

New Smyrna Beach City Commission Meeting May 26, 2020

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<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFnPWTUfup3BtTrUyHaJisA>

1. City Commissioners conducted their first meeting back in City Hall since the coronavirus shutdown began, and lifted most restrictions on city facilities, events and activities.

Staff members who have been working remotely from home will return to their offices June 1. City offices will reopen to the public on June 8. Centers For Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) guidelines for social distancing, limits on gatherings and hand washing will be observed. The city is providing employees with two washable face coverings and additional masks as needed.

Other COVID-related changes will include:

- The Cruise Night vintage car meet, staged by East Coast Cruisers Car Club each month on Canal Street, will return on the second Saturday of each month beginning June 13. They will maintain social distancing and other CDC guidelines.
- Playgrounds and public restrooms will remain closed in city parks until June 9.
- The city's Sports Complex will reopen for practices as of June 1, with the expectation that regular games will start about two weeks later.
- The New Smyrna Beach Farmers Market can bring back food trucks to its event each Saturday.
- Babe James Summer Fun Camp will proceed at 50% capacity with one counselor for each nine campers, a total of about 75 children. Social distancing and CDC guidelines will be followed.
- Vacation Rentals are cleared to operate in accordance with Volusia County's guidelines and COVID-19 protocols.
- Commissioners OK'd allowing Canal Street restaurants and businesses to close the street for two weeknights and put tables and chairs out in the road for outdoor dining ... as a pilot program.

2. City Clerk Kelly McQuillen announced the week of June 8-12 is the week in which prospective City Commission candidates must qualify to run for office later this year. The positions of Mayor and City Commission Zones 3 and 4 will be on the ballot in the fall.

3. City Commissioners aim to cut down the number of boat trailers that illegally park in North Causeway neighborhoods. They had the first reading of an ordinance to approve a new, \$100 parking fine for those vehicles.

The current fine for illegal parking is \$35. The second reading and public hearing for the new law is set for June 9.

The scarcity of parking for boat trailers and their tow vehicles ... as well as cars driving to the beach here from Orlando and surrounding counties, has become a severe problem for New Smyrna. When the county closes beach ramps, beachgoers park along residential beachside streets.

On a recent weekend, Commissioners said there were more than 260 trucks and boat trailers parked at the city's AOB (160 N. Causeway) site and nearby. Some vehicles were parked illegally in residential yards and along rights of way, said Vice Mayor Michael Kolody.

Traffic on North Beach roadways was so heavy it blocked streets. "We have the police force stretched to the limits ... People drive here and can't get on the beach, so they park in residents' yards; they park in driveways; we enforce the heck out of it; but still ...the people in the North Beach area are literally trapped by the number of vehicles and the number of people coming to that area. We simply are being overwhelmed... We have to do something." Vice Mayor Kolody said.

Mayor Russ Owen rode with a police officer who was enforcing parking violations one weekend morning. That "opened his eyes" to the seriousness of the problem, he said, and gave him an idea about potential solutions.

Having a penalty that is meaningful is "necessary," Owen suggested. "If we truly want to start enforcing and reclaiming our neighborhoods, I think we should only do it combined with parking solutions elsewhere."

"We need to work with the county and have more signs (on SR-44) saying the beaches are full, no parking is available," the mayor added. In addition, he asked staff members to contact the bank across the road from the city's boat launching ramps and ask if it would allow boat trailers to be parked there on weekends. He and other Commissioners acknowledged there's no way the city can provide parking for every single truck and boat trailer, but they can work on finding other alternative places to park vehicles.

4. The City Commission directed its staff to come back at a to-be-determined August meeting with three-to-four options for parking and other uses on the AOB site. This city property is the only one with vacant land and deep-water access to the Intracoastal Waterway.

Commissioners generally agreed they don't want to see the entire tract covered with parking for the trucks and boat trailers that arrive each summer weekend en masse to use the city's adjacent boat launching ramps. Most of the Commissioners said they don't want to sell the property. Earlier City Commissions attempted to do that when developers proposed building a marina, hotel and dry boat storage at the site. Presently, the tract has a few picnic tables and a grassy area for residents to sit and enjoy the riverfront view.

Vice Mayor Kolody said, "I want to see a good part of that area set aside for the enjoyment of the waterway," adding, "I don't want to see a swim park, a pavilion ... I don't want to see any real facilities there." He added that he supported adding more parking for boat trailers but didn't want to use up most of the land for that.

Commissioner Randy Hartman noted it didn't make sense to designate the AOB site as a formal park right now, and develop it as one, until the Commission has a chance to see what options the staff comes up with for the land.

"We have been told we don't have enough marina space," Mayor Owen added. "I think another thing that could be talked about in that spot, is an expansion of city marina facilities."

5. City Commissioners voted 4-1, with Commissioner Jake Sachs dissenting, to approve a proposed amendment to the land use regulations. They added Kennels as a Special Exception Use in the Highway Service Business District (B-3) zone.

The ordinance would modify the definition of a Kennel in the city's Land Development Regulations to allow pet day care, training, grooming, overnight boarding and outdoor dog runs/play areas.

Applicant Tibor Horvath sought city approvals to open a high-end, "resort-type" spa for pets like one he operated in Michigan, where pets are boarded, exercised, trained, socialized, and groomed on a daily basis. His daughter, Jennifer Horvath-Percoco, previously assured Commissioners there would be no outside runs accessed by dogs for long periods during the day or night. All pet suites would be inside the building. The proposed kennel would be at 1301 West Canal St., formerly Gators Roadside Grill.

Horvath still must come back to the City Commission and formally request the Special Exception for a kennel.

Other changes proposed in the land regulations include requiring any kennel to be at least 250 feet from any building where people live. The 250-foot rule would be measured from the nearest property line of the lot where the kennel is proposed, to the nearest part of a residential building. Outdoor controlled environments or pet play areas would not be used between the hours of 9 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

6. City Commissioners unanimously approved requests for annexation, land use and zoning changes, including:

- A request to annex 3.25 acres at **1016 Dillon Circle** and change its future land use from the county designation of Rural to the same land use in the city, and rezone it from the county's A-3, (Transitional Agriculture) with a designation that it lies within an Airport Height Notification Zone, to the same city zoning classifications.
- A request to annex 2.35 acres at **1031 Bay Drive** and change its future land use from a county designation of Rural to the same land use in the city. In addition, the property was rezoned from the county's MH-8, (Rural Mobile Home Estate) with a designation that it lies within an Airport Height Notification Zone, to a city zoning classification of RA, (Rural Agriculture Estate) and a designation that it is within an Airport Height Notification Zone.

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