people from driving in the City, but were redirecting them to places that were more appropriate and improved along with safety. She said the tourist that visit the City have more of an authentic experience when they walked down Spanish Street and she was in support of the permanent change. She agreed that there were other streets in the City that would uphold the Vision Plan and safety, which could make the City more walkable.

Commissioner Springfield spoke in support of the closure. He said there had not been any data to show otherwise and the businesses on the street knew it would be closed before the construction. He said the real estate business could benefit from walk-ups as there had been an increase in pedestrian traffic. He understood people would use global positioning system (GPS) to find the office or call ahead and make an appointment but thought businesses were changing like most everything else was changing. He said this area would become an attraction and he was in support of the change.

Mayor Sikes-Kline appreciated the comments brought forth from the public. She said economic vibrancy was in the City's Mission statement and important to the City. She said the investment made on this street was not only for residents but included businesses. She said this had been a very successful revitalization project downtown, which would contribute to positive economic outcome. She said when St. George Street closed in 1984 which brought huge debate within the community. She said the commission in those days were very forward thinking and now today it was the most valuable commercial real estate in the City.

MOTION

Commissioner Blonder MOVED to pass Ordinance 2024-33 on second reading. The motion was SECONDED by Commissioner Garris.

Ms. Lopez read the title as follows:

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-33

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA CREATING SECTION 22-169 A NEWLY NAMED STREET LOCATED ON THE SOUTHERN PORTION OF THE TOLOMATO LOT BETWEEN SPANISH STREET AND CORDOVA STREET; CREATING SECTION 22-337 STREET CLOSING TO VEHICULAR TRAFFIC THE SECTION OF SPANISH STREET BETWEEN TOLOMATO LANE AND ORANGE STREET AND CLOSING TO THROUGH VEHICULAR TRAFFIC THE SECTION OF SPANISH STREET BETWEEN CUNA STREET AND A NEWLY NAMED STREET DESCRIBED IN SECTION 22-169; AMENDING SECTION 24-13 REVERSING THE ONE WAY TRAFFIC DESIGNATION FROM EAST TO WEST ON CUNA STREET BETWEEN SPANISH STREET AND CORDOVA STREET PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERANCE OF INVALID PROVISIONS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

VOTE ON MOTION:
AYES: Blonder, Garris, Springfield, Horvath, Sikes-Kline
NAYES: NONE
MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

8.B. Ordinances – First Reading (only if required by law)

(None)

8.C. Resolutions – Public Hearing (only if required by law)

(None)

9. Ordinances and Resolutions - No Public Hearing Required

9.A. Ordinances – First Reading

(None)

9.B. Resolutions

(None)

10. Staff Reports and Presentations

10.A. Anastasia Island Fire Station Discussion. (R. Franklin, Assistant City Manager)

Reuben Franklin, Assistant City Manager reviewed the Anastasia Island Fire Station update. He said the two issues that were being addressed was the intersection at Red Cox Road and having a new fire station location on the island. The proposed location for the new fire station was at 500 Anastasia Boulevard, which had three points of entry and was large enough to build an up-to-date modern station to serve the community. He said this particular location was located in a flood zone but would be built up to elevate that problem. He said it would be subject to design standards as it was on the entry corridor.

Chief Carlos Avilés, St. Augustine Fire Department said the response times would not have an adverse impact to the City of St. Augustine's Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating. He noted under normal driving conditions from the current station location to the proposed location was forty-six seconds, which was less than a one minutes difference in response time. He said the individual response times would change due to the location; however, the average response time for the entire zone was three minutes and fifty-eight seconds which was compliant with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1710 standard.

Commissioner Blonder asked how the rating and response times would be impacted once the Department of Transportation (DOT) began construction.

Chief Avilés said it would depend on when the City was surveyed next as they were normally on a five year cycle. He said a lot of it would depend on timing and when it would be complete. He said the times predicted were based on perfect conditions and that was normally not the case. He said the major benefit to this location was the multiple access points out onto Anastasia Boulevard.

Commissioner Horvath asked if a traffic signal would be added at Moultrie Place for quick access to Anastasia Boulevard.

Chief Avilés said the long-term goal would be to have a control device at one of the access points. He said to determine which access point, a traffic study would have to be conducted.

Commissioner Garris asked if most people stopped now when they saw the firetruck leaving the station.

Chief Avilés replied that usually that happens but having a traffic control device allowed people a longer time to react and helped them gain access quicker.

Meredith Breidenstein, Assistant City Manager informed the Commission that the

City had received preliminary finance figures regarding what a debt service could be for borrowing to purchase and construct a fire station. She said the request was to understand if the Commission wanted staff to continue moving forward with negotiations for the property and to allow staff to look into the finance options. She said at that time, staff would be able to provide a more accurate estimate for the project and other options to add other projects or purchases that would make budgetary sense for the General Fund. She said at a future meeting they could provide this information and a refund resolution. She said because a bond closing can take time, this would allow the City to be paid back.

Mr. Franklin advised the property was appraised which was included in the packet and valued at $3.8 million dollars. He advised that if the commission decided to proceed, there would be a public open house held on November 7, 2024, in the Alcazar room, and staff would be available to present and answer any questions at neighborhood association meetings.

Mr. Birchim said if the Commission authorized the concept, he would begin to negotiate with the property owner to place it under contract, and that would be presented for approval. He said property purchase was done through a resolution. He said this was only approval to explore the idea of entering into a contract, and at the same time public outreach would be done to ensure the community was in support, and results, and more details for financing would be provided during a subsequent meeting.

Mayor Sikes-Kline asked regarding the site plan, if there could be a new lane or alley to help the citizens enter and exit the neighborhood safer. She said she was in support of the location and appreciated the hard work to find alternative locations as the fire department needed to be moved from the curve it was currently on to make it safer for everyone.

Commissioner Horvath commented that she was in favor of this plan rather than the one prior and thought it was better to keep the fire trucks closer to Anastasia Boulevard and out of the neighborhoods.

Commissioner Springfield agreed and thought this was a better site. He said this could be developed into more of a command center and emergency. He stated this could turn out to be a very important center for safety.

Commissioner Blonder said it had been difficult to find the right location; however, she felt this was it. She was in support of moving forward.

Commissioner Garris agreed and said this had been in the works for a long time. She said this location was more isolated and would be more visible. She said it would be safe for residents. She asked if the offices would be elevated since the property was in a flood zone.

Chief Avilés replied that what was shown were conceptual drawings and with a lot of community input, resiliency would be in the forefront not just with the design but with construction. He said this was an investment in public safety and wanted this to be an anchor for public safety for residents on Anastasia Island.

MOTION

Commissioner Horvath MOVED to approve the next steps be taken with the Anastasia Fire Station to negotiate and further develop and return to the Commission with more information. The motion was SECONDED by Mayor Sikes-Kline.

<u>VOTE ON MOTION:</u>
AYES: Horvath, Sikes-Kline, Garris, Springfield, Blonder
NAYES: NONE
MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

10.B. Update on the Status of the City's Drop-in Day Center and establishing Dining with Dignity at 90/92 South Dixie Highway. (A. Skinner, Director Planning and Building)

Amy Skinner, Planning and Building Department provided a brief update on the City's Drop-in Day Center and establishing Dining with Dignity off South Dixie Highway.

Commissioner Springfield said the work behind this project was fantastic and he thanked the architects for making it easy to understand. He asked if there had been consideration to allow the Sunshine bus or other bus services the ability to drop off at the center or near it. He asked if there was any input from people who used the services.

Ms. Skinner replied that there was a current Sunshine bus stop near the drop-in center, and it had been discussion about moving it to the site or being adjacent to the site for easier access. She said the Dining with Dignity had been involved and the stakeholders were asked. She said there was a survey within the past year from users and what they would be open too. She said at this point with the Community Outreach staff person follow-up would be done to make sure everything was worked out.

Commissioner Springfield said he understood the drawing was a draft but thought the design should be well throughout and dignity should be provided to the shelter, as this was a show place to the City and we should be proud of the final product.

Ms. Skinner said the main focus was function, but the goal was for it to be nice and welcoming where people felt comfortable.

Commissioner Blonder said this was a great start and she appreciated the update. She asked about the timing. She noted there was a place in Gainesville that did not work out and asked staff to find out what happened and why it was not viable.

Ms. Skinner said it should be around ninety days before starting. She said the place in Gainesville was more of a hangout area and they wanted the City's venue to be more of a controlled location. She said initially, it would only be opened when Dining with Dignity was present.

Commissioner Horvath spoke in support of the plan. She said it was important to have just the single point of entry. She appreciated the canopy being maintained and agreed the structure where Dining with Dignity would be held should be similar to the rest of the plans.

Commissioner Garris said the first steps would be to have the picnic area with tables, and the rest would be built later. She reiterated that construction would begin in ninety days.

Ms. Skinner confirmed that a contractor was on board and the construction documents and permitting was complete. She said they were waiting on finalization and then construction would start.

Commissioner Garris said Dining with Dignity provided dinner only; however, she had spoken to several business owners and individuals who were interested in providing breakfast. She said the center would only be open when Dining with Dignity was present. She asked if a staff person would be stationed at the center.

Ms. Skinner replied that at first the focus was Dining with Dignity.

Mr. Birchim commented that the plan for the site was to provide many services especially when the full drop-in day center was developed. He said there was a commitment from Dining with Dignity to move their program to this site and did not want to ask them to do something they were not committed to.

Commissioner Garris asked if providing breakfast would be possible.

Mr. Birchim said a property manager would be on site when the property was in use and would be full time until the drop-in center was completely developed. He said breakfast could be done in the future but could not guarantee it would be done in the first phase.

Mayor Sikes-Kline thanked Ms. Skinner for the update. She said Dining with Dignity was very organized and dinner was the most important meal.

Commissioner Garris commented that homelessness was her passion, and she had spoken to individuals who wanted to help when the center was available, in the hopes to show that the City supports dealing with the homeless situation.

Mayor Sikes-Kline replied that the City was in support; however, for now it was just Dining with Dignity.

Mr. Birchim said the plan for the site was not to have the City run the programs but to provide the venue for outreach services to have their own programs. He said the City would build the structure and manage the property but would not manage each individual program that provides services to the homeless.

Mayor Sikes-Kline said a mission statement could be developed to indicate what would be done and what would not be done. She said the focus should be on what the City could do and what would be done. She said it needed to be clearly defined.

Mr. Birchim felt that the mission statement was a great idea and noted the development of a master plan. He said a grant was received from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and that a mission statement was in line with the goals and was an important aspect.

10.C. Update on US-1 and Oyster Creek FDOT Construction Project. (S. Slaughter, Director Utilities and Public Works)

Stephen Slaughter, Director Utilities and Public Works provided a brief update on the construction project on US1 just south of King Street. He said the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) were replacing two box culverts and the estimated completion date was fall 2025.

Commissioner Springfield asked if the ones that had been put in would have to be replaced.

Mr. Slaughter replied that one of them would have to be replaced.

11. ITEMS BY CITY ATTORNEY

11.A. Quarterly Report: 4th Quarter FY 2023-2024. (I. Lopez, City Attorney)

12. ITEMS BY CITY CLERK

Darlene Galambos, City Clerk reminded the Commission that the November meeting had been moved to Tuesday, November 12, 2024, at 5:00p.m. due to a conflict with Veteran's Day. She advised that a special meeting would take place on December 2, 2024, at 7:30p.m. to seat the new Commissioners.

13. ITEMS BY CITY MANAGER

(None)

14. Items by Mayor and Commissioners

Commissioner Garris thanked everyone for coming and speaking during public comment about Spanish Street and the citizens who attend regularly and provide their concerns about the community. She thanked her fellow commissioners for being team players even though they might not always agree, it was a team effort.

Commissioner Springfield noted that Father Matt Marino had been in involved in an incident. He said he was asked repeatedly to send gratitude to the City Fire Department and City Police Department. He said Father Marino was doing well.

Commissioner Blonder said there were many things taking place within the City and it was very exciting. She said she was asked to give a presentation regarding conservation. She asked J.B. Miller, Fish Island, about how many acres the City had acquired within the boundary, which was 8,181 acres and Fort Moses and Anastasia State Park were 870 acres in total. She said with the new conservation program and Fish Island Preserve it was about 173 acres for a grand total of 12.7% was some sort of park or natural area; however, that did not include the pocket parks. She said more was coming and was something to be very proud of.

Mayor Sikes-Kline said that information should be included in the audit.

Commissioner Horvath said she was representing the City on November 1, 2024, for the Art Association for the Sister City's Presentation.

Mayor Sikes-Kline thanked all the first responders as it was National First Responders Day. She said she asked the City Manager to take a look at derelict signs as there were many in various places throughout the City. She said Light up Night! was coming and she had purview to choose who was allowed to do the light up. She announced she chose the Sister's City's Organization with recognition of the 100 years. She said the organization chose two representatives, Consuelo Lippi and Len Weeks. She said she was unable to attend the next meeting, which was Commissioner Horvath's last meeting. She thanked her for all her hard work and dedication throughout the years. She said she was grateful for her service.

Commissioner Horvath said she would be at the Special meeting on December 2, 2024.

15. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 P.M.[1]

Nancy Sikes-Kline, MAYOR

Darlene Galambos, CITY CLERK

[1] Transcribed by Elyse Wiemann