

## **New Smyrna Beach City Commission Meeting March 10, 2020**

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<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFnpWTUfup3BtTrUyHaJisA>

### **1. City Commissioners voted unanimously to pass a law allowing them to call in and attend Commission meetings remotely if needed, in recognition of the profound changes imposed on society by the COVID-19 pandemic.**

City Manager Khalid Resheidat advised the Commission city staff members are following an increased cleaning regimen for public park facilities, and they also have developed a plan to work remotely, if necessary.

"As a city we're doing everything we can to prepare," Mayor Russ Owen noted. "We're trying to prepare to take reasonable measures to protect our citizens, our staff and our employees and ourselves."

Commissioners have had two emergency meetings relating to the Coronavirus issues and have closed several city facilities in response. They've also cancelled city meetings and events throughout this month, except for regular Commission meetings.

In another meeting-related matter, Commissioners had the first reading of an ordinance that would increase the amount of prior notice for a special meeting from 12 hours to at least 24 hours, and preferably up to 72 hours. The second reading of that ordinance will be March 24. The increased notice requirement would not apply to emergency meetings of the Commission.

### **2. The City Commission unanimously agreed to accept a \$400,000 ECHO grant to offset part of the \$950,000 price tag of an artificial turf surface for the football field in the city's 68-acre Sports Complex.**

Commissioners voted to apply for the grant in October 2019, after hearing the long-term benefits of replacing grass on the football field with artificial "field" turf that would allow it to be used more often. Sports teams from cities throughout Volusia County, as well as outside groups, use the New Smyrna Beach Sports Complex for a variety of activities.

David Ray, Manager of the New Smyrna Beach Sports Complex, said the county awarded the grant to the city with the expressed desire that the project would be completed this year. To do that, officials agreed to take part in the National Cooperative Purchasing Agreement (NCPA), allowing the city to use Field Turf USA, a field turf company that installs its artificial turf in professional football, baseball and soccer stadiums, as well as for College teams. If the city put the project out for competitive bids, Ray said it likely wouldn't be able to have the new field turf installed prior to this year's football season. He added that components of Field Turf USA's turf product are entirely manufactured in the U.S., and the turf surface it installs is guaranteed for 10 years.

In addition to the grant money, New Smyrna Beach will pay for the artificial turf with \$240,000 in funds carried forward into the general fund from the previous fiscal year, plus \$310,000 from the general fund reserve. In the next budget year, Commissioners agreed to begin paying back the city's reserves from the accounts that benefitted from the field turf expenditure.

**3. City Commissioners agreed to tackle different requests for stop signs at their March 24 meeting, to give staff members a chance to present speed studies and other information needed for the decisions.**

The Commission previously voted to have stop signs and traffic-calming devices installed on sections of Magnolia Street. However, several residents of Live Oak Street, the next street to the west, have told city officials the problem of speeding traffic simply moved over to their road.

Commissioners agreed that's the last thing they intended. They asked staff members to take a look at the traffic problem in the South Mainland areas of Live Oak, Magnolia and Palmetto streets, as well as nearby Riverside Drive, and try to develop a comprehensive plan to address it.

The request for stop signs on Live Oak Street, as well as another stop sign at Due East and Pine streets, are expected to be heard at the March 24 Commission meeting.

**4. The City Commission agreed to wait until its March 24 meeting to decide whether to seek a Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) grant to replace the long fishing pier at Buena Vista Park, by the North Causeway.**

Staff members advised the Commission they learned the fishing pier is in poor condition and should be replaced, but Vice Mayor Michael Kolody suggested the pier doesn't look that deteriorated. Commissioners asked the city manager to determine if the pier could simply be repaired this year, so the city can budget ahead for its replacement cost.

**5. City Commissioners voted unanimously to approve a request from the Flagler Avenue Business Association (FABA) Hospitality Group to put on an Aug. 6 Flagler Avenue Shrimp and Seafood Festival.**

Concurrent with that vote, the Commission voted 4-1, with Commissioner Jake Sachs dissenting, to direct its staff to return at a future meeting with information on the potential for creating a pilot program with a trolley to transport people to and from the special event.

Local restaurants will sell sample-sized portions of their favorite dishes at the festival and compete for the "Best on the Beach Award." The event will run from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. and would involve closing Flagler Avenue between North Atlantic Avenue and Pine Street, and farther west to Peninsula Avenue if needed.

**6. The City Commission voted 3-2, with Vice Mayor Kolody and Commissioner Sachs voting no, to approve a one-year agreement between the city, the New Smyrna Beach Visitor's Center and beachside hotels Springhill Suites and Hampton Inn, to offer discounted deals to meeting planners.**

Package deals would involve discounted rates for hotel rooms, as well as a less expensive fees to use the city's Brannon Center. The city's Leisure Services staff has been working with representatives from both hotels and the Visitor's Center over the last four months to create the package deals to bring meeting planners to New Smyrna Beach and increase usage of the Brannon Center.

**7. The City Commission voted 3-2, with Vice Mayor Kolody and Commissioner Sachs dissenting, to waive a \$5,230 code enforcement fine against the owner of 409 Mary Ave.**

The city's code enforcement personnel inspected the Mary Avenue property in September 2018 and found the sign's faces were missing. The sign did not comply with city codes at the time, and a notice of violation was mailed to the property owner. The owner requested an extension on the case in December 2018 because he was leaving town. A permit to remove the top part of the sign was submitted in January 2019, but the sign remained in non-compliance until May of that year. A fine was levied on the property from March to May of 2019. The property's owner told Commissioners he was waiting for a crane to come and remove the sign for a portion of that time.

**8. City Commissioners had the first reading and public hearing of an Ordinance that would vacate a Public Access Easement on private property with the addresses of 1014 Clermont Street and 1017 Fremont Street.**

The second reading and public hearing will be conducted at the regular meeting on March 24, 2020.

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