

PENDING ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS

1. **PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF POLICE CHIEF AND THE CITY MANAGER.** The reviews were discussed by the Commission at its January 14, 2020, continuation meeting. The Commission directed that it be reminded in October 2020 to begin the reviews for the calendar year, with the reviews to be discussed at the Commission's December 7, 2020, meeting. Information for review of the City Manager was provided to the Commission in October. As Chief Hardwick had been elected Sheriff of St. Johns County, the Commission did not do his review as he had left his position as Police Chief. At their December 7, 2020, meeting, the Commission by consensus decided that each Commissioner would meet with the City Manager to discuss his evaluation.

2. **LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS CHANGES.** The latest change to be approved was an ordinance to allow the Planning Board to approve certain conditional use permits. This topic will no longer be included in this report.

At the Commission's December 6th meeting, further changes to the Regulations will be proposed. They are to clarify setbacks and permitting requirements for sheds, decks, patio covers, screen enclosures and outside stairs, and to provide a definition for patio covers and screen enclosures.

3. **UPDATING STRATEGIC PLAN.** As its January 7, 2019, meeting, the City Commission decided to do the update itself with the City staff. At later meetings in 2019, the Planning Board and the Sustainability and Environmental Planning Advisory Committee provided suggestions for the plan. The Commission agreed with the City Manager's suggestions for items in the plan and asked him to include in it parking infrastructure. The City Manager prepared a Mission Statement, a Vision Statement, a Values Statement and a list of goals and the tasks each. The Commission reviewed the plan and provided comments at its January 14, 2020, continuation meeting. The topic was on the agenda for the Commission's February 1st meeting, but because of time, the Commission scheduled discussion of it to the continuation meeting on February 8th. At that meeting, the Commission provided some suggestions for changes and Commissioner George will work with the City Manager on changes to the wording for the plan's Vision Statement.

4. **PARKING PLAN.** The City Commission has changed the focus of the parking plan from paid parking to improvements for parking on City-owned plazas and streets. The staff will draft a five-year plan and the Police Department is to determine the most effective parking regulations for the streets west of A1A Beach Boulevard. Proposed locations for parking improvements were provided to the Commission at its May 3, 2021, meeting. However, because that meeting ran late, the topic was postponed for discussion at the Commission's May 24th continuation meeting. At that meeting, the Commission by consensus asked that City staff present a list of parking projects to the Planning Board for it to prioritize. The Board discussed this request at its June 15th meeting and decided that each Board member will provide their list of parking projects. As only the Chairman submitted a list and as there were only four Board members present for the Board's July 20th meeting, the topic of parking improvements was tabled to the Board's August 17th meeting. It recommended the following: a. that the Commission continue to explore opportunities for increased and improve parking; b. that the City not use any currently landscape plazas for parking; c. that the City work with the County to develop a parking area along the north side of Pope Road; and that the City make a priority improving the parkette on the west side of A1A Beach Boulevard

between A and 1st Streets. The Commission discussed these recommendations at its September 13th meeting and decided that the parkettes to be improved in Fiscal Year 2022 will be the ones along the west side of A1A Beach Boulevard between A and 1st Streets. An appropriation of \$45,000 has been put in the budget for this project.

5. JOINT MEETINGS:

- a. With the County Commission. No date has yet been proposed by either Commission for a joint meeting.
- b. With the Comprehensive Planning and Zoning Board and the Sustainability and Environmental Planning Advisory Committee (SEPAC). The next joint meeting will be scheduled during the spring of 2022.

6. UPDATING PERSONNEL MANUAL

The entire Manual will be redrafted to correct spelling and remove redundant and/or obsolete provisions.

7. LED STREETLIGHTS. The City has signed a contract with FP&L. New lights have been installed along the Boulevard and Pope Road, and 16th, 11th and A Streets, and Mickler Boulevard. The next step is putting LED lights in residential neighborhoods.

8. GRANTS. The Public Works Director has prepared applications for grants from the following agencies:

- a. Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program, \$106,500, for restrooms at Ocean Hammock Park. City match would be \$35,500. Total project cost: \$142,000. The Governor approved the appropriation and the contract with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection has been signed. The restrooms have been designed by a local architect and the Public Works Department has done the site design. The St. Johns River Water Management District has approved the permit. The Commission will be asked at its December 6th meeting to award the bid to construct the restrooms.
- b. Coastal Partnership Initiative: \$25,000, to fund planning for other improvements to Ocean Hammock Park: picnic pavilion, observation platform, playscape for children, more trails. City match will be \$25,000. Total project cost: \$50,000. Though it is federal money, the grant is provided through the state, which has approved it, and the grant agreement has been executed. Contract with a parks design firm has been signed. The survey has been completed, plans are 60% complete and the City has submitted an application for a permit to the St. Johns River Water Management District.

The Public Works Director has applied for another Partnership grant for \$60,000 for additional improvements to Ocean Hammock Park. The application was submitted on September 25, 2020. The state has approved the grant. The grant agreement will be executed upon completion of design and permitting.

The City has applied for a Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program grant for \$200,000 to complete the Park improvements.

- c. The City is applying for an adaption/resilience plan grant to further develop projects that were recommended in the vulnerability study done earlier in 2021, such protecting the east end of Pope Road

and the pier park from storm surge. Grant may provide \$150,000. It doesn't require a match from the City.

d. St. Johns River Water Management District Cost Share Program: Grant applied for in February to provide funds for the new weir at the City's Mizell Road retention pond. The amount requested was \$600,000. The District appropriated the money in its Fiscal Year 2021 budget and the contract has been executed. The City advertised for bids and the bid was awarded scheduled to Sawcross, Inc., which has started construction. The project is 25% complete.

9. NON-CONFORMING BUSINESS SIGNS. The City's sign code has a height limit of 12 feet for business signs. A number of businesses have signs that exceed that height. According to the code, these signs must be made conforming by August 2023. The Building Official and his staff will notify the businesses of this requirement and will work with them to bring these signs into conformity.

10. CHARGING STATION FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES. The Public Works Director is working with the staff of the North Florida Regional Transportation Organization to have a charging station for the public at city hall. The Public Works Director met with the company that builds the stations to determine the location for the station, which will be two charging stations next to Building C on the west side of the south city hall parking lot. In early December, the charging station was constructed. The company has provided a proposed contract, which the City Attorney has reviewed and approved. The City Manager signed the contract on August 25th. It was then sent to the company for signing.

11. FLOODING COMPLAINTS. Citizens have expressed concerns about the following areas:

a. Ocean Walk Subdivision. The subdivision is located on the east side of Mickler Boulevard between Pope Road and 16th Street. Earlier in 2020, the ditch that borders the subdivision's west side was piped. Ocean Walk residents have complained that the piping of the ditch has caused flooding along the subdivision's west side. The Public Works Director had the Mickler and 11th Street ditches clear of debris, so as to improve the flow of water. At its October 5, 2020, meeting, the City Commission asked the Public Works Director to prepare a Request for Qualifications, so that the Commission could consider an engineering firm to review the Ocean Walk drainage issues. The deadline for responses to the RFQ was November 23, 2020. The Public Works Director prepared an addendum, which was advertised before Thanksgiving. The deadline for the RFQ is December 8, 2020. A committee of City employees reviewed the three proposals that were submitted and recommended the City be authorized to negotiate with the Masters Design Group of St. Augustine. The Commission approved the authorization at its January 4, 2021, meeting. At its March 1st meeting, the Commission approved the contract with Matthews. In March 2021, the City was notified that its request to the Florida Legislature to appropriate \$694,000 for Ocean Walk drainage improvements was approved and in late May the City was notified that the appropriation had survived the Governor's veto. The grant agreement has been executed. A contract has been negotiated with the Matthews Design Group of St. Augustine for the design and permitting of the project. Matthews will provide a report on the project to the Commission on November 1st. At the Commission's December 6th meeting, a contract with Matthews for final design and permitting will be presented for approval.

b. Oceanside Drive. This street is located in the Overby-Gargan unrecorded subdivision, which is north of Versaggi Drive. A survey has been done to determine the road's right-of-way and the design of a new

road is underway by the City's civil engineering consultant. The Commission will review a proposed plan for improvements at its December 6th meeting.

c. St. Augustine Beach and Tennis Complex and Private Pond between Ocean Trace Road and the Sabor de Sal Subdivision. The private retention pond for the Beach and Tennis condo complex is too small and floods during periods of heavy rainfall. The flooding threatens the condo units that border the pond. The Sabor de Sal subdivision had a pond that is owned by the adjacent property owners. It also floods and threatens private property. The area needs a master plan that will involve the City, private property owners and the Florida Department of Transportation. The Public Works Director plans a town hall meeting the affected parties, to discuss a possible private/public partnership. A preliminary step will be the hiring of a consulting engineer to do an assessment and develop project alternatives.

d. A resident of 6th Street east of the Boulevard has complained about flooding on adjacent streets. The Public Works Director is investigating the causes.

e. A Street east of the Boulevard. Vice Mayor Samora spoke of this ongoing problem at the Commission's February 8th meeting. On February 26, 2021, Commissioner Samora, the Public Works Director, the City Manager, the County's Interim Public Works Director and interested citizens met on A Street at the location of the flooding problem. The Vice Mayor met with County and City staff members at A Street on July 9, 2021, to review the plan for improvements. An underground drain and five-foot wide sidewalk are proposed for the north side of A Street. The Commission will review the proposal at its November 1st meeting.

f. Pipes under Pope Road and A1A Beach Boulevard. Application for 550,000, 75% of which will come from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

12. STORMWATER UTILITY FEE. City staff asked the Commission at its October 4, 2021 meeting for permission to notify the residents and schedule a public hearing on the City's possible intent to levy the fee. However, the Commission decided that the timing of the request wasn't right in light of the recent increase in the non-ad valorem fee for the collection of household waste and recyclables and the increase in property taxes due to the rise of property values in the City. The suggestion for the utility fee will be brought back to the Commission later in 2022.

15. SOLID WASTE COLLECTION AND RECYCLING. On June 17, 2021, the Commission held a workshop meeting to increase the non-ad valorem assessment that residential property owners pay for the solid waste service. The Commission decided to put a fee of \$211 per household in the Fiscal Year 2022 budget, but at its August 13th meeting raised the fee to \$315. The new fee was sent to the Tax Collector. The fee will be each property owner's tax bill. Also, the Commission increased the City's monthly fees to collect solid waste from businesses: \$6.25 for a 64-gallon cart and \$9.30 for a 96-gallon cart.

Concerning recycling: By mutual agreement, the City and Waste Management, the company that provided recycling pickup service to the residents, cancelled the contract as of October 4, 2021 because the company was unable to provide consistent service due to a shortage of employees. The Commission at its September 13, 2021, meeting made the following decisions: to suspend the recycling program on October 4, 2021, and to have Mayor England send a letter to a garbage truck supplier, to reserve a truck that the City will purchase and use for recycling pickup. The truck was delivered to the City in early October. Once the financing to pay for the vehicle has been arranged and two employees hired, the

pickup of recyclables will be resumed by the City. This could happen in early January 2022. In the meantime, St. Augustine has loaned the City two dumpsters where residents can put their recyclables. The dumpsters are located in the southwest corner of the city hall parking lot, adjacent to the state highway.

16. REFURBISHING AND HIGHLIGHTING CITY'S CIVIL RIGHTS MONUMENT. The monument is located on the south side of pier park and adjacent to the bocce courts. It commemorates the attempt by black citizens to integrate the "whites only beach" in front of the former city hall in the summer of 1964. The monument was erected by July 2002 and paid for by the Northrup Grumman Corporation. At its September 22, 2020, meeting, the City Commission asked the City Manager to work on a vision for the monument, to take pictures of it for the City's website and social media, to have a picture of it put in the city hall corridor, and to seek funding to repair the monument, which has a metal base that's been corroded. At the Commission's May 3, 2021, meeting, Commissioner George reported she is having ongoing discussion with the St. Johns County Cultural Council and that she will bring proposals and timelines to the Commission.

17. BEACH RESTORATION. St. Johns County is the local sponsor of beach restoration in the City, as money from the bed tax is used to pay the County's share of the cost for each restoration project. According to the County's Coastal Manager, the next renourishment of the City's beach is scheduled to be done in 2023. In the meantime, the County is discussing whether a renourishment project may need to be done sooner because of severe erosion of the beach in the vicinity of the County fishing pier.

18. QUARTERLY REPORTS ON PROGRESS OF PROJECTS. At its September 22nd budget meeting, the City Commission asked the City Manager to provide at the end of each quarter in the Fiscal year a report on the progress of projects and expenditures for them. The Finance Director prepared a spreadsheet, and the first quarter's report was provided to the Commission in January 2021. The report for the second quarter (January through March) was forwarded to the City Commission in April. The final report was provided in October. The report for the first quarter (October through December 2021) of Fiscal Year 2022 will be provided in January.

19. REPAIR OF POPE ROAD. At the City Commission's February 1st meeting, a resident complained about the poor condition of Pope Road. As the street is owned by the County, the City Manager sent a request to the County Administrator, Hunter Conrad, that the road be put on a schedule for repair. In a February 5th email, Mr. Hunter replied that he had forwarded the City's request to the County's Interim Public Works Director, Mr. Greg Caldwell. The City Manager also requested that the County work with the Florida Department of Transportation on improvements to the intersection of State Road A1A and 16th Street, as 16th Street is owned by the County. Mr. Caldwell replied that the repair of Pope Road is on the County's list of projects to do.

20. NEW YEAR'S EVE FIREWORKS SHOW. Because of the pandemic, the show for December 31, 2020, was cancelled. At its February 1st meeting, the Commission discussed whether to have it on December 31, 2021. The consensus was for the City staff to work on plans for a smaller, scaled down event. At its April 5th meeting, the Commission approved the proposal of Ms. Conlon, the Events Coordinator, to have a New Year's Eve event that will benefit local businesses. Ms. Conlon provided an update report to the City Commission at its August 11, 2021, regular meeting. The contract with the fireworks company for a 25-minute fireworks show was signed in October. At the Commission's December 6th meeting, Events Coordinator will report on the progress of planning for the event.

21. **PROPOSAL TO DEED THREE LOTS FOR CONSERVATION.** The lots are located along the north side of the unbuilt part of 2nd Street, west of 2nd Avenue. The two owners want to deed the lots for conservation. In February, the Board of Putnam Land Conservancy informed the City Manager that it has agreed to the owners' proposal to establish a conservation easement on the lots. In early August, one of the owners informed the City Manager that a conservation easement agreement with the Trust had been prepared. The agreement was reviewed by the City Attorney, who proposed some changes and sent the agreement back to the Conservancy. As of the end of November, the Conservancy hadn't provided a response.

22. **INTERGOVERNMENTAL PROJECTS.** When the Commission discussed the strategic plan at its February 1st meeting, more involvement with the County and St. Augustine was mentioned as desirable. Below is a summary of the City's current involvement with various area governmental entities.

a. **Mobility:** In March, the Public Works Director contacted St. Augustine for information about its mobility projects. The response was an executive summary of St. Augustine's mobility initiatives. It was forwarded to our City Commission. Our City's staff met with St. Augustine's to discuss our City supporting the following: St. Augustine's request to use our city hall parking lot as a park-and-ride location for events happening in downtown St. Augustine; and the River-to-Sea Loop bike/pedestrian trail that will go through the State Park and connect both cities. Also, St. Augustine's staff wants to discuss a potential bike-share program and possibly locate a hub in our City. St. Augustine's Public Works Director, Reuben Franklin, presented his city's mobility plan at the SAB City Commission meeting on August 11th.

b. **River-to-Sea Loop:** This is a Florida Department of Transportation, St. Johns County, St. Augustine and St. Augustine Beach project to construct 26 miles of a paved bike/pedestrian trail as part of the 260-mile trail from the St. Johns River in Putnam County to the ocean in St. Johns County. The Loop will then go south through Flagler and Volusia counties to Brevard County. This is a long-term, multi-year project. At this time, the Loop will enter St. Augustine along King Street, go across the Bridge of Lions, south along State Road A1A to the State Park, through the Park and into our City, then along A1A Beach Boulevard to State Road A1A. Though possibly not feasible in all locations, the goal is to have a wide, bike/pedestrian trail separate from the adjacent road.

c. **Transportation Development Plan:** The development of the plan involves several agencies, such as the County, St. Augustine, our City, the North Florida Transportation Organization and the Sunshine Bus System. On February 25th, the City Manager attended by telephone a stakeholders' meeting for an update on the development of the plan's vision, mission goals and objectives. Most of the presentation was data, such as population density, percentage of residents without vehicles, senior citizens and low income and minority residents in the County and the areas served by the Sunshine Bus. The next stakeholders' meeting has yet to be announced. The agenda will include transit strategies and alternatives and a 10-year implementation plan.

d. **North Anastasia Island Nature Trail.** The City Manager proposes this as an intergovernmental project that would include the County, St. Augustine and St. Augustine Beach. It would be an off-shoot of the River-to-Sea Loop and could include the State Park, the City's Ocean Hammock and Hammock Dunes parks, St. Augustine's Fish Island Park, and the City's Mizell Road retention pond and the 10-acre conservation area west of the pond that the City owns. Combined with the River-to-Sea Loop, this

Nature Trail would make accessible to the public natural areas of Anastasia Island and provide a combined bicycling/walking trail for exercise and recreation.

e. Pedestrian Crosswalk Safety Signals. The County's study of the A1A Beach Boulevard crosswalks has been completed. City Commissioner Rumrell and County and City staff met to review it on July 9th. The study shows that over all the current crosswalk system is working well and only needs some minor changes. In late September, the County's Public Works Director informed the City that the first crosswalk improvement project will be at the pier park and the Boulevard.

f. Recycling. As noted above, St. Augustine has loaned two dumpsters where residents can put their recyclables for pick up.

g. Street Sweeping. Because the private company that sweeps A1A Beach Boulevard isn't doing a satisfactory job, City staff is discussing with St. Augustine the possibility of paying that city to do the sweeping.

23. AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT. This was passed by Congress and approved by President Biden in February and March 2021. It will provide money to states, cities and counties to help them recover from the pandemic's effects. Our City is eligible to receive \$3.5 million. However, the money can be spent only for allowable projects and will be provided to small Florida cities through the state of Florida. On May 10th, the U.S. Treasury Department issued guidelines. Drainage projects appear to be eligible for money from the Plan. Money from the Act has to be spent or committed to specific projects by December 31, 2024 and spent by December 2026. The agreement with the State was signed by the Mayor at the end of August, the City has received the first payment of \$1.7 million. The Commission reviewed information and a list of possible projects from the staff at its October 4th meeting and decided a number of priority uses for the money, such as premium pay for employees who worked during the pandemic, restoring revenue lost because of the downturn in the economy caused by the pandemic, and using part of the money for drainage improvements. The Act appears to allow the use of funds for these projects. The Finance Director will provide an update at the Commission's December 6th meeting.

24. UNDERGROUNDING OF UTILITIES. At its May 3, 2021, meeting, Commission George ask for Commission support to have Florida Power and Light come to a meeting to discuss the undergrounding project. The City Manager contacted Florida Power and Light, which owns the electric lines, about meeting to discuss the preparation of a presentation concerning costs and scope of work. City staff met with FP&L staff on May 25th to discuss the preliminary steps, one of the first of which will be to provide FP&L a list of the areas where the City proposes the lines be put underground. The City staff will prepare the list and the company will then provide a preliminary estimate of the costs to do the project. This information will be presented to the Commission for direction concerning the next step.

In the meantime, the City is exploring with FP&L its requirements for undergrounding the electric lines when a new street, 2nd Street west of 2nd Avenue, is constructed. On October 18, 2021, City staff met with FP&L representatives to discuss this project. The first step is for the City to obtain from each property owner an easement that will allow FP&L to put its underground line and its above ground transformers. This request will be made in late October or early November 2021.