

## **City Commission Regular Meeting**

**Tuesday, March 11, 2025**

[Video](#) and [Agenda Packet](#)

**Present:** Mayor Fred E. Cleveland, Vice Mayor Lisa Martin, Commissioner Brian Ashley, Commissioner Valli Perrine, and Commissioner Jason McGuirk

### **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

- Completed reorganization of the City Manager's office to enhance public service, communication, and transparency.
- Participated in several meetings to discuss noise related concerns and potential solutions.
- Continued preparations for the upcoming City Commission annual strategic plan meeting to be held March 13 at the Brannon Center
- Began preparations for the 2025 State of the City presentation to be held April 21 at the Brannon Center.
- Continued Police Chief recruitment process
- Continued preparations for the 2026 Fiscal Year Budget scheduled to be approved September 23
- Attended the 2025 State of the County "Coming Together for a Bright Future" event
- Followed up on citizen comments received during the February 25 City Commission meeting about criminal activity at 806 E. 23rd Ave.
- Followed up on citizen comments received during the February 25 City Commission meeting about traffic and pedestrian safety on Washington Street
- Attended the Volusia Managers Association meeting on February 26 to collaborate with local City/County Managers on common issues.
- The Finance Department published the approved Fiscal Year 2025 budget on February 28. The document is available for review at [Budget Reports | New Smyrna Beach, FL - Official Website](#).
- Met with City staff on February 28 to discuss pedestrian safety on the North Causeway.
- Attended the monthly Mayor and Manager Breakfast on March 11 to discuss issues of mutual interest between New Smyrna Beach, Edgewater, and Port Orange

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

- 3 citizens spoke on flooding issues 0 one specifically on the West Side.
- A local dentist spoke about concerns for the Commission's recent decision to remove fluoride from our local water supply.
- A citizen asked to be provided with the end date for the contract for the City Attorney. He can find it for the Clerk and Manager, but cannot find one in the Attorney's contract.

## **CONSENT AGENDA – Three items unanimously approved.**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS/NEW BUSINESS**

Presentation of the Appointed Officials' performance evaluations.

The City HR director summarized the results of the recently completed performance evaluations for the City Manager and the City Attorney.

City Manager Cowper received a cumulative average rating of 4.5 out of 5. Each of the Commissioners and the Mayor were impressed with the impact Mr. Cowper has made in his short time serving the City and all felt his performance was worthy of recognition and salary increase. Mr. Cowper had pointed out the discrepancy between his retirement benefit when compared with that negotiated by the City Attorney and asked that the Commission consider raising that to be more competitive. Mr. Cowper's salary is approximately \$195,000/annum. The average salary for all city managers in Volusia County is \$201+ thousand and the average of the five cities having a city attorney is approximately \$233,000.

**A motion to increase Cowper's salary to \$233,000/annum along with an increase in retirement contribution to 22% was unanimous.**

City Attorney Carrie Avalone received a 4.4 cumulative average evaluation. All of the Commissioners and the Mayor spoke to her successful length of service, wealth of legal knowledge, leadership and valuable guidance over the years. Avalone's current salary is approximately \$189,000. The average for city attorneys in Volusia County is \$217,880/annum.

**A motion to increase Avalone's salary to \$220,000/annum along with an increase in her car allowance to match the city manager's was unanimous.**

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

10.A Ordinance No. 08-25; 9-25; and 10-25: Conduct the Second Reading and Public Hearing of an Ordinance, which if adopted, would annex, change the future land use to Low Density and rezone the property to R-2 (single family residential) on approximately 0.47 acres of land located at 707 Corbin Park Road. **All three Unanimously adopted.**

10.D Ordinance No. 11-25; 12-25; and 13-25 Conduct the Second Reading and Public Hearing of an Ordinance, which if adopted, would annex, change the future land use to Low Density and rezone the property to R-3CO (Urban single family residential) approximately 0.41 + acres of property located at 731 Old Mission Road.

**ALL three ordinances Unanimously adopted.**

### **MAYOR AND COMMISSION REPORTS**

- Vice mayor Martin detailed the many meetings and events she had attended in the past two weeks.
- Commissioner McGuirk gave a shout out to the NSBHS sports programs and their success. He also talked about Senate Bill 700 being discussed during the current session. It discusses fluoride in drinking water. Decisions on that bill will affect all.

- Commissioner Perrine commended the crosswalk on Washington St., employee recognition day and she toured Farmton for 3 hours to learn about their commitment to conservation and public lands.
- Commissioner Ashley toured the NSB Airport and spoke about Venetian Bay and the lifting of the building moratorium.
- Mayor Cleveland commended the success of the NSBHS sports teams and spoke about his attending a meeting of public officials who received updates on floodwater management in Volusia County. There is a commitment to keep drainage canals open and they are studying tides and how drainage into Turnbull Bay and Spruce Creek are affected by them. He asked the Director of Flood Water Management to make a similar presentation in NSB.

### **CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

The city attorney provided a [written summary](#) of bills being discussed during the current session of the legislature and gave a few updates. She will continue to report back on any bills that will directly affect the city and its citizens.