

THE VOTER

Nov - Dec
2020

www.LWVVC.org

P.O. Box 9695, Daytona Beach, FL 32120

President's Remarks:

We are nearing the end of a long, exhausting election season that brought with it challenges we never had to face before. Yet, despite restrictions on face to face events, LWVVC members did a remarkable job educating the public and providing important information to prepare voters to cast an informed ballot. This edition of The Voter contains several articles related to our election activities, but I want to take this opportunity to thank those who gave so much of their time and talent to make these initiatives possible.



- **Carla Christianson** for her leadership in educating the public through amendment presentations and election information handouts, and for coordinating our efforts to monitor the Canvassing Board and mail-in ballot boxes.
- **Ann Smith** for her work coordinating and moderating both virtual and live candidates forums.
- **Jeanne Tanke** for coordinating three rounds of the LWV Get-Out-The-Vote Postcard campaign.
- **Sandy Horikami** for coordinating our Vote411.org Voter Guide
- **Mary Anne Connors** for arranging informative hot topics and general meeting speakers who provided background information on important election topics.
- **Vickie Presley's** Diversity and Social Justice Team for spearheading our *I Vote Because* video with special thanks to video producer **Saralee Morrissey**.
- **Wes Lewis and Linda Mojer** for their behind the scenes work keeping our webpage and social media platforms up to date with important election information.
- **You, our members**, for always being ready to respond to our calls for support. Without you, none of this work would be possible.

Our guest speaker for the November 14 zoom general meeting will be Mark Lane, News Journal Columnist. Mark always provides an insightful and engaging look at Florida's election results so be sure to mark your calendars for that event.

With the election behind us, we will be turning our attention to the upcoming legislative session and contacting our local legislative delegation to discuss our priorities and hear their views on the important issues facing our communities. This year, we will focus our discussions on LWVVC priority areas: election law issues, education, natural resources and healthcare. Any member interested in learning more about our lobbying efforts can contact me at president@lwvvc.org.

It is such an honor to serve as president of this remarkable organization. It is because of the dedication of members like you that LWVVC is able to continue its non-partisan work to make our democracy work for all.

In League, *Nicki Junkins, President*

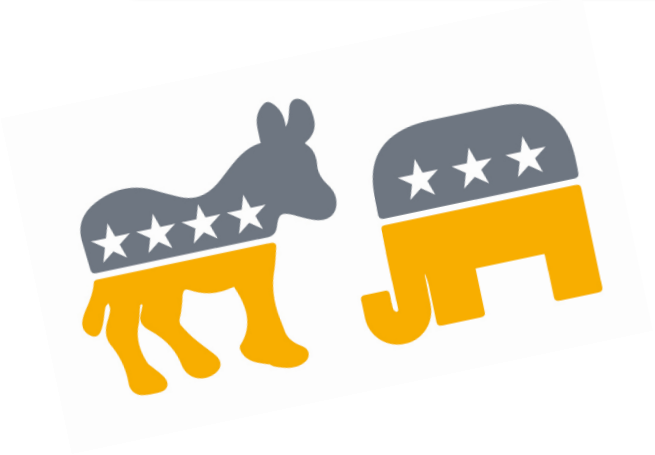
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Sandra Horikami, Voter Editor



**Nov 3, 2020
General
Election**



November & December Events



November Virtual General Meeting
 Saturday, Nov. 14, 2020
 10:30 a.m. – 12 noon

Post-Election Update
 by Mark Lane
 Daytona Beach News Journal

RSVP to Ann Smith to ahsmith5@bellsouth.net by 11/12/2020

November Virtual Board Meeting
 Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2020
 5 – 7 p.m.

Members welcome!



Tentative Virtual Holiday Celebration
 Friday, Dec. 4, 2020
 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Activity information will be distributed via e-mail.

December Virtual General Meeting
 Saturday, Dec. 12, 2020
 10 a.m. – 12 noon

Affordable Housing

RSVP to Ann Smith at ahsmith5@bellsouth.net by 12/10/2020



January Virtual General Meeting
 Saturday, Jan. 9, 2021
 10:30 a.m. – 12 noon

Challenges of Educating our Children in the Midst of a Pandemic
 By
Dr. Carmen Balgobin
 Acting Superintendent VCS

RSVP to Ann Smith at ahsmith5@bellsouth.net by January 7, 2021



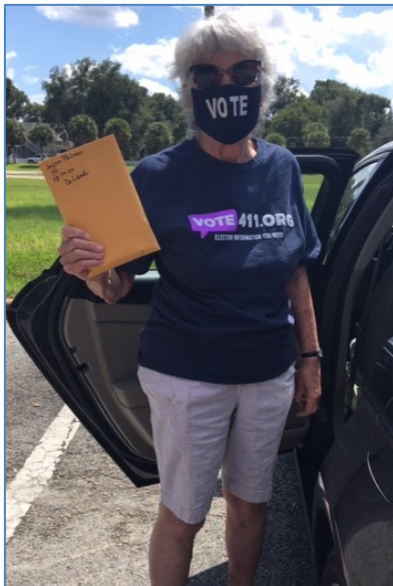


Returning Citizen Postcard Campaign

Forty-one volunteers agreed to address and sign postcards to Returning Citizens urging them to Register and Vote. The ACLU provided names and addresses of persons with felony convictions whose fines have been paid or none were owed. In late August, one of five postcards was sent to a name on our list of 400 persons. Calls and inquiries to LWVFL resulted, confirming that the cards were a success! In late September we sent a “DON’T GET STUCK ON VOTING FIRST BASE!” postcard to 1400 Returning Citizens reiterating the deadline to register as October 5th.

In October, 1000 postcards were sent to Returning Citizens who had registered to vote urging them to be sure to vote!

*Jeanne Tanke,
Amendment 4 Team Leader*



Jeanne Tanke distributing postcard materials.



Maritza Patterson signing postcards.



Remembering Our Past: The Ocoee Election Day Massacre

Submitted by Nicki Junkins

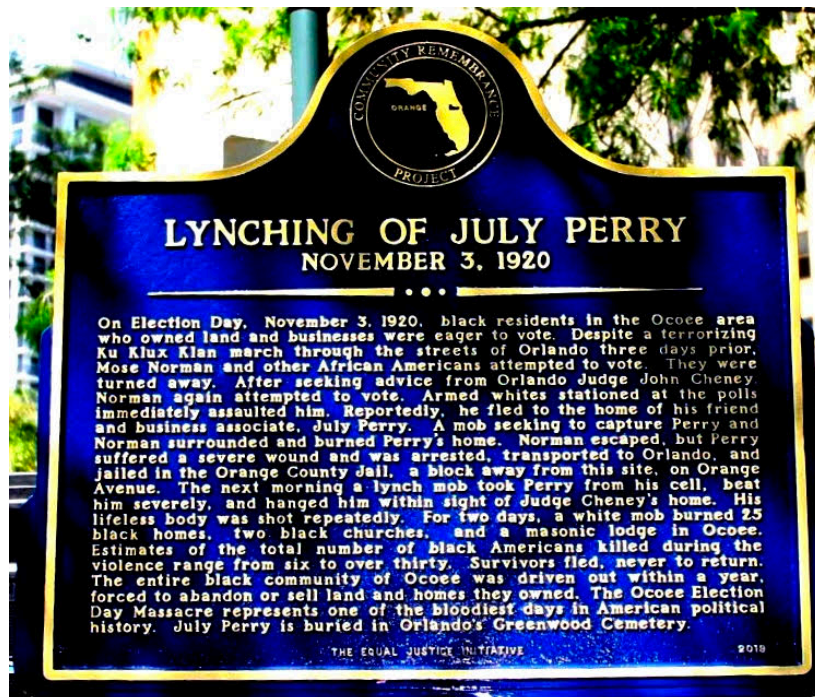
Background information provided by Jody Williams

We are all aware that 100 years ago, women finally achieved the right to vote. For many, it was a time of high hopes and celebration. However, many Americans may not be aware that on election day, November 2, 1920, a white mob attacked African American citizens in Ocoee, Florida. Most African American-owned buildings and residences in northern Ocoee were burned to the ground and over 30 may have been killed. This event remains the largest incident of voting-day violence in United States history.

The attack stemmed from an ongoing voter suppression effort to prevent African American citizens from voting. They had essentially been disfranchised in Florida since the beginning of the 20th century. Despite a Ku Klux Klan march in his community, Mose Norman, a prosperous African American farmer, was determined to vote but was twice turned away at the polls. After being attacked by armed whites, Norman sought refuge at the home of his friend, July Perry. Mr. Norman was able to escape, but his friend was seriously injured, arrested and jailed. The following morning, July Perry was lynched. The carnage continued for the next two days with the mob burning nearly all African American homes, churches and businesses while continuing to murder the community's residents. Over the next year, black residents fled their homes and businesses, never to return.

In April, 2019, Orange County in partnership with the Equal Justice Initiative unveiled a historical marker remembering Julius "July" Perry and the victims of the Ocoee Massacre at the Orange County Regional History Center just about a block from where Mr. Perry was lynched. It is easy to take our voting rights for granted, but let us not forget that Americans have given their lives fighting for the right to a say in their government.

This article is being shared as part of our goal to educate ourselves and our community on historic and ongoing systemic racism.



Recruiting Potential Board Members!



The Nominating Committee is looking for members interested in being considered for a Board Member position. This year, the Committee will be nominating individuals for the following positions for 2 year terms beginning July 1, 2021.

The positions are:

- ◇ President
- ◇ First Vice-President
- ◇ 2 Directors

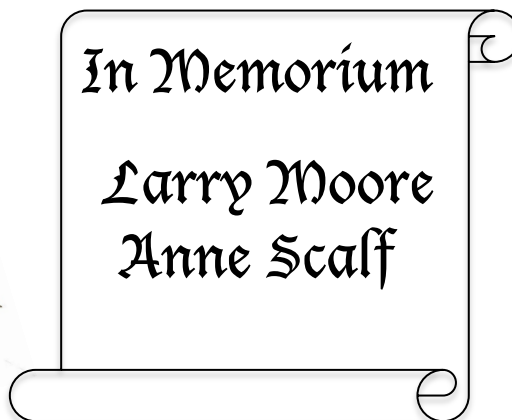
For 1 year terms (non-board positions):

- ◇ Nominating Committee Chair
- ◇ 2 Nominating Committee Members

Please contact Jeanne Tanke (jeanne622lwvvc@gmail.com) if you would like to serve on the board, suggest someone else for one of the positions or if you have any questions.

Jeanne Tanke
Nominating Committee Chair

You will be missed.....



Voter Service Action Team Report

We are almost to election day and our members are busy serving voters.

We have had an amazing response to the postcard writing campaign. Jeanne Tanke has been with the Amendment 4 project from start to the last postcard!!! It was very exciting to have an option of doing something to help returning citizens get information about their right to vote. The sad story of the Legislature thwarting the will of the people has been difficult to watch and to follow. In the end many citizens are still denied the right to vote but those who were able to register did get a information from our members.

Ann Smith has done a fantastic job of bringing candidate forums to voters. She has once again done a thoroughly professional job along with her team which has included Carolyn West, Cathy Egley, Claudia Roth, Suzy Peace, Pat Drago and Wes Lewis. A special thank you to Dinah Pulver for invaluable assistance. The hard work and skill has paid off and videos are available on our website for voters to use for help in making informed decisions.



President Nicki Junkins assists at a Mail In Ballot Mailbox

Many thanks to our amazing Amendment Information Presenters. This year our schedule was lighter and mostly done by Zoom. The list of amendments was only 6 plus the 2 local resolutions. Having information on Echo and Volusia Forever was both interesting and a positive part of the presentations. A link to one of the presentations is on the homepage at LWVVC.org.

We have had a great response to the request to watch the vote-by-mail drop boxes. Also, our dedicated members have been volunteering to observe at the Canvass Board. Once again many of our members are working at the polls. Thank you to each one for doing this valuable task. We are grateful!



Mary Anne Connors and Saralee Morrissey observe the Canvassing Board.

If you would like to do more, we have 2 opportunities.

- There is a texting campaign you can sign up here: <https://forms.gle/RWBXKa5EapvRyD1v6>
This is a campaign to continue to reach out to returning citizens to get them to the polls. You can sign up until Oct 30th. The State League will send you a training video to let you know how and what to write.
- The other item is training for those of you who will be at the polls as voters, poll workers, watchers, or drop box workers. The training will provide you with the tools needed to deal with a variety of issues one might encounter. This training is hosted by the national office. The time and date: October 29th at 3:00 p.m. EST. More details and registration can be found at this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZArcOqvrz0uHNGFFCY15hXMgb7AUtohiNF>

One more shout out goes to the members of Stetson Votes. The team of dedicated students at Stetson have worked tirelessly to register every student and to get those students to vote. They have been creative as well as persistent. They are even offering rides to the polls. The work of this enthusiastic team led by Amelia Maulfair has been nothing short of amazing. Thank you!!!

Remember to share our League Facebook posts, promote Vote411.org and tell your friends to plan their vote!

This unusual election has been challenging. How proud and grateful we are of all of our volunteers who have been participating in every way you can.

Carla Christianson
Voter Service Chair
reclaim4all@gmail.com

Social Justice and Diversity Action Team Report

“Diversity is not how we differ. Diversity is about embracing one another’s uniqueness.” ~Ola Joseph

The Social Justice and Diversity Team engaged in an “I Vote Because...” project which included collaborating with other groups or organizations and individuals to develop a video, a non-partisan campaign that would encourage everyone to register to vote and to vote in the 2020 election. The subcommittee of the Team which included Carla Christianson, Ann Smith, Saralee Morrissey and Vickie Presley recruited participants for the video that was launched via social media. Saralee, actually, produced the video. We thank Wes Lewis for his support and assistance.

We thank those who participated in this project. This collaborative effort fits with the LWVVC goal for 2020-21 to promote collaboration and build positive relationships with diverse groups. As our League President, Nicki Junkins, states, “One of the purposes of LWVVC is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government. COVID-19 has forced us to pivot and revamp our ground game. We now are relying on social and digital media platforms. This video effort does that and showcases why our residents consider voting to be important.” You may view the video by clicking on the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mi-iBObe-TE&feature=youtu.be> [youtube.com]

Vickie Presley
Social Justice & Diversity Chair

Education Action Team Report

The Education Action Team met virtually October 5 and reviewed its plan for the year. There was agreement that the disparity in resources and services for high poverty schools was a pressing issue. The district's response to Covid-19 only exacerbated the disparity. We need to understand the current situation better in order to understand where we might be effective.

To that end, Judy Winch, executive director of Food Brings Hope has been invited to talk to the team on Nov. 16. She will be able to tell us about the resources they provide high poverty schools, where Title I leaves off. She can also tell us about the gaps she sees. Judy Winch retired from Volusia Schools as principal of Westside Elementary and is very knowledgeable about this topic.

School board member Linda Cuthbert also offered to have the interim superintendent of schools, Dr. Carmen Balgobin, speak to the membership in January. We will be able to better understand how the

last calendar year's changes to curriculum have impacted students and staff. We will receive data on enrollment of public schools, in person and online. We will also learn of private school and charter school enrollment and how many students are not present in any of these.

From this gathering of information, the team will be better able to formulate a plan. Next meeting is virtual, Nov. 16 at 3:00 pm.

*Pat Drago,
Education Team Chair*



Welcome New Members!

Janet Babbitt
John Battenfield
Sandra Burke Bishop
Kevin & Mrs. Button
Phoebe Cole
Jodie Cook
Sonya Crandall
BethAnn Filingeri
Patty Gertenbach
Doug and Nancy Hall
Carolyne Sue Hofstrand
Christen Kramer

Dana McCool
Gaea Nunez
Joyce Palmer
Wilfred Parsons
Laura Rocco
Elaine Stevenson
David Thomas
David & Michele Wallens
Janet Wieboldt
Mark & Marie Wilkinson
Steve Wonderly

Observer Corps Report

The following are key issues reported by League Observers at local meetings. We need additional Observers for Volusia county city meetings not currently represented. Please contact Susan Bayley, susancbayley@gmail.com or Ann Harrell, aharrell595@aol.com or Nancy Nusbaum, nusbanh@gmail.com if you can help.

Daytona Beach

Keturah Thompson, Observer

www.codb.us/577/Agendas-Minutes

See website for information

Daytona Beach Shores

<https://www.dbshores.org/289/Agenda-and-Minutes>

Pat Gadbow, Observer

May, June, July I did not physically attend the meetings. At the April meeting it was announced that Nancy Maddox has replaced Roni Jackson who has retired as Recreation Director. Roni was very effective as a recreation director.

Ordinance 2020-05 allows for outdoor dining with restrictions. After much discussion in earlier meetings this ordinance is approved.

In the May meeting it was announced that Halifax Health Urgent Care Center opening in the vacated recreation building has been delayed due the coronavirus.

At the May meeting there was a discussion of opening a part time Chamber of Commerce office in DB Shores.

Becky Voce is the new City Attorney.

Face Masks are strongly urged but not mandated due to the difficulty in enforcing. Richard Bryan and Michael Politis were unopposed and will serve a second 4 year term

In cooperation with Port Orange established a pilot program for a Chamber of Commerce Annex.

Continued progress of improving recreation activities by adding bocce, shuffleboard and an additional tennis court. Completion of the Halifax emergency care unit in the old Council Chambers building is expected next Spring,

Deland

<http://www.delandfl.iqm2.com>

Mara Whitridge, Observer

See website for information

The last two months city council meeting have largely concerned land development. Three developments are in the forefront in Deland: Cresswind Planned Development; The Lincoln Oaks development and the old Sandhill Golf course. All have many unanswered questions.

Edgewater

Linda Mojer, Observer

<http://www.cityofedgewater.org/bc/page/agendas-minutes>

Emergency suspension of public meetings continued through the summer, with all official business of the City Council conducted using both digital video and with limited public access. Routine increases in meeting frequency allowed for in-depth annual budget deliberations, added emergency management procedures, and a high volume of development action presented by attorney Glenn Storch over the six-month period (for property owners of Air Park Road, Farmton Master Plan, Jones Fish Camp Road).

September Final budget and associated millage rates were set to underwrite operating, Animal Shelter and Parks; new Public Works project is being advanced under the direction of the City Manager; new

refuse containers delivered and being distributed throughout the City. Through Volusia County, additional CARES Act funding being sought; union negotiations undertaken and approved, City Ordinances reviewed and revised. Environmental issues, drainage, waterway and intercity partnership for shared equipment proposed.

August The second meeting of the month was devoted solely to a budget presentation; the first included an abbreviated agenda of items, including review of insurance/broker agreements, purchasing in support of sidewalk improvements, refuse carts; individual land use, easements and ordinance amendments. In advance of the August 18 primary elections, it was determined that candidates qualified to seek City Council seats in District 2 and District 4, without the need for primary runoff. One individual came forward in D2 and two candidates in D4 will face off in the general election.

July Second and third meetings of the month devoted to budget; first meeting addressed Lift Station remote monitoring, janitorial services contract, wastewater pump agreement, Coronavirus emergency funding; partner service agreements with City of Ormond Beach and consulting services. Zoning, board appointments, mitigation plans, park trespass issues, and Fair Housing code ordinance discussed.

June Along with a series of resolutions in regard to Affirmative Action, EEOC, displacement/relocation policy and citizen participation, the City approved a prohibition on the Excessive Use of Force resolution, adopting a policy for the protection of individuals engaging in non-violent civil rights demonstrations. Added action covered comprehensive planning, grievance procedures, lighting and planned unit development.

Following a comprehensive City Charter review by the citizen board comprised of Gigi Bennington (chair), Pat Card, Ken Hooper, John McKinney, and Eric Rainbird, a series of recommendations were made and approved by the Council. Adopted ballot language is presented for vote in General Election materials, in nine (9) proposed amendments that address City Council training requirements, salary adjustments, borrowing limitations, “resign to run” provisions and nepotism rules; also revising minimum voting parameters for the hire/fire of City Manager, City Attorney and City Clerk; and aligning with state executive powers authorizations for conducting emergency meetings.

May Mid-year budget planning commenced, along with Capital Improvement Program review; increased demand for communications/media technology discussed in the context of emergency management; preliminary charter review ballot language proposed. Ongoing discussions of water, wastewater, stormwater and refuse collection and rates; continued approvals of operational requests and contracts.

April After approving the previous month’s emergency declaration and reviewing the March 17 Presidential Primary election (in which 81,023 Volusia County voters took part), City Council authorized the City Manager to conduct projects for water treatment and main replacement, culvert maintenance and wastewater pumping and collection. Zoning issues, financing, and citizen concerns were addressed throughout the agenda.

Throughout the early phases of the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak, the City of Edgewater joined its neighbors in making operational adjustments to protect public health and safety, including reduced contact city services and a moratorium on late fees and penalties. Outdoor public activities were re-considered carefully before re-opening and businesses were permitted to modify their operations to accommodate added social distancing and outdoor dining. Universal mask usage was not mandated by the City, as had been considered and imposed by other municipalities throughout the county and region.

Halifax Health Board of Commissioners

Susan Pate, Observer

No report this issue

Holly Hill

Susan Pate, Observer

www.Hollyhillfl.org/bc/page/agendas-mintues-meeting-recordings

August The meeting began with a proclamation honoring Elizabeth Nelson for 21 years of service to the city of Holly Hill. The commission also recognized Scott Gotimer for his nearly 10 years of service to the city and its citizens.

Public speakers were concerned about the appearance of the city particularly along US1. Uncut grass and weeds, and trash littering the streets are some of the complaints. It was suggested that business owners and absentee landlords be fined. It was pointed out that more than 50% of the homes are rentals and are not being properly maintained.

The commission approved a county grant agreement for coronavirus relief fund. This fund is part of the Cares Act and monies spent must be directly related to Covid-19. Holly Hill is in line to receive approximately \$430,000 from the fund.

The city manager reported that the city with still working with the state and FEMA for hurricane repairs. He is getting the runaround from both agencies when dealing with the pier repair. He will try to contact a state representative for help.

Closing comments mentioned that Pictona and the community garden are progressing well and that the Y will phase in 24hour access starting with Holly Hill.

September The commission presented the final reading of a resolution adopting a final tax levy of 6.25 mil. The resolution passed 4-1 with Mayor Chris Via dissenting

The commission voted on the final reading of the City of Holly Hill budget. The vote was unanimous. A proclamation was read honoring Michael Cooman who recently retired from the Holly Hill police Department

After the consent agenda was passed unanimously a first reading of an addition to the ordinance on animal cruelty was read. The addition prohibited tethering of Animals with exceptions for humane tethering and provides for enforcement and penalties. A section on providing and defining adequate shelter will be added for the second reading.

After much discussion about the Holly Hill Christmas Parade the commissioners voted 4-5 to move forward with the parade.

Closing comments included the mayor discussing a memorial for all Holly Hill residents who died during military service. He has asked the local American Legion to help track down names and plans to reach out to other organizations. The names will be placed on a memorial honoring veterans. City manager Joe Forte showed a half page ad for the city in Lifestyle Magazine. The ad consisted of 5 photos depicting life in Holly Hill and included the newly developed Pictona and Sunset Park with new boat launch.

October The meeting began with a proclamation recognizing October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. A plaque was given to representatives from Beacon House. Beacon House is the only state sanctioned agency for domestic abuse in Volusia County. The agency provides not only shelter but also programs to help victims mentally and financially achieve the independence needed to leave an abusive environment

During public participation one speaker talked about the amount of trash including needles along the Halifax River. She and several volunteers have been trying to clean the area. She would like to see some trash bins along with signage and also a new osprey platform. She was commended for her hard work and determination. The city manager asked her to meet with him to formulate a volunteer program with a coordinator.

After the consent agenda was approved the commissioners listened to a presentation by Keith Norton from Team Volusia. An Economic Development Agreement for FY2020-2021 was approved. The commission asked that Team Volusia concentrate on small businesses for Holly Hill since the city has no large parcels of land. The commission would work to help redevelop commercial areas with smaller businesses such as manufacturing in mind.

The second reading amending an ordinance of animal care and control to include harmful tethering of animals was passed unanimously.

Comments at the end of the meeting included announcements that an art festival is scheduled for April 10-11 and that the new Pictona was awarded the International Pickleball Tournament in April 2021. The commissioners are very proud of how well Pictona has been received by the community

New Smyrna Beach

www.cityofnsb.com/315/Agendas-and-Minutes

Nancy Nusbaum, Observer

August The Commissioners approved changes to the City Charter which will appear on the November 3 ballot. The Charter Review Committee stated that “. . . is a refinement of the document that has been amended at various times. Many of the changes . . . are for the purpose of clarifying or further defining the intent of the language; removing obsolete language; changing current sections; and adding items not included in the existing charter. There have been no changes to the form of government, the makeup of the City Commission, or the terms of office.” There is a new article addressing sustainability with regard to the environment, preservation of historic neighborhoods, use of impervious material, sale of public land and septic tank practices.

The NSB city commission meetings have been at the Brannon Center since the start of the pandemic to allow social distancing. The Commission approved purchase and installation equipment there to record and live-stream meetings and events. Other changes approved include renewal of a controversial lease for the NSB Boat and Skii Club, construction of another automobile service center on SR 44, expansion of The Palms residential subdivision, and construction of a dog “resort” on SR 44

September The commission addressed special events that have been planned for fall in light of continuing concerns about COVID 19. Most of the events were cancelled. Other topics included budget, zoning, upgrades and repairs to public spaces and infrastructure

October In addition to routine city business related to zoning, annexation, building permits, etc. the following issues were discussed. NSB traditionally has many public gathering events during the next few months that each have been reviewed for plans to comply with COVID 19 guidelines. Upcoming Trunk or Treat and Flamingo Follies (Flagler Avenue merchants event) were approved but other events such as the boat parade were cancelled. Compliance plans for several others, Coastal Christmas market, Craft Beer Walk, Light up Flagler, will be reviewed.

A public comment brought up the incident from New Smyrna Beach High School where a black student was verbally abused on a bus with racial slurs and taunts. The incident was posted on Facebook in a 22 second video and was picked up by news media. It was said that none of the students on the bus came to the individual’s assistance or defense. Officials from Volusia County Schools made statements that “the situation was being handled” and that “racism will not be tolerated . . . we have zero tolerance for this behavior.” There was another comment about racial conflict. A public comment was made regarding weekly Black Lives Matter campaign gatherings that were widely attended after the George Floyd murder, and have continued with fewer participants. The commentor described the verbal abuse of people in attendance who oppose BLM.

There was another public comment made about how the vote on our revised city charter has become the target of false information and politics on social media. I have observed that some local issues seem to follow this national trend that creates confusion, conflict and division.

Ormond Beach City

www.ormondbeach.iqm2.com/citizens

Susan Bayley, Observer

September Another virtual meeting dominated by the issue of granting permits to vendors and food trucks on Re 1 during Biketoberfest, with 15 citizens representing Destination Daytona and bars on Rte. 1 pleading for granting such permits. Interestingly, no other citizens spoke to not granting permits, for whatever reason. To my surprise, there wasn't an official vote for the decision to grant permits, although it was understood that the commission would approve granting permits. Persis continued her concern about the event spreading Covid19, but realized she was outnumbered. She "caved" to the majority.

A regular meeting with social distancing, but I chose to listen to the meeting at home. Commissioners approved the \$96,520,000 budget for 2020-2021, noting that healthy reserves are 20% of the budget. The city has 18,374 employees.

The 1946 building for the Ormond Beach Memorial Museum & Garden will be rebuilt, preserving some of its history--built by returning veterans from WWII. Recent heavy rain and wind have created serious storm water problems, a major one being on Harbor Drive. The master plan includes repairing this particular drainage problem by spring 2021.

A national bicycle association is planning a major route (not a trail) from Key West to Maine, asking for city input about its proposed route in Ormond Beach. Commissioners want citizens on the affected route to be consulted because the city can propose changes. Not surprisingly, the route will include some of the Loop.

October Ormond Beach received a public improvement award from the state for its new floating dock on the Halifax River. The Community Redevelopment Agency approved a \$960,000 capital improvement budget that includes \$900,000 for water and waste management. FEMA will be granting 75% of the city's \$1.5 million budget for future projects.

City Manager Shanahan reported that the city has finally received 95% of FEMA grants for Hurricanes Matthew/seven projects (2016) and Irma/24 projects (2017).

Littleton reported concern about the closing of Regal Theater on Williamson, i.e. the city should consider repurposing it.

Selby reported that a county commissioner had called him a liar on a local radio program and told the sheriff about it, receiving support from the community about this allegation.

Pierson

www.townofpierson.org

Susan Bayley, Observer

September Councilman Bennett did not attend because he had a stroke and is in intensive care. Legal counsel reported that because the state of Florida stipulates a seven-day state of emergency, the mayor has the authority to renew it without having to hold a meeting of the council. Hurricane season seems to require this action. Legal counsel also told the council that it appoint a town employee to handle regulation of signs in the town.

The mayor and others discussed how to improve census returns. In 2010 it was about 50%, while right now it is less than that. They want to make sure that the Farmworkers Association and local churches help in getting out the word.

A candidate for the West Volusia Hospital Authority introduced herself, noting that her opponent wishes to defund it.

Note: Of the 18 attendees at this meeting, eight wore masks.

There was much discussion of rental fees for use of the Rodeo Grounds (RG) because the Saddle Club (SC) now has an agreement to use this town property. The RG will continue paying \$250/month, while the SC will pay \$200/event.

Two of the five councilmen did not attend, but there was a quorum. Sadly, Herbert Bennett (not related to Samuel Bennett Chair) died of a stroke that occurred a few hours after the September 8th meeting. He was running for election as a 30-year incumbent, but had an opponent. The window of opportunity for someone else to be on the upcoming ballot was in mid June, so this candidate will now replace H. Bennett. Interestingly, this candidate (Sergia Cardenas) is a Hispanic woman, a first on two fronts for this council. Hispanics comprise 54% of the population.

October Much of the meeting dealt with plans for repurposing a former elementary school building that the town had purchased from Volusia County in 6/19, including a microphone system for council meetings and engineering services. It also dealt with giving away surplus children's play items. Council members were pleased to learn that Team Volusia, a public-private partnership, had just agreed to pay for Pierson's membership (\$1,000 or \$.50/resident). There have been only three of the county's 16 cities that had not joined, but the organization chose Pierson for this grant.

Ponce Inlet

https://ponceinlet-my.sharepoint.com/:v:/g/personal/phunt_ponceinlet_org/EWvJsX7IH09BmpxnncPwjM0Bih7rd4IPwi8_7R4_lahkxQ?e=ah3xEI

Pat Gadbow, Observer

August, September, October Improvements in the dog park planned. As more people have obtained pet during the pandemic it is probably wise to invest in their existing dog park.

Plans continue on the Ponce de Leon Circle gravity septic-to-Sewer Project. This land is surrounded by water on all three sides and is high priority. Details on sharing costs with Port Orange, SJRMD (St Johns...) Residents would be responsible for \$3,000+

10/15/20: Preparations and budgeting are underway for the inevitable sea level rising. Under their watershed master plan the town is seeking some state funding.

Resolution 14 2020 acknowledges how much the town of Ponce Inlet has been improved from both Volusia Forever and Echo. They are hopeful these programs are continued for another 20 years.

River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)

Ann Harrell, Observer

<https://www.r2ctpo.org/board-committees/tpo-board/>

See website for information

School Board of Volusia County

Ann Harrell, Reportin

www.vcsedu.org/school-board/agendas-minutes

August 25, 2020 - School Board Meeting – Workshop/Work Session

▲ Dr. Carmen Balgobin, Interim Superintendent, presented a PowerPoint to clarify the three Options available for school reopening, Aug. 31, 2020. Option 1: Traditional Classroom Setting; Option 2: Volusia Live (real-time learning option that mirrors Traditional classroom school day, but remotely); Option 3: Enhanced Volusia Online Learning. This option provides for virtual learning at your own pace. VOL parttime students take some of their classes at their regular school of enrollment and some

classes virtually. There was quite a bit of discussion and questions by various board members throughout the presentation.

August 25, 2020 – Regular School Board Meeting (Virtual)

▲ In response to a Board member’s question, Amanda Wiles, Executive Director, ESE, explained that the district did save some money for the time in the spring that schools were closed, but some of the savings were used to provide services over the summer. The remaining savings have been used to increase the number of behavior specialists for this school year by two individuals.

▲ The Board moved to consolidate Ortona and Osceola Elementary schools and build a K-5 campus on the existing Ortona Elementary site. Motion carried 4:1 with Mr. Persis voting Nay.

▲ Attorney Doran provided an update on the status of the FEA vs. State of Florida case. Florida Education Association filed a lawsuit shortly after the state of Florida issued an executive order to reopen brick and mortar schools by August 31, 2020 or lose funding. Judge Dodson sided with the FEA and ruled that the executive order was unconstitutional. Mr. Doran stated that this is a huge victory for the teachers. The Governor has filed a notice of appeal.

September 8, 2020 - School Board Regular Meeting (Virtual)

School Board members shared their experiences visiting schools within their districts during the first week of the 2020-2021 School Year.

▲ The Volusia County School Board approved its nearly \$1 billion (\$992,134,746) budget for 2020-2021, and a slight tax increase, complete with almost \$11 million from its reserves to balance out its annual deficit. Total millage rate – 5.907. According to Debra Muller, Chief Financial Officer, pulling money out of savings account every year to off-set ever increasing operational costs will eventually result in a financial crisis.

▲ Volusia County Schools Superintendent, Scott Fritz, leave of absence will be extended until February 1, 2021, as he undergoes cancer treatment.

▲ Resolution 2020-30 states: The School Board of Volusia County hereby, retroactively appoints Dr. Carmen Balgobin as Interim Superintendent effective August 31, 2020 and continuing intermittently as needed, based on Dr. Scott’s Fritz’s ability to work, until February 1, 2021. Board members expressed the need to add a provision that any increase in pay for Dr. Balgobin would be determined later after union negotiations and teacher salary allocation are completed. Motion carried unanimously as amended.

October 13, 2020 - School Board Regular Meeting

▲ About two-thirds of students in middle school and high school enrolled in Volusia Live are failing at least one class. Data shared by the school district showed that 65%, or 3,619 out of 5,533 student in high school enrolled in the live streamed classroom learning model have a D or an F grade in at least one class. The number is higher at the middle school level. Those students will be encouraged to return to in-person schooling.

▲ For the first time Volusia County students scored higher than the national and state averages on the SAT last year.

▲ At the request of teachers and the School Board to “fix” the remote learning system, high school students will have new class schedules by the beginning of the second quarter of the school year.

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