

New Smyrna Beach City Commission Meeting
Nov. 27, 2018

1. City Commissioners voted 5-0 to commit about \$427,000 to support the New Smyrna Beach Housing Authority's bid to seek tax credits to help finance an 80-unit apartment building for seniors in the West Side community.

The Housing Authority and its partner, New Smyrna Beach Redevelopment Partners LLC, would apply to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation for Low Income Housing Tax Credits. If the Housing Authority is successful in getting them, the tax credits would be sold to finance an 80-unit senior housing apartment building costing about \$18 million. The new apartments would replace roughly 18 existing units in three buildings.

The new housing will receive city support amounting to about \$427,000 from New Smyrna Beach's Community Redevelopment Agency, a move that improves the Authority's chances of receiving the tax credits. The CRA money would be paid out over two to three years, beginning in the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

Background information on the Commission agenda shows the local Housing Authority owns 126 dwelling units built in 1954 and 1962. Many of those are experiencing structural problems and their fixtures are outdated.

The Housing Authority expects to learn in February whether it was awarded the Low Income Housing Tax Credits.

2. The City Commission unanimously endorsed an Environmental Assessment Process to evaluate conservation lands in the Turnbull Creek watershed.

Citizens overwhelmingly passed a general obligation bond issue on the November 2018 ballot that proposed buying up to \$15 million of conservation lands near Turnbull Creek. The Institute for Water and Environmental Resilience at Stetson University developed the Environmental Assessment Process approved by Commissioners.

The process will evaluate land purchase priorities based on the diversity of species living there, whether the site has been disturbed or is in pristine condition, water quality and historic preservation. Commissioners could be asked to approve a list of proposed property purchases in early 2019.

The Commission previously voted in September 2018 to apply for grant money from the Florida Communities Trust to assist in buying sensitive lands near Turnbull Creek. The state is expected to award those grants on Feb. 21, 2019.

3. City Commissioners voted unanimously, to seek Requests for Proposals on video streaming options for City Commission meetings. The RFP would be for a six-month contract, with an option to extend it, and involve no physical alterations to the Commission meeting room. Officials hope to begin live video production of Commission meetings in their existing building, until its new meeting room is ready for business. The RFP also will address the potential for real-time, closed captioning that complies with accessibility standards.

4. The City Commission voted 5-0 to pass the first readings of ordinances annexing, rezoning and changing the future land use for three properties.

One request encompasses two parcels totaling 3.64 acres at 2219 Doster Drive and 2820 Letha St. The Doster Drive parcel would change to city low density residential, and the Letha Street property would be changed to rural and conservation city land uses.

In addition, the third parcel on 3.5 acres at the northeast corner of Turnbull Bay Road and Bayview Drive would become a city land use of rural residential and conservation.

5. City Commissioners granted unanimous approval for the owners of The Spa at Riverview, 103 Flagler Ave., to remove a damaged and declining Historic Live Oak tree in the business' parking lot.

The tree measures 36 inches in diameter, but a certified arborist said it is in the declining states of life. Its trunk has been severely altered due to trimming and it has a limited canopy and branches. He supported removing the tree for public safety.

6. The City Commission voted 5-0 in favor of the city applying for Volusia County grant monies to renovate the Woman's Club of New Smyrna and stabilize and restore the coquina wall around part of Old Fort Park.

The Woman's Club is a one-story, Mediterranean Revival structure built of stucco and concrete block. Built in the early 1920s, it is a Local Historic Landmark.

The age of the coquina wall at Old Fort Park is uncertain, although some say it dates to the time of the Turnbull Colony's establishment in 1768.

Both structures are on the National Register of Historic Places, and lie within the New Smyrna Beach Historic District.

The city will apply for Volusia County ECHO grants to restore the Woman's Club and Old Fort Wall. These are grant funds that can be used to acquire, restore, build or improve public facilities that are used for environmental, cultural, historic or outdoor recreational purposes.

For the Woman's Club renovation, New Smyrna Beach would be seeking \$267,500 in grant money, which the city would match. That project's total cost is \$535,000. For the Old Fort Wall project, city officials will ask for \$80,000 in grant funds, to be matched by the same amount of city dollars. That project's total cost is \$160,000. The County Council is expected to consider recommendations for ECHO grant funding in March 2019.

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