

MINUTES  
CITY COMMISSION MEETING  
November 8, 2021

The City Commission met this date in regular session in the Commission Chambers. Comm. Hamilton gave the Invocation. Mayor Smith recited the Pledge of Allegiance. A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM with the following in attendance.

|                       |   |                        |
|-----------------------|---|------------------------|
| Mayor                 | : | Hubert B. Smith        |
| Commissioners         | : | Catherine Hamilton     |
|                       | : | Christine Wasdin       |
|                       | : | Edward Crosby          |
| City Administrator    | : | Carl Scott             |
| Police Chief          | : | Joe Hart               |
| City Attorney         | : | Hayward Dykes          |
| Fire Chief            | : | Tommy Mayville         |
| Public Works Director | : | Nathan Kelley (camera) |
| VBCS General Manager  | : | James Butler           |
| Library Director      | : | Hope Willis            |
| City Engineer         | : | Beth Brant             |

Others in attendance: (not inclusive) Bob Bachelor, Bob Blanchard, Tim Mosteferis, Tom Miller, Mike Griffith (Bay Beacon), Tom Browning, Daniel Irwin, Mark Norris, Christina Payne, John Payne, Joe Cobb, Marion Cassell, Clifton Locke, Natalie Schulte, Bonnie McGregor

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**COMM. HAMILTON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 11, 2021, AS SUBMITTED. COMM. CROSBY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION.**

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

John Payne, 123 Edge Avenue, said they did a petition for their street. He said there is an area where grass has grown over the street, he has pictures to provide the Commission. Mr. Payne says it has encroached a lot. Mr. Payne said he and Mr. Taylor, who lives on corner lot, have used his tractor to try and clear areas but it still really far in, there is also a drainage issue. He said he had talked to some of the city guys, and they said they would talk to city engineer and find out what to do but they've heard nothing back. Mr. Taylor said along while back there was a drainage area there with rocks and it had been done correctly. Mr. Payne said now it is really overgrown and we would like to see if we could have someone look at that and have something done with it. Mr. Payne said it causes a big issue when the bend in the road there is a pine tree, that causes everyone to go into people's yards just to get through the area. They have not seen the street sweeper in a while. Mr. Payne said they are also concerned about the medians, there doesn't seem to be a lot being done to them. Mr. Payne said and also an area of concern is Argyle Park, he has pictures. Comm. Wasdin said she'd like to see the pictures, Mayor Smith did also. Mayor Smith said Glen Argyle is a water tributary, as such much of that area isn't allowed to be changed or messed with. He said you cannot cut down a water tributary because it would disrupt the flow. Mr. Payne said a sidewalk path was put through there so you could

1 walk around and then a frisbee golf place and he drives that way a lot and even before the bridge  
2 construction, it has never been cut adequately for someone to walk through. He said even when it is  
3 cut, they cut around the area and no one is going to walk through that. Mr. Payne said he knows it is  
4 wet for the most part but when it's been mowed around it has been done pretty well, he doesn't know  
5 why the frisbee golf came in, but it would be nice to use. Mayor Smith said unfortunately we are down  
6 18 people or so and haven't been able to get the prison crew back. Comm. Hamilton said we are  
7 really short staffed. Mayor Smith said we are trying to keep the city functioning. He said with Florida  
8 Park and Glen Argyle parks we are governed by Department of Environmental Protection, and we are  
9 not allowed in the wetland areas. Mayor Smith said we talked to DEP about putting sand in or raising  
10 the elevation but were told no. Comm. Hamilton said DEP has come out and basically told us no, there  
11 are certain type plants we aren't allowed to mess with because it is a declared wetland. She said before  
12 the perimeter of Glen Argyle was kept up more and she believes that has to do with shortage of staff.  
13 Comm. Hamilton said she wishes we had more people to get out and help, the prisoners were very  
14 helpful in the past, we just don't have access to them at this time but hopefully soon. Mayor Smith  
15 said he thought he saw a prison crew today in Niceville, talked to our Public Works Director Nathan  
16 Kelley and hopefully there is a program he will speak to the warden about tomorrow. Mayor Smith  
17 said this program allows a couple of our city employees to take a 16-hour class and they can act as the  
18 supervisor over the prison crew. Comm. Hamilton said short staffing is an issue everywhere. Mr.  
19 Payne asked what about looking at outside source to do common areas. Mayor Smith said just takes  
20 money, Mr. Payne said we are getting money with people buying houses like crazy. Comm. Hamilton  
21 said she runs a business, and we can't get landscapers there and we have money, they will say they will  
22 come out to provide and estimate and they don't show. Comm. Hamilton said it is like everyone that is  
23 functioning is overloaded with work and they can't take on more clients. Comm. Wasdin said we will  
24 have someone look at the pine tree and see if it is public right-of-way or private property, see what we  
25 can do. Mr. Payne said thinks it is public property because it is right on the edge and the drainage  
26 needs to be looked at.

27 Mrs. Christina Payne, 123 Edge Avenue, said she would like to know what is the understanding  
28 for code enforcement for getting things done in our neighborhoods. She said they have a property on  
29 their street that we call about every couple of months because the grass gets so high. Mrs. Payne said  
30 the house is dilapidated, in last couple of weeks they've had three different cars on blocks, it is truly an  
31 eyesore. She said in regard to mowing there is a 30 day window, is there a way to shorten that? Mrs.  
32 Payne said if she can keep up her house and yard, weekly or biweekly, she doesn't know why we can't  
33 shorten time especially since it is always a repeat problem. Mayor Smith asked who she was calling,  
34 because Carl Scott is our code enforcement officer, and he is shaking his head like he hasn't heard a

1 thing about this. Mr. Scott asks for the address, Mrs. Payne said I live at 123 Edge Avenue and it is  
2 diagonal across street. Mrs. Payne said the property belongs to the Woodcock's not sure what the exact  
3 address. Mrs. Payne said she has called code enforcement and has left several voice mails; she also  
4 knows neighbors have called. She said this is a constant problem. Mayor Smith said Mr. Scott will  
5 look at it possible tomorrow and see what can be done by the city

6 Ms. Marion Cassell, Highland Street, said she had same question about the park, T J Brooks  
7 Park it looks terrible. She said she knows the Commission continually say we don't have enough  
8 people to straighten it out. Ms. Cassell would also like to know what happened to the playground  
9 equipment; it had been taken down at the park. Mr. Nathan Kelley, Public Works director, said he  
10 assumed she was asking about the playground at T J Brooks Park, it had been donated by the STEMM  
11 center and been used several years there and a few at the park, with it being used equipment, the  
12 decision was made to remove it before it became hazardous. Ms. Cassell asked if we'd get another  
13 playground to replace it because there's nothing there. Mr. Kelley said he could certainly put it on the  
14 capital improvement plan to allow the Commission to vote on it. Ms. Cassell said Mr. Scott we've  
15 talked about signs going up for Valparaiso to show where things are located post office, parks, library,  
16 and museum what has happened? She answered her question saying nothing has been done. Mr. Scott  
17 said have ideas but didn't come to fruition. Comm. Wasdin said she is the streets Commissioner, she  
18 doesn't like the idea of signs everywhere. Ms. Cassell said she didn't say all over the place, she thinks  
19 a sign at the two entry ways of the city should be up and a sign that gives direction to a new person  
20 moving into the community. Comm. Wasdin said she would look into it.

21 Mr. Daniel Irwin, 184 Chicago Avenue, he wanted to let the Commission know he appreciated  
22 the stop sign that had been placed on Chicago Avenue, it had taken awhile but got it done. Mr. Irwin  
23 said now the biggest thing is enforcement and this is where the Police Chief comes in. Mr. Irwin said  
24 he called the police department on several different occasions to get someone down there and enforce  
25 it, hopefully the police department is pulling people over and holding them accountable. Chief Hart  
26 said our policy is we stop and warn the person the first time, due to the sign being new down there  
27 several people have been stopped and warned. Mr. Irwin said he agrees with Ms. Cassell signs are  
28 needed in the city, places that have speed limits should be posted, there are no speed limit signs. Mr.  
29 Irwin said put this out by Florida law the speed limit says unless otherwise posted, that is required by  
30 law within the city limits.

31 Mr. Irwin said he called the city commission members in regard to the large oak tree on  
32 Okaloosa, half of the tree is rotten, he is just waiting for the next hurricane to come along and drop it  
33 on his cars so he can say he told you so. Mr. Irwin said he doesn't believe the employees are very  
34 enthused about doing their job which is to take care of citizens safety.

1 Mr. Irwin also wanted to talk about the city website. He said there is stuff on the site from  
2 2020 or even 2018, for the love of God people, take advantage of the multimedia dollars from the  
3 budget and take the time to update the website. Also, Channel 1 needs to be updated. He suggest  
4 someone update the webpage where you could submit questions, concerns and so on to the Mayor or  
5 Commissioners, something to be able to drop in a concern to mitigate coming here. Mayor Smith said  
6 the city had something like that years ago and it just became a bashing site. Mr. Irwin said he  
7 appreciates Commission listening to him, again that tree is going to fall it isn't if only when and this is  
8 second time, he has acknowledged it before the Commission publicly, please do something about it.  
9 Mr. Irwin said he gets that some of you guys don't really care, Mayor Smith said he does not  
10 appreciate that statement. He said I don't think there is anyone up here that doesn't really care. Mr.  
11 Irwin said he understands that, but we don't have enough people isn't a real excuse with safety  
12 concerns.

13 Mr. Terry Griffin, 253 Grandview Avenue, would like to talk about his property located at 257  
14 Bayshore Drive, he said he had asked the city to do something about the drain on edge of property it  
15 dips and curves that go in both directions every time there is rain that backs up . Mr. Griffith said his  
16 father in law had asked for something to be done 50 years ago, he said he had been asking since  
17 property was damaged, and he had to spend \$2500 to repair because the city was negligent in taking  
18 care of it. Mayor Smith said he believed that had been turned over to our insurance company. Mr.  
19 Griffin said it was and they denied it. He called Florida League of Cities and the lady said to him it was  
20 denied. Mr. Griffin said he is still out \$2500, city hasn't done anything about the drain, curb. He said  
21 he understands the city is shorthanded, but the city has plenty of money. Mr. Griffin said do  
22 something about it, the city is on notice.

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

24 Mark Norris, Niceville resident, attending on behalf of Trinity Church, AAU owners Mr. Roger  
25 Noel, Trinity Presbyterian Church, New Hope Gospel, and the Korean Church in old Valparaiso there  
26 use to be a sign at Okaloosa Avenue and John Sims Parkway. He said the sign on Hwy 20 that listed  
27 the business and churches in old Valparaiso, it was taken down and placed at the city yard where it has  
28 been taken apart and is now in pieces. Mr. Norris said it sits at the city yard in dilapidated condition,  
29 after three calls to Public Works and three visits to Public Works, Mr. Norris said he sat down with Mr.  
30 Kelley and asked what was going on with the sign? He has pictures that show the signs condition. Who  
31 took it down? Where the businesses notified? Mr. Norris said the comedy club "the peanut gallery"  
32 told him he should go to Accent Signs and procure a new sign, because the city didn't have any  
33 responsibility for the sign. Mr. Norris said he left very frustrated because he didn't have anything to  
34 tell his deacons after going to Public Works and speaking with his friend Mr. Kelley. Mr. Norris said a

1 sign that use to advertise old Valparaiso has been taken down and forgotten about. Mr. Norris said he  
2 has found out that Mr. Rick Holcomb was working on sandblasting the sign and got so far as one  
3 corner. The sandblaster stopped working, they couldn't keep the sand dry and therefore could not  
4 continue. Mr. Norris said Mr. Holcomb has retired and so some other people have alluded to the  
5 project has died due to lack of interest. Mr. Norris said Mr. Monstiferis called the city and was told the  
6 sign would be put back up. Mr. Norris said when is that going to happen? Mr. Norris said he knows it  
7 is the desire of this Commission to see old Valparaiso thrive and we want to see old Valparaiso as a  
8 vibrant area. Mr. Norris said he is here to ask the Commission who took the sign down and he would  
9 like to have it put back up. Mr. Norris said he hears a lot of signs planned he would like to ask Mr.  
10 Dykes if the city took it down then who responsibility would it be to put back up? Mr. Dykes said  
11 unless there was a contract, doesn't know who originally put the sign up, if on city property, the city  
12 isn't required to advertise for private businesses, unless there is a signed contract the city isn't  
13 obligated to replace, no legal basis. Mr. Norris said he isn't asking to advertise, asking to put sign  
14 back where it was. Mr. Norris said he knows from Mr. Kelley the city yard took the sign down for  
15 convoluted reason. Mrs. Johnson said the sign was in terrible shape. Mr. Norris acknowledges with  
16 10 4. Mr. Norris said he was told the sign had been dismantled and Mr. Holcomb has retired and there  
17 is no further plan for the sign. Mr. Scott said this was on an agenda a few months ago about repairing  
18 the sign, there was money put aside and that sign was supposed to be redone. Mr. Norris said he  
19 would just ask for the two businesses and two churches in old Valparaiso square that the sign that was  
20 taken down would be replaced, it could compliment the museum sign.

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

22 Nothing to add this evening.

23 **2. ACTION ITEMS – Dirt Road Paving Cost Estimate**

24 Comm. Wasdin said she asked this be put on the agenda this evening to talk about, not ready  
25 for action quite yet but wanted to discuss. Comm. Wasdin said in the packet is a series of dirt roads in  
26 our town, we have some funding we need to use for infrastructure, and she would like to match the  
27 two. She said she had the engineers run a list up for her and the list runs up to about a million bucks.  
28 Comm. Wasdin said she knows we aren't ready to spend a million bucks on roads because we have  
29 other things that we need to buy. Comm. Wasdin wants to talk about what we are going to spend half  
30 cent sales tax money on that is for infrastructure along with other federal money we have received for  
31 infrastructure. She believes we need a plan; do we want Planning Commission to do that for us, do we  
32 want to have workshops, have each Commissioner draw up a list form their departments and compile  
33 them? Mayor Smith said he would like Planning Commission to review, list shows one street with  
34 only one resident on it for \$66,000. Comm. Wasdin said it is about making our city look better.

1 Comm. Hamilton said she would like the Planning Commission to look over, but we all know one of  
2 the biggest projects we need to look at is the sewer. Comm. Hamilton said that will eat up so much of  
3 the money because we are way overdue. Comm. Hamilton said she would love to have some of that  
4 money for her enterprise funds, but she knows that is not the neediness part of the city. Comm.  
5 Wasdin said this is an unprecedented time for federal money, just want to make sure we spend wisely.  
6 Comm. Hamilton suggests giving this over to the Planning Commission, once we have their input,  
7 have workshops, or discuss it in a meeting. Mr. Joe Cobb, a member of the Planning Commission, ask  
8 for a copy of the estimate list of roads. He believes the Planning Commission could take a good long  
9 look at things as they have done in the past. Comm. Wasdin said it isn't just about streets and sewer,  
10 there are also things the engineer is working on. Mr. Cobb asked if the list of streets was prioritized?  
11 Mrs. Brant said no, Comm. Wasdin asked for estimates but not for them to be in order. Mrs. Johnson  
12 suggests looking into hiring a consult to come in and tell us exactly what money can be spent on, if we  
13 spend it incorrectly it would have to be paid back and it is over \$2 million.

14 **3. ACTION ITEMS – City Manager**

15 Comm. Hamilton said this have been talked about the last two meetings, it continues to sound  
16 better and better to have a person here that knows how to get grants and do those type of things and  
17 have central oversight in the city. Comm. Hamilton talked to Lannie Corbin, and he thought it was a  
18 great idea. She also talked to Mr. Dykes, and we would not have to do a charter change to hire a city  
19 manager. Comm. Hamilton asked if we could go forward? Mr. Dykes said we can either change form  
20 of government, Comm. Hamilton said no, we do not want to change form of government it is too hard.  
21 Mr. Dykes said if you just want to designate certain authorities to a person, Comm. Hamilton said a  
22 city manager. Mr. Dykes said we can look at it, possible to handle with an ordinance, where certain  
23 powers/authorities are given. He said we would need to flush out details so not a complete hand the  
24 city over to this person, not to run afoul of the charter. Mayor Smith asked if she thought of how we  
25 would pay for such a position because we would be talking about anywhere from \$50,000 to \$100,000  
26 a year. Comm. Hamilton agreed and said now would be the time to budget for the position. Mayor  
27 Smith said the budget cycle has passed. Comm. Wasdin asked can we write something up that if funds  
28 become available, we can hire a city manager? Comm. Hamilton said to write it and then we can start  
29 the interview process and see what is out there. Mr. Dykes said you have a city administrator, as a  
30 Commission you need to look at what powers and authorities to give this position, he said he would get  
31 a job description and square that up with the charter. Comm. Wasdin asked Mr. Dykes if he could  
32 work on that so that the Commission would have something to look at. **COMM. HAMILTON**  
33 **MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE MR. DYKES GOING FORWARD WITH RESEARCH ON**  
34 **CITY MANAGER POSITION.** Mr. Dykes said he would the research and bring back a possible job

description, structure for a ‘city manager’. **COMM. CROSBY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.**

Mr. Terry Griffin, 253 Grandview Avenue, said the last time the city looked at a city manager position he was opposed to that. He said since that time he has done a lot of research on city managers, instead of laying up city manager, city administrator, city clerk all of those positions cost money. He said from his research all city manager personnel you want to have an MPA, you aren’t going to get someone with an MPA to take a manger job for \$50,000 a year. He feels the city would be looking at \$100,000 or more, so there will have to be cutbacks somewhere. Mr. Griffin said he isn’t saying whose job to cut but that form of government is way more efficient and effective. Comm. Hamilton said she was glad to hear him say that. Mr. Griffin said he didn’t know much about it before, but he did a lot of research on it. Comm. Hamilton said that would be our second chore to change the charter, worked on it a year before and the vote was extremely close. Mr. Griffin said he would not be against it anymore; he would be 100% behind it.

#### **4. ACTION ITEMS – Pay Scale**

Comm. Hamilton said in the last meeting we were waiting and waiting for the pay scale report, she is going to lose some more people in cable, she’s already lost one. She said because they are being poached, we have the room already passed budget, she has room in her cable budget to give raises to the people she wants to give raises to. Comm. Hamilton said it was talked about last month and she wanted to know where we are with the study. She wanted to see if she was authorized to tell Mr. Butler to use the funding. Mrs. Johnson said she knew they were down a person but have hired someone already for that spot. Mr. Butler said yes, they have hired for the open position. He said we’ve budgeted, he had budgeted to give everyone in his department raises, we did lose one guy and one of the reasons he left was another job offering \$3.00 more an hour than he was making here. Mr. Butler said one of his other techs keeps getting repeated calls from Cox, offering him up to \$27 an hour. He knows that is something we cannot pay but we need to do something. Mrs. Johnson said the benefits study is in, she said we received it Friday. Comm. Hamilton said she knew Mr. Butler had reached out to Mrs. Johnson about distributing raises but was told by Mrs. Johnson she didn’t know. Mrs. Johnson has copies for everyone this evening. Mrs. Johnson said a representative from Cody and Associates would come to the Commission and make a presentation about the study, she would be happy to come next week if the Commission would like to hear from her. Comm. Hamilton said what does that mean, with something that is already in our budget that has already passed. Mrs. Johnson said what this does it sets the minimum wage, puts employees in categories they should be in to keep in line with the minimum wage raising. Comm. Hamilton said she has money right now in her budget, Mrs. Johnson said everyone does but before we didn’t know exactly how to distribute until we

1 received the study. Mrs. Johnson said this tells us what to pay our employees. Comm. Hamilton said  
2 this advises us, we also have to look at the market. Mrs. Johnson said they went out among the cities,  
3 spoke with department heads will come and present all information next week. Comm. Hamilton said  
4 we can't implement raises we have already approved in budget. Mrs. Johnson said that is what Chief  
5 Hart asked a couple months ago and he was told to wait until the study was presented, then raises could  
6 be retroactive. Mrs. Johnson asked when a good date would be for the study to be presented and  
7 Wednesday, November 17<sup>th</sup> at 6pm was selected, she will advise Comm. Denney of meeting and time.

8 **5. ACTION ITEMS – Resolution No. 11-11-08-21 2021 Local Mitigation Strategy**

9 Mayor Smith read **RESOLUTION NO. 11-11-08-21, A RESOLUTION REPEALING THE**  
10 **2011 LOCAL MITIGATION STRATEGY; ADOPTING THE 2021 LOCAL MITIGATION**  
11 **STRATEGY; CLARIFYING SECTIONS OF CITY RESPONSIBILITY; AND PROVIDING**  
12 **FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. COMM. HAMILTON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE**  
13 **RESOLUTION NO. 11-11-08-21 AS WRITTEN, COMM. CROSBY SECONDED THE**  
14 **MOTION WHICH PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.**

15 **6. ACTION ITEMS – American Rescue Plan Funding**

16 Mrs. Johnson said this is the information that we have received from the American Rescue Plan  
17 (ARP), Valparaiso has received \$1,352,555. The information enclosed in the packet is taken from the  
18 Florida League of Cities November 4, 2021, legislative meeting. Mrs. Johnson said fortunately Mr.  
19 Kelley, our public works director, attended the meeting on behalf of the City of Ft. Walton Beach as he  
20 is a council member there. Mrs. Johnson said this information provides samples of what other cities  
21 are doing.

22 **1. OLD BUSINESS – Tom's Bayou Bridge Utilities Update**

23 Comm. Hamilton said things are moving forward, the bridge is fully open on weekends and in  
24 the evening after 5 PM on weekdays, continuing to do sidewalks, and lastly completing median work  
25 and removing central barrier right in front of Glen. Chief Mayville asked if she had heard when they  
26 would open Bayshore Drive back up? Comm. Hamilton said as soon as they can complete the  
27 sidewalk work, hopefully within a few weeks.

28 **2. OLD BUSINESS – Property Foreclosure Update**

29 Mr. Dykes said we have good news the Turner foreclosure is approaching the finish line. He  
30 said today the court granted the City's motion for summary judgment to foreclose on Ony Turner that  
31 half of the property. The son and daughter together had 50% also but have signed the deed over to the  
32 city for their ownership. Mr. Dykes said the next step would be to schedule foreclosure sale about 45  
33 days out, submit order tomorrow to the court, then process through court system. He said with the  
34 holidays approaching it would probably be January 2022. Mr. Dykes said there is also the matter of



1 the IRS lien that is on the property, once we have complete ownership, assuming no one steps in and  
2 purchases in foreclosure sale then we can negotiate that with the IRS. Mr. Dykes said total cost around  
3 \$33,000 for cleanup, attorney fees and court costs, IRS lien between \$20k to \$40k. He will keep  
4 Commission advised. Mr. Scott said earlier discussion about code enforcement, he has spent 11 ½  
5 years on just this property.

6 **3. OLD BUSINESS – Building Lease/Buy Agreement (Synovus Bank Building)**

7 Mr. Tom Miller, 265 Florida Avenue, moved into Valparaiso in 1968, left for a few years came  
8 back in 1975 and this is where they settled. He appreciates the opportunity to come to speak before the  
9 Commission this evening, he has some questions about leasing the bank building. Mr. Miller said he  
10 received a copy of the lease agreement along with the 30 year amortization schedule, according to the  
11 agreement after 10 years the city has a chance to exercise the purchase option for about \$1.8 million  
12 dollars. Mr. Miller said by that time the city will have paid \$1.2 million toward the lease purchase, if  
13 the city can't exercise the option in 10 years, then the lease will continue for another 20 years. Mr.  
14 Miller asked if the city would be in a position in 10 years to buy the property? What has been  
15 discussed to provide for the financing? Is the city looking to set aside funds leading up to the 2031  
16 date? He did a quick calculation city able to do that and arrange financing at 2.9%? Mr. Miller said  
17 nothing in the \$3.6 million amount includes cost of remodel, the need for an elevator, contingency of  
18 HVAC, electrical, water and sewer, this is a liability for the city once agreement entered into. Mr.  
19 Miller said the cost of moving functions for administration from where they are to new location,  
20 ground maintenance most lawn maintenance companies provide service every day to clear any  
21 obstructions from the property, has the city considered that cost? Mr. Miller asked if the city had  
22 looked into purchasing property to build a new city hall? Or renovate the existing city facilities? Is  
23 this a need? Have the citizens been informed of the details of this proposal? And given opportunity to  
24 comment once all details have been ironed out? Mayor Smith said he appreciated Mr. Miller's  
25 questions and comments and in his opinion with the way this lease looks today he would not be in  
26 favor of signing. Mayor Smith said he believes the city should seek out its own financing and buy the  
27 building not in any way interested in proceeding with lease agreement as it is written today. Comm.  
28 Wasdin asked what parts are you objecting to? Mayor Smith said he is objecting to him holding the  
29 bag on everything in the building. Mayor Smith said then closes with after 30 years he would be  
30 donating the property to the city, he isn't "donating" anything. Mayor Smith said because we are  
31 responsible for everything but can't change the color of the wall without their approval. He may have  
32 moved some wording on subletting. Mayor Smith said he doesn't see anything in this new lease  
33 agreement that he would vote to approve. Comm. Crosby said he has thoughts along those same lines.  
34 Mr. Miller said another consideration would be traffic issues. Mayor Smith said doesn't acknowledge

1 the parcel of land behind bank that was sold all as one property, wouldn't approve signing without that  
2 being included. Mrs. Johnson said two parcels are included. Mr. Dykes said the owner of property  
3 will only consider a one time buyout option and that is after 10 years. Mr. Dykes said Huff  
4 Management LLC and H and S LLC have signed this lease and approved it, first time to bring before  
5 Commission for review and comment. Mr. Scott said regarding financing city could finance it  
6 tomorrow just do a buyout. Mr. Scott said last month Commission voted not to go for \$14,000 a  
7 month but agreed to \$10,000 a month. Mr. Scott said they wanted to pursue lease deal so that is what  
8 was done. Mr. Scott said if we go ahead Commission will have to decide what to do with other  
9 properties? Mr. Miller said so everything here will be gone? Mr. Scott said yes everything but the  
10 police department. Mr. Miller said it all goes back to original question why is it needed? Comm.  
11 Wasdin said our city is growing, just because we are having a hard time hiring people now doesn't  
12 mean we will in the future. Comm. Wasdin said every vacant lot in town is getting a house on it, we  
13 are going to be managing more things on a more esoteric scale it is a big monument to our town when  
14 you drive in and see that beautiful building, nice building, wouldn't it be nice to have the city  
15 represented by a nice building instead of these World War II buildings, that everyone remembers as a  
16 skating rink and bowling alley? Mr. Miller said it is about perception, Comm. Wasdin said and  
17 capabilities, how long before these buildings start to fall down around us? Mr. Miller said he  
18 understands what she is saying just asking questions, the bank building is 60 years old now in 30 years  
19 it will be 90. Discussion continues.

20 Mr. Terry Griffin, 253 Grandview Avenue, what will be the immediate build out cost? That  
21 building isn't going to suddenly be able to accommodate all city business. Mr. Griffin said what are  
22 the plans? Has anyone done the homework to know what the immediate out lay is going to be? Mr.  
23 Griffin said if he was going to buy a house and it needed renovations that would be his first concern,  
24 how much will that cost? Mr. Griffin hasn't heard an answer yet. Mayor Smith said we have not  
25 discussed what would go where, Comm. Wasdin said it isn't our building yet.

26 **COMM. WASDIN MADE A MOTION TO SEND MR. SCOTT AND MR. DYKES BACK**  
27 **WITH THE CHANGES THE CITY REQUESTS, THEN WE ADOPT THE LEASE**  
28 **AGREEMENT AS PRESENTED WITH THOSE CHANGES.**

Comm. Hamilton said that at the  
29 present time the lease is just too hard core for her, that means when they bring it back with the changes  
30 we will sign it, and she hears resistance from Mayor Smith and Comm. Crosby, it would end in a split.  
31 Mayor Smith said these buildings would be sold or rented to offset the cost to renovate, we do have  
32 some money to go towards that. Comm. Hamilton asked if we could put this item on the agenda for  
33 the meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup>? Mr. Griffin said he understands lease or sell these buildings to offset cost, but  
34 he wants to hear numbers. He said these are our tax dollars. Mayor Smith said we can ask Mr. Scott

1 as he is also a builder, but he doesn't think he could give you cost six months from now. Mr. Griffin  
2 said he can go down there with pen and paper and diagram to figure out who needs to be where, he's  
3 remodeled houses he can do that. Mayor Smith said that would be the cost for today not six months  
4 from now. Mr. Scott said problem is it isn't up to me where people are going to go. Mr. Scott said  
5 they have to decide where to place people. Mr. Griffin said as written now we would have to get  
6 Huff's permission for everything, and it doesn't state anything about a library. Mr. Dykes said in these  
7 types of agreements, you can be very specific or more broad depending on what Commission wants to  
8 do.

9 Mr. Miller said he would also like to mention the other places and businesses we are discussing  
10 rent out space to how to control security of city offices because other businesses have longer hours  
11 than what the city does. Mr. Dykes said we would have to work out how to manage that if way to  
12 corridor off city space if can't logistically do it. Comm. Hamilton said keeping the language that way  
13 in case we can or want to. Mr. Dykes said signed by owners and looked to start off as of 1 November.  
14 They are looking to go immediately, Mr. Dykes said if Commission decides to wait till December 1<sup>st</sup>  
15 will have to rework payment and amortization schedule. **COMM. WASDIN MADE A MOTION**  
16 **TO HAVE MR. DYKES ADDRESS NEW ISSUES WITH OWNER AND PUT ON AGENDA**  
17 **FOR NEXT WEEK. COMM. HAMILTON SECONDED THE MOTION.** Mayor Smith added to  
18 amend the motion to see what straight buy out would look like, Comm. Wasdin said we did that last  
19 meeting. Mayor Smith said he doesn't want to have to ask permission to do rentals in the building, if  
20 we are paying that money then that should be a city decision, the city should control that. Mr. Dykes  
21 said we can pull out that language, to sublet without notice or approval. Comm. Crosby said he is  
22 worried about five days then charge late fee, Mr. Dykes said he could change to seven days.

23 Mr. Griffin said how many people in building across the street that are city employees. Mrs.  
24 Johnson said seven, Mr. Griffin said we are leasing a 17,000 square foot building for 6 or 7 people?  
25 Mayor Smith said no, the library would also move there.

26 Mrs. Payne said she was here when this was first discussed only reason property is wanting to  
27 be acquired for the city offices to move into is because it is available? Comm. Wasdin said there was a  
28 discussion to move or build something before. Mayor Smith said he believes we have always  
29 entertained thoughts of being on main street, main road to be more visible. Mrs. Payne said she  
30 understands it is a beautiful building that has been maintained so who would do maintenance? If we  
31 have such a hard time doing medians now how will that be maintained? Mrs. Payne said if you look  
32 across at city hall now, it used to be pretty, but grass is dead, it is overgrown so who will maintain that  
33 building? Mrs. Payne said large property on main through fare, what makes me think it's going to stay  
34 looking that way when we can't maintain the medians? Mayor Smith said it will be maintained, Mrs.

1 Payne said what about the medians? Mayor Smith said that isn't what he said, the bank property will  
2 be maintained. Mrs. Payne said she understands but can't the medians and other areas be maintained  
3 as well. Mayor Smith said our city employees and hopefully the prison workforce will be able to take  
4 care of the city properties. Mr. Scott said the company that maintains the grounds at this point will  
5 stay on until contract expires. Comm. Wasdin said we aren't that far yet, have to lease the building  
6 first. Mrs. Payne said public works cut out at 2pm, how about work a few more hours over a month or  
7 so to get caught up. Mayor Smith said they come in at 6am that is why they leave at 2:30pm. Mrs.  
8 Johnson said it all comes down to staffing shortage, public works and the police department are really  
9 hurting. Mrs. Payne said if you keep that lawn care company, for lawn businesses commercial  
10 property is better than residential because the money is commercial. Maybe we could look into them  
11 doing the medians and such. Comm. Wasdin said that is a good idea and once we lease the building  
12 something to consider.

13 Mr. Payne said as a business owner it sounds strange to make decisions on 'if we get the  
14 building' he thinks decisions should be made before leasing the building. He asked who else would  
15 want to come in and want that building? Mr. Scott said Circle K has made an offer on it, to tear down  
16 the building and put a Circle K gas station there. Mr. Payne said we would let Circle K come in?  
17 Mayor Smith said we would not have an option; it is zoned that way. Comm. Hamilton said that is one  
18 of the considerations, we have to keep that beautiful building, Comm. Wasdin said it is a historic  
19 building. Mr. Payne asked why it was such a rush because Circle K wanted to come in? Mr. Scott said  
20 the building is for sale. Mr. Payne said if Circle K does buy the building are you guys going to  
21 continue looking or renovate these buildings or just leave as is? Mr. Scott said we have been  
22 discussing for years what to do over there because we are crunched for space, we have outgrown the  
23 business area we have. Mr. Dykes said he would work through the lease. Mr. Dykes said what about  
24 the 5 to 7 days before late fee, Mrs. Johnson said we would work that out in house. VOTE OF 4 TO 0,  
25 revisit on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November.

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

27 Comm. Wasdin said nothing to report this evening.

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

29 Mr. Scott had nothing to report this evening.

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

31 Comm. Wasdin said nothing new this evening.

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

33 Mayor Smith said Comm. Denney isn't here this evening, but he believes everything is going  
34 well.

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

2 Mrs. Johnson said there was not a meeting in November.

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

4 Chief Mayville said the Cities of Niceville and Valparaiso will have their annual Christmas  
5 Parade on the 4<sup>th</sup> of December 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in December.

6     7.     **REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS** - Disbursements

7 COMM. CROSBY MADE A MOTION TO PAY THE BILLS AS OUTLINED IN THE  
8 MONTHLY FINANCIALS. COMM. HAMILTON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH  
9 PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.

10 **1. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS – Reinstate Employee Vacation Time Accrual**

11 Mrs. Johnson said we had an employee return to us this year and we reinstated her accrual of  
12 vacation leave and she was told we would review on case-by-case basis. Mrs. Johnson said we have an  
13 employee that has come back to us that has been gone a little over two months and wanted to know if  
14 we would do the same for him? **MAYOR SMITH MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE**  
15 **REINSTATING THE EMPLOYEES VACATION ACCRUAL, IF WE DID FOR ONE ONLY**  
16 **RIGHT TO DO FOR ANOTHER. COMM. CROSBY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH**  
17 **PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE COMMISSION 4 TO 0.** Mrs. Johnson said maybe  
18 we need to make a policy change, give a certain span of time. Mayor Smith said over six months  
19 would be too long, Comm. Hamilton said maybe three months, 90 days. Mrs. Johnson said she could  
20 do a resolution for an upcoming meeting.

22 **ADJOURN**

23           There being no further business to be brought before the Commission, the meeting adjourned  
24 approximately at 8:25 PM

Hubert B. Smith  
Mayor

Catherine Hamilton  
Chair, VCA

33 ATTEST:

36 Tammy Johnson, CMC  
37 City Clerk

38 \*\*\*A recording of the November 8, 2021, Commission meeting will be kept on the City's  
39 secure file server as a permanent part of these minutes. \*\*\*