

MINUTES  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY OF NICEVILLE, FLORIDA  
APRIL 13, 2021

The Niceville City Council met in regular session at 7:00 p.m., April 13, 2021 in the Council Chambers, 208 N Partin Drive. All Council members and the Mayor was present. Also present were City Manager, Lannie Corbin; City Clerk, Dan Doucet; City Attorney, Dixie Powell; Police Department, Chief Popwell; Fire Department, Chief Mayville; Public Works, Johnathan Laird. Both Deputy Clerks attended including Wendy Farmer and Finance Director, Steven Rausch. There were 23 additional attendees including other City employees.

Mayor Henkel offered the prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Henkel called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Regular Council Meeting, March 9, 2021  
Special Council Meeting, March 23, 2021  
Planning Commission Meeting – April 5, 2021  
Local Planning Agency Meeting – No Meeting Held

Councilman Nodjomian moved approval of the minutes. Councilman Williams seconded. No discussion followed. Council Vote: Schaetzle-yes; Nodjomian-yes; Alley-yes; Donahoo-yes; Williams-yes. Motion passed

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**PRESENTATIONS**

Youth Advisory Council - Update

Niceville Youth Advisory Council Vice-Chairman James Baird addressed the City Council and said the Youth Advisory Council would be attending the Florida League of Cities Youth Advisory Council virtual summit on May 1<sup>st</sup>, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. We will be picking up ideas and tips for increasing Youth Advisory Council participation. We also recently submitted an essay for the Florida League of Cities contest. The winner will be announced in late April. Tonight, we will be giving out the award for the park-naming contest. Councilman Nodjomian spoke about the Youth Advisory Council's park-naming contest for the park near the corner of Rocky Bayou Drive and Forest Road next to the Ruckel Airstrip. We had how many submissions, asked Councilman Nodjomian? Mr. Baird said we had more than 170 submissions. The Youth

---

Advisory Council worked to cut that down and assigned the names to certain categories, like those named after animals or named after people, or other kinds of categories. Then, they ultimately presented them to the Niceville City Council, an opportunity to select the name we thought was best for that piece of land and what it is going to mean to our City, said Councilman Nodjomian.

So, of the total submissions, the person who ended up submitting the park name that we all chose, was Linnea A. Keene, said Councilman Nodjomian. So, if you will come up and join us I'm going to read the Certificate of Appreciation. Councilman Nodjomian read the Certificate while the City Manager displayed the two artist's designs on large poster boards, of the new park name, both with an aircraft and the park name in the design. The park, which was built on land donated for that purpose by Okaloosa County, will be named Rocky Runway Common, explained Councilman Nodjomian. Ms. Keene was presented a card, signed by all of the members of the Niceville Youth Advisory Council, along with a \$100 Amazon gift card purchased with funds raised by the Youth Advisory Council. Ms. Keene expressed her appreciation for recognizing her submission.

Tammy McGaughy, CPA/ABV, CFF, CFE, Warren Averett, LLC – 2020 Financial Audit Outbrief

Ms. McGaughy thanked the Mayor and City Council for the opportunity to present the audit this year. I wanted to let you know the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, which includes the Audit, is about 169 pages. In your book, you have a very high-level overview of the results. For the audience, I have a little presentation here as well. This year we were able to issue unmodified opinions on your financial statements, which is the highest level of assurance you can receive on your financial statements, which is great. We look at your internal controls to see if there were any deficiencies in internal controls, said Ms. McGaughy. This year we noted two significant deficiencies in internal controls. We'll go over those a little later. There was one compliance finding, which was isolated to this year, and we'll go over that as well.

You also were subject to a Single Audit, where you had funding of expenditures over \$750,000. That level of audit gets more into the Federal Awards, the internal controls surrounding those dollars, as well as compliance, and we found no findings associated with the Single Audit.

I'm happy to present, that this year also, you have received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 34<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. That is a great accomplishment for this City, and we're proud that you have been able to do that, said Ms. McGaughy.

Probably your biggest liability relates to pension standard reporting. The City offers, through the Florida Retirement System, benefits for employees. Throughout their period of employment, they start accruing those. For the City, although you are making your annual required contributions, the State of Florida overall is underfunded. They have about \$200 billion in a liability at this point in time. They are 82 percent funded. The City of Niceville shares in that responsibility. Your liability, at the end of September 2020 was \$13.8 million. So, that's an increase of probably about \$2 million compared to last year. That changes because there are actuarial assumptions that are made, such as how much you can invest and what is the rate of return. So, there is often a disparity between what the actuaries are using as assumptions versus the actual experience of the investments in the retirement plan.

Another benefit that you offer is other post-employment benefits (OPEB). This is the health insurance. That also has a \$5.4 million liability as of September 30, 2020. Again, this is just actuarially determined. It's an estimate and it can change from year to year.

The next slide is really looking at the government as a whole, and what it takes to run the City of Niceville. It costs the City of Niceville, for the past fiscal year, a little over \$26 million. You funded some of the expenses through charges for services, and some items through operating grants, or capital grants. And, then you have general revenues. That includes your taxes. During 2020, you were able to have an increase in your bottom line of \$4.4 million. If you look at 2020, one unique thing that happened this year is that we had the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of you are still wearing masks. You received some Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act money, which also made you subject to the Federal Single Audit. You also started receiving money from the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States (RESTORE) Act fund. You have the Discretionary Sales Tax Fund also that is starting to increase and benefit the City of Niceville. So, in 2020 you had a \$4.4 million increase in your bottom line, said Ms. McGaughy.

From a General Fund standpoint, we look at a historical trend, and you can see 2020, as we have already described, was a unique year for that increase in funding. Your property tax revenue is increasing as well. There was a six percent increase from last year to this year.

In the governmental world, there are different types of restrictions on your fund balance. Some of it is unassigned, meaning that you can use those funds for the future however you want. Some of the monies are restricted by external resources. Some of the money is internally restricted by you. You have internally imposed some restrictions. So, probably a third of your fund balance is available for future purposes, said Ms. McGaughy.

---

This next graph shows how your proprietary funds performed this past year. Again \$2.5 million was added to the bottom line of your proprietary funds, with your Water and Sewer, and your Stormwater Funds producing most of that increase. The Sanitation Fund had a loss, but if we took out the depreciation, you were pretty much at a break-even point for 2020.

We've already talked about the pension liability. Again, the big picture is that the City is doing everything that you're supposed to be doing, as far as making those annual required contributions. That liability will change from year to year based on the assumptions that are being used by the actuaries, said Ms. McGaughy.

The last thing I want to talk about are some of the deficiencies that we found in the internal control structure, as well as the compliance finding. The first deficiency is auditor-proposed journal entries. There are different levels of deficiencies. The highest level of deficiency would be a material weakness in your internal control structure. We did not find any material weaknesses.

The second level down is a significant deficiency, where we feel it is very important to communicate to the Council to improve some of those deficiencies. The first one is auditor-proposed journal entries. During our audit, we made a significant amount of journal entries. If you look at 2020, and everything that was going on in this year, we feel that management and finance can implement some additional policies and procedures to review things throughout the year rather than waiting until the end of the year when the volume of entries is significant. As a result, we made some significant adjustments, as auditors during the audit. So, we had to make that comment.

Councilman Nodjomian said just to put it in layman's terms, if this was our personal account, we should have been balancing our checkbook in a little bit more timely manner? That's correct, said Ms. McGaughy.

The second deficiency deals with asset accounting and reporting. This comment has been a repeating comment over the years. Sometimes it improves, and sometimes it doesn't. Really, what it boils down to is, there is obviously a lot of capital activity going on around the City. Not all of the information gets to finance on a timely basis, and so sometimes the projects that are going on are missed, and some of it is just the volume of activity. So, we're recommending that management take a look at the procedures, and reconcile the subsidiary ledgers on a more periodic basis, versus waiting until year-end. This comment came back because of the material nature of the comments that were made this past fiscal year.

The last comment is isolated to 2020. You had a sales tax discretionary fund. You originally budgeted the expenditures in the General Fund. The reimbursement of those expenses was from the Sales Tax Discretionary Fund. So, there was no budget. Florida requires, that if you are going to spend money, that those expenses be budgeted. So, this year, the Discretionary Sales Tax Fund did not have a legally adopted budget, so therefore, any expenses that were incurred within that fund, were considered a compliance issue. In 2021, you've already adopted a budget for the Discretionary Sales Tax Fund, so it's really just isolated to FY20, but we had to report it.

That's it. Again, it's a very high-level overview. I would be happy to sit down with anyone who has questions on the details of the report, but this is just a real high-level summary of what happened with the financial performance for the City in 2020, said Ms. McGaughy.

Councilman Nodjomian said, given both finding 001 and 002 were essentially the same, of not doing timely journal entries and recognizing capital assets, and given that finding 002 is a repeat finding, what are we going to do to prevent that from occurring next year? Mr. Corbin replied, we met with Ms. McGaughy. We met with the ones that are making those entries, and we have that problem resolved. So, we won't see this next year, asked Councilman Nodjomian? No, replied Mr. Corbin. We will revisit this, before year-end to ensure that this comment will not resurface. So, we will be helpful in trying to make sure that doesn't happen, said Ms. McGaughy. So, this is a clean audit, and if we can just get those things done we'll make sure this doesn't happen again, said Councilman Nodjomian. The bottom line was that there was a bottom line. Nothing fraudulent happened. There were some entries that should have been made on a timelier basis. Ms. McGaughy works with us as we need her, and does a great job working with us. We will resolve those issues. Thank you, Ms. McGaughy, said Mr. Corbin.

#### Elisa Mitchiner, Niceville Historian – Historical Marker Grant Application

Ms. Mitchiner greeted the City Council and said before I talk about the historical markers, I'd like to provide an update on the CCC Worker Statue. It was ready to be shipped today, coincidentally. So, the CCC Legacy president is coordinating with the trucking company, and as soon as I get that information, I'll let you know. Today, we're here to talk about proposed historical markers. You have received copies of the four that we are looking at. It was tough to write those because we were limited to 1,235 characters, including punctuation and anything. So, are there any comments or questions about any of those, asked Ms. Mitchiner? Mayor Henkel said he assumed everyone had a chance to look them over and asked for questions or comments.

Mr. Rausch asked to speak about the Historical Marker Grant Application. Mayor Henkel said go ahead Steven Rausch. Ms. Mitchiner said yes, please do. Thank you, said Mr. Rausch.

Mr. Rausch stated that he wanted to talk briefly about this historical marker grant. I have been working with Ms. Mitchiner and she has written that language that you have in front of you. I have been working within the rules of the grant. In order to get this grant, which is a 50/50 match grant, the City would have to match the grant funds for these official state historical markers. I think it's a good deal for the City. The City would have to contribute a little less than \$5,000 and the value of the historical markers is close to \$10,000. There would be four historical markers, and the locations suggested by Ms. Mitchiner are listed in the paperwork that you received. One is for the Niceville Landing. One is at Lions Park. One is at the Lula J. Edge Elementary, which used to be Niceville High School, and one is in the vicinity of the Front Porch restaurant.

In order for this grant to be approved, it has to be submitted by June 1<sup>st</sup>. Before it can be submitted, it is required that the language be approved by the State Historical Marker Council. The deadline to submit the language is this Friday. It has an improved chance of being passed by the State Historical Marker Council if the City Council, you all approve the language. I have prepared a letter, in case you approve it, that Mayor Henkel could sign, that would say that you all approved it by a vote. I wouldn't have to change the letter if it was a unanimous vote. So, I am asking if you would do that?

A little bit more information... they would decide on the language by May 20, 2021, and then we would have the next 11 or 12 days to actually submit the grant application. There's a little bit more to the grant. We would also need the government official who represents that public property, to sign off approving the historical marker to be located on the property, for the school for instance. If the grant is approved, we would get the funding, only if the State Legislature approved the funding. Then we would receive the grant funds on or after July 1, 2022, so you could not order or pay for the historical markers until on or after that date. You would have one year to do it. Lastly, the geographic coordinates of the historic marker locations would need to be submitted with the application, said Mr. Rausch. So, we will need to know the precise geographic locations for where the signs will go, to submit the historic marker applications this Friday. That's what I had for you. Do you have any questions, asked Mr. Rausch? Do you want us to approve the language for each marker, asked Councilwoman Alley? Yes ma'am. And, I hadn't had time to discuss this, but you do get extra points if you do a double-sided sign, with one side in Spanish. This year, one of the two objectives of the historical grants program, was to make them more accessible to communities underrepresented in historic preservation. So, I think that would improve the chances of

the grant being awarded, if we were to go for the double-sided marker with one side in Spanish and one in English.

Councilman Schaetzle said, if it isn't too much trouble, with four different markers and four different sayings, for the sake of the audience, is it possible to read what you have?

Ms. Mitchiner stepped forward and read each of the four pages of words that she wrote, one for each historical marker application as follows:

#### Old Maritime City

*Mail service here was established in 1868. The Schooner Bera Attious was built at the shipyard here in 1888. Niceville, in Walton County was known as Boggy until 1910 when the name changed. In 1915 Okaloosa County was formed. Products from sawmills, shingle mills and turpentine stills were transported across Choctawhatchee Bay to Pensacola. In 1911, the steamer Belle, loaded with naval stores sank with the loss of four lives including local Noah Edward Burlison. Fishing was a lucrative industry. Fish wagons from as far away as Alabama and the northern part of the state came here to buy fish. Some of the launches servicing this area were the Swan, Donna, Ruth, Fritz and the Belle, providing passenger, freight and mail services with scheduled stops between here and Pensacola. In 1934 an ice factory made it possible to produce large quantities of ice, increasing fish sales. Niceville was the center of the commercial fishing industry of the Choctawhatchee Bay region, the basis of the community's prosperity. The Niceville Fish Company operated by Claude Meigs and the Spence Brothers Fish Company were the leading commercial fishing industries maintaining fish warehouses and fleets of fishing boats.*

Councilman Nodjomian recommended a minor revision to keep chronological order. Ms. Mitchiner agreed and two sentences were switched resulting in the version shown immediately above. The next one is the Boggy Mill Company Site, which was where Lions Park is now.

#### Boggy Mill Company Site

*Lumber industry jobs like logging and shingle-getting drew settlers. The work was rough, difficult and dangerous. With access to the forest and waterways, Boggy was an ideal location for this industry. Scarritt Moreno of Pensacola owned the Boggy Mill Co. The complex consisted of 40 acres. In early November 1908, the flywheel of the largest engine gave way. A piece of metal struck Engineer George Bostick, resulting in his death. The Pensacola News Journal reported November 25, 1908: "The Boggy Mill Company is now running its plant on full time, cutting about 21,000 board feet per day. The mill of the Consolidated Land and Lumber Company will be ready to start up within a short time. Boggy is becoming one of the best towns in this section. The name Boggy signifies*

---

*that it is bogged up with business. There are about ten buildings in the course of construction and everyone is busy. New families are locating rapidly, and at the present time the town has four stores, two mills and two turpentine stills.” In 1912, J. P. Rawls bought the Boggy Mill Co. at public auction plus 6,000 more acres. Rawls sold the Boggy Mill Co. to the Mutual Land and Lumber Co. also at Boggy, owned by R. E. L. McCaskill.*

Our next marker would be the old Niceville High School, which is Edge Elementary, said Ms. Mitchiner.

### Old Niceville High School

*In May 1924, George Nathey conveyed 7 acres to the Okaloosa County Board of Public Instruction for the site location. It was built in 1925, facing Niceville Avenue. Fire destroyed the school in 1926. It was rebuilt and ready for classes in 1928. In 1933 Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Co. 1402 set up temporary camp on the school grounds while the permanent camp was built across the highway. It was again destroyed in July 1936, by a hurricane. The Great Depression made it even harder to raise funds to rebuild. It became one of the county’s top priorities. The School Board petitioned Congress to grant aid for school construction as a part of the Emergency Division of Works Progress Administration (WPA). The school built by the WPA was described as a splendid, modern building that would provide for the needs of the community for a long while. The only high school in the southern section of the county, in 1943, it was the first school in the county to have a 9 month school term for military families at Eglin Field. In 1952 the name changed to Niceville Elementary and in 1962 to honor her commitment in preserving the school, it became Lula J. Edge Elementary. It is Niceville’s oldest school.*

We would need to get permission from the School Board, I’m sure, for this to be erected at Edge Elementary, said Ms. Mitchiner.

People are talking about the next one, the Niceville Fire of 1934.

### Niceville Fire 1934

*As Reported in Local Newspapers:*

*“The 200 CCC men formed bucket brigades and in cooperation with the fire crews of the Choctawhatchee National Forest did yeomen service in saving buildings and stocks of merchandise after three grocery stores, a dry goods store, creamery, post office building, hotel, drug store and fish warehouses were destroyed. The loss is estimated at \$100,000 (worth two million dollars in 2021) with little insurance. There was no running water with which to combat the flames and it appeared for a time that the town would be completely destroyed until the forest firefighters and CCC workers took charge.”*  
*(Gadsden County Times, January 25, 1934)*

---

*"While the ruins were still smoldering, space was being made in Finck's for the post office. During the day the Niceville Fish Company set up offices there. Within a little while a grocery had been added. And now Adolph's establishment represents the bay country's first and only complete arcade. In it is found a post office, a wholesale and retail fish house, a grocery, a restaurant, a bakery and the bay country's only draft beer dispensary, while the Niceville Masonic Lodge occupies the floor above."*  
(*The Valparaiso Star, February 1, 1934*)

Councilman Nodjomian asked Ms. Mitchiner if she added the \$2,000,000 for context? Is that intended to be on the historical marker? Ms. Mitchiner replied that she had and it was. I would suggest that it reads, approximately two million in 2021 dollars, said Councilman Nodjomian. That sign is going to be read twenty years from now. We're not putting up that sign temporarily. So, we need to benchmark it as far as today, being 2021, said Councilman Nodjomian. That's a good point. Okay, said Ms. Mitchiner. As a result of this discussion, the words were revised to read as shown above.

Those are fantastic, said Councilman Nodjomian. Thank you, replied Ms. Mitchiner. So, since the worker statue didn't meet the criteria for this, I'm delighted to have Steven Rausch working with us for this grant.

Mayor Henkel said, so we need a motion to approve the verbiage, and we also need to approve going after the grant in the format that was described. Is that correct Steve? Yes sir; and we would like to come back to you in a month with a resolution, because the application would require a resolution be passed, stating the matching funding was there, and submitted with the grant application. So, the funding resolution can wait a month, but the verbiage would have to be approved today sir, said Mr. Rausch.

Mayor Henkel asked if the suggested revisions would be possible without exceeding the character limit for the historical markers? Mr. Rausch said the changes would be possible and recommended approving the historical marker language with suggested revisions. Councilwoman Alley motioned approval of the verbiage for the four historical markers, with the recommended verbiage revisions. Councilman Nodjomian seconded.

Ms. Judy Boudreaux, of 2423 Duncan Drive came forward and introduced herself. What is the size of these historical markers? Mr. Rausch showed a picture of an official State historical marker and said he would look up the specifications and provide them. No further discussion followed. Council Vote: Schaetzle-yes; Nodjomian-yes; Alley-yes; Donahoo-yes; Williams-yes. Motion passed.

Becky Cole, Executive Director, Niceville Housing Authority

Ms. Cole greeted the City Council and said she wanted to re-introduce the Niceville Housing Authority to City officials since we have a few new Council members. The housing authority owns and manages 111 public housing units. The units are provided for elderly, disabled, and low-income families. Public housing is a federally-funded program. Property is owned and managed at the local level by the Housing Authority and we're under contract with the local government. We operate from our rents collected from the tenants. We get a subsidy from the federal government and annually they give us a federal grant for capital improvements. Ms. Cole provided a history of the public housing authority program at the federal and local level.

Ms. Cole said the 111 units are occupied year-round, with a wait-time of about 12 months. So, the need for additional affordable housing increases each year. The federal government has decided to divest from supporting these original units and turned over the burden to the housing authorities. The Niceville Housing Authority has a vision to eventually develop its properties and double the amount of affordable housing in the City. We must do so with no federal funding. We have created a 501c3, which is a tax-exempt nonprofit and it is called Niceville Housing Authority, Incorporated. We're hoping through donations to our affiliate, and funding from the City, that one day we'll be able to fulfill our mission said Ms. Cole. Our current Commissioners with the Housing Authority, we have a few of them here, are Chairman Freddie Allen, Vice-Chairman Katherine Dunn, and Commissioner Freida Spence.

#### Proclamation – City Clerk Week

Mayor Henkel said before we go to the next agenda item, I want to do a special presentation. Mayor Henkel said Councilman Nodjomian had joked about Mr. Corbin being around for the 1934 Fire. Most of you know that he has served as our City Manager for about 50 years in August. Well, he has a side-kick. His name is Dan Doucet. Dan hasn't been here for quite that long, but he's been here for a while, said Mayor Henkel. So, Dan would you come up here please? There is the 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Professional Municipal Clerk's week coming up May 2<sup>nd</sup> through May 8<sup>th</sup>. You knew that, right? Yes, sir. One of the duties I have is I get to issue proclamations once in a while. We have one of these professional municipal clerks, and I would like to issue a proclamation to acknowledge that fact. These proclamations drive me crazy sometimes because they have a lot of whereas's in them. Mayor Henkel read the proclamation ending with "Now, therefore I, Daniel Henkel, Mayor of Niceville, do recognize the week of May 2<sup>nd</sup> through May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 as Professional Municipal Clerk's Week, and further, extend appreciation to our Professional Municipal Clerk, Daniel J. Doucet, and to all professional municipal clerks for the vital service they perform, and their exemplary dedication to the communities they represent." Thank you, sir. I had a lot of help getting there, said Mr. Doucet.

---

Ordinance 21-04-01 – An ordinance for rezoning of certain properties in the City of Niceville, Florida, providing for the same and an effective date. The property owner has requested to rezone several of their properties on South Cedar and 27<sup>th</sup> St. from R-2, one or multiple family to R-3, multiple family. Randy Wise Homes. (Final Reading)

Mr. Doucet read Ordinance 21-04-01 by title. Councilman Williams moved approval. Councilman Donahoo seconded. No discussion followed. Council Vote: Williams-yes; Donahoo-yes; Alley-yes; Schaetzle-yes; Nodjomian-yes. Motion passed.

Resolution 21-04-01 – A resolution of the City of Niceville Florida, establishing election procedures.

Mr. Doucet read Resolution 21-04-01 by title. Councilman Nodjomian moved approval. Councilman Williams seconded. Mr. Doucet explained the resolution was required by the City's election code. It establishes a schedule for the qualifying periods, etcetera. We have two elected officials, Councilman Nodjomian and Councilman Donahoo, who are up for reelection this year. Our election is on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021. If there is a run-off election, it would be on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021. It's a really helpful resolution. It is a step-by-step schedule for the election, said Mr. Doucet. It's helpful to candidates and anybody who's interested in the election process. No further discussion followed. Council Vote: Nodjomian-yes; Schaetzle-yes; Alley-yes; Donahoo-yes; Williams-yes. Motion passed.

Resolution 21-04-02 – A resolution granting a special exception to the Land Development Code section 8.05.03, C, minimum parking requirements, to allow for 4.0 per 1,000 square foot as apposed to the required 10.0 per square foot. Requested by Valparaiso Realty, 1030 John Sims Parkway E., representing Aldi's.

Mr. Doucet read Resolution 21-04-02 by title. Councilman Schaetzle moved approval. Councilman Donahoo seconded.

Mr. Pat Byrne, representing Valparaiso Realty Company. I'm going to do the broad brush, and if you want some more particulars, Mr. Zinke, who is an engineer, is here to answer any of those. For whatever reason, that parking requirement got into Niceville's code in the 1980s. I don't think it has ever been enforced. I'm of the opinion it was a clerical error somewhere, because no one has ever heard of 10.0 per 1,000 square feet for grocery stores, except it's in Valparaiso's code. Mr. Zinke had a theory, and it's only a theory, that the same consultant in the 1980s cranked out this document, and no one ever realized grocery stores never need ten parking spaces per thousand, said Mr. Byrne. Restaurant parking lots do. Other things do. Most of the municipalities, over the last 30 to

40 years, have gone from five spaces per thousand square feet of commercial space, down to the low fours. Walmart has a 3.97, at their request.

Essentially, Aldi needs 95 parking spaces, which is 4.65 spaces per thousand square feet of commercial space. They know their own internal needs to sustain their own building. They, better than anyone know what they need in consideration for this, said Mr. Byrne. If you have any questions, Mr. Zinke is available.

Councilwoman Alley asked if access to the grocery store would be from State Road (SR) 20, or from the back?

Mr. Zinke, 121 Hart Street, Niceville, greeted the Council and said, to answer your question, the proposed grocery store would have access both from Marc Smith in the rear, and from SR20 in the front. That SR20 connection would have to be permitted through the Department of Transportation (DOT) once we get to that stage. Right now, Aldi's, in their due diligence, hasn't kicked off their engineering, because they want to make sure they can get this parking nailed down before they move forward. If Niceville required 10 parking spaces to 1,000 square feet of commercial space, no grocery company is going to come in at that parking ratio. I think it's in your binder; I made a list of all of the ratios from Pensacola all the way to Bay County. It's all either 5 per thousand or 4 per thousand. The national code is at 3.92 I think. That's from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Parking generation manual. The City planning staff, at the planning meeting, mentioned if they were not able to use Niceville's building code, they had used that manual for the past several years.

The planning commission voted 5 – 0 on this, asked Councilman Nodjomian? That is correct, replied Mr. Zinke. I assume you will come back later with stormwater? Aldi has their own engineer, but we'll be working with them. I'm really curious how their going to do that, said Councilman Nodjomian. More discussion followed about stormwater planning.

Councilman Nodjomian said, not a comment for you necessarily, but please stay there in case anybody else has questions. Do we have any commentary as to why our code is so far out of whack with everybody else's on this parking requirement? And, if we've known this for years, which is what I've heard from my planning representative, when he talked to me about this particular planning project, I'm curious as to why we haven't adjusted ours to be more in alignment? Instead of waiving it every time, why don't we just get it right, asked Councilman Nodjomian? I agree with that. We need to change it, said Mr. Corbin. I'll put that on the Planning Commission agenda, and make it a recommendation to the City Council at the next meeting. I think that would be a much better way, rather than having them come back for variances and waivers every time, said

Councilman Nodjomian. No further discussion followed. Council Vote: Nodjomian-yes; Schaetzle-yes; Alley-yes; Donahoo-yes; Williams-yes. Motion passed.

Resolution 21-04-03 – A resolution granting a special exception to the Land Development Code section 9.06.04, E, swimming pools, to allow for a 5-foot setback from the house and a 2-foot setback from the property line as opposed to the required 6-foot and 4-foot. This 2-foot setback will prohibit the future construction of a pool enclosure. Randy and Judy Thompson, 1246 Elderflower Drive.

Mr. Doucet read Resolution 21-04-03 by title. Councilman Schaetzle moved approval. Councilman Donahoo seconded. Councilman Nodjomian asked why they were asking for an exception that's not going to allow them to do a pool enclosure?

Mr. Randy Thompson, 1246 Elderflower Drive, introduced himself and explained because he was asking for a 2-foot setback instead of the 4-foot set-back, there would not be room for a pool enclosure. I understand now. The enclosure itself would violate the setback? Yes sir, replied Mr. Thompson. Thank you. Council Vote: Williams-yes; Donahoo-yes; Alley-yes; Schaetzle-yes; Nodjomian-yes. Motion passed.

Resolution 21-04-04 – A resolution granting a special exception to the Land Development Code section 9.06.04, E, swimming pools, to allow for a 3-foot setback from the property line as opposed to the required 4-foot. William and Heather Meeboer 244 Elderflower Drive.

Mr. Doucet read Resolution 21-04-04 by title. Councilman Williams moved approval. Councilman Donahoo seconded. No discussion followed. Council Vote: Williams-yes; Donahoo-yes; Alley-yes; Schaetzle-yes; Nodjomian-yes. Motion passed.

## **CITY MANAGER REPORTS/REQUESTS/RECOMMENDATIONS:**

### **WATER AND SEWER**

Mr. Laird greeted Mayor Henkel, the Council, and Mr. Corbin and said, a quick recap; well 11, since we've been doing our monthly bacteria tests, everything is still looking good for that well, so we won't talk about it again.

We completed the water installation project on Fir Avenue. We'll be moving to Benton Avenue next, for another six-inch upgrade. We'll be piggy-backing off of Okaloosa County on a bore to go under John Sims Parkway to start that project. I've been in contact with Okaloosa County Water and Sewer engineers. So, they'll be moving in to start the boring on a twenty-inch re-use line that'll be going to the City.

There were 42 water calls and 15 sewer calls, 6 water taps, 18 sewer taps, and 252 line spots said Mr. Laird.

They're crossing the boulevard. They started Monday on the curbing work. They have it formed up. The work will be this week, weather permitting. The roadway installation will follow. It should be another couple of weeks and then we're done with that, said Mr. Laird.

### **STORMWATER:**

We started our stormwater project on Cedar Avenue, adding curbing and sidewalks. We finished our sidewalks a little while ago, and next week we'll start fixing the headwall around Thomas Branch. We completed another stormwater project at Red Maple Way.

### **STREETS:**

For our next sidewalk project, we'll be installing sidewalks around Plow Elementary School. We've been in contact with Okaloosa County. They will be putting in a sidewalk at Plew Elementary School around June 1<sup>st</sup>, when school lets out, from Valparaiso Boulevard, down to around Plew.

We're still waiting on Gulf Coast Traffic Engineering to start our striping program. Weather has been causing the delay.

We have paving done on Bayshore Drive and Rocky Bayou Drive. When we have completed our paving on Cedar Drive, we will pave that stretch from 31<sup>st</sup> Street to John Sims Parkway.

There's only one other thing, we had a setback. We were notified last week, on Thursday April 8<sup>th</sup>, that statewide, all inmate crews will be pulled from the roadways until further notice. We're working hard with Mr. Corbin to come up with a plan for this. So, we're going to work hard to still get everything cut, but please bear with us if you have any complaints, said Mr. Laird. Is this going to be a temporary thing, asked Mayor Henkel? I talked to the warden last Thursday, and he said at least until July, but don't hold him to it, replied Mr. Laird.

Mr. Corbin said, we're going to meet with some private contractors that do landscaping to find out what kind of price tag it would be for them to take care of that for us in the interim.

Councilwoman Alley asked if there was a timeframe for the construction of a Swift Creek sidewalk? I'm working with Mr. Corbin on that, said Mr. Laird. We're going to Plew, since school's out. Are you thinking fall, asked Councilwoman Alley? Mr. Corbin stated the Homeowner's association decided on the one at the North end by the Church. It all depends on how quickly we get the others done. Those have been there a long time without being done. But, after that, we can move right in there. We have the money in the budget for it for this year. Hopefully we'll get to it before the end of the fiscal year, said Mr. Corbin. I love the new park by the way, said Councilwoman Alley.

Mayor Henkel said the Council has been aware of the Public Works projects including making sure Rocky Runway Common park developed as it is and the paving on Rocky Bayou Drive. They are ecstatic about that work and I just want to thank you all for all of the work you have all been doing to make that happen, said Mayor Henkel. Yes sir; I also want to give a lot of credit to Northwest Florida Asphalt. We all worked together to make that happen. They worked very well too, said Mr. Laird. Things went really smoothly. Councilwoman Alley said she had been to the park walking her dogs and thanked Mr. Laird and the Public Works department.

#### **INFORMATION SERVICES AND PURCHASING:**

Mr. Morris greeted all and said there was a lot of computer maintenance and normal operations going on for the Information Technology (IT) side of things. We're still working on some irritating little issues with the virtual machine roll-out. We will be getting in touch with a couple of you to update your laptops. Your laptops will need to be turned on to update. If they are off, I am not as concerned as if they are on and not getting the updates, said Mr. Morris.

Moving over to the purchasing side of operations, I passed out a letter at the beginning of this meeting, so you may not have had time to look over it closely, said Mr. Morris. We are requesting a motion and approval by the Council to enter a Purchasing Card program with Synovus Bank. We currently use a couple of different corporate credit card accounts. Mr. Morris discussed the details of the current credit card purchasing program and explained that sometimes the lowest priced vendor does not want to accept a purchase order for payment for the reason they would prefer not to wait for payment. We always have the option of not using the lowest priced vendor and instead using a vendor that accepts purchase orders, but then we're spending more money. Mr. Morris explained the Purchase Cards have more granular control. A discussion of the details of the new Purchasing Card program followed. There is no cost to the City for this program, said Mr. Morris. In that way it is just like a credit card.

Initially, we will keep the existing credit cards until we see the Purchase Card program working. One nice benefit is that we may reach a threshold where there would be rebates to the City, but that is not the driving factor behind this decision. Synovus Bank requires a motion and approval for this, so the first paragraph on the letter I provided is the suggested motion.

Councilman Schaetzle motioned approval. Councilwoman Alley seconded. Councilman Schaetzle asked Mr. Morris if under the Purchase Card program, if we are not charged for the card, are they still giving a rebate to the City if we hit a threshold? Mr. Morris said he believed that amount is \$200,000 per year in charges. We don't currently spend that much, but if we get to that point it is approximately a one percent rebate. I'm assuming the banks make their money from VISA, said Mr. Morris. They get it from the merchants, said Councilman Nodjomian. The merchants pay that when the card is used, just like a credit card is done, said Mr. Morris.

Can we amend the motion to add the credit limit suggested, and put me on as the administrator? Those things are specifically required in the Synovus Bank paperwork, said Mr. Morris. Councilman Schaetzle said he would amend the motion he made as suggested by Mr. Morris. The credit limit would be \$50,000 and Chad Morris would be the Purchase Card program administrator. Councilwoman Alley seconded the amended motion. No further discussion followed. Council Vote: Williams-yes; Donahoo-yes; Schaetzle-yes; Alley-yes; Nodjomian-yes. Motion passed

### **Police Department – Update**

Chief Popwell greeted Mayor Henkel, the Council, and Mr. Corbin and stated that during the month of March 2021, the Niceville Police Department responded to 3,190 calls for police assistance. There was a total of 57 traffic crash reports written involving 105 vehicles, and one pedestrian fatality. The estimated amount of damage to these vehicles and related property was \$463,954. A total of 127 traffic citations and 136 traffic warnings were issued. We made 16 misdemeanor arrests, 14 felony arrests, and 3 DUI arrests. The DUIs were at: 2:30 p.m., Tom Thumb at Highway 85 with drugs involved; 2:50 p.m. CEFCO on Highway 85 with drugs involved; and 9:49 p.m. at Redwood and 27<sup>th</sup> Street. They refused to tell us where they were drinking, but they also had a warrant which made it become interesting. Chief Popwell gave a brief account of other good works they had done for the community during the month of March. We served five warrants this month. We write warrants, get them signed by the judge, and we go out and look for them and get them. We had 14 calls for suspicious activity and abandoned property. They were all homeless individuals.

We provided training to Boy Scout Troop 546. They're a charter organization. We completed all of our youth leadership training so we can be around boy scouts, girl scouts, and the explorers.

We finally got a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed with Eglin. It was difficult, especially trying to do a staff summary sheet after several years. But, that went through. We also are working on an MOU with the Sheriff's office right now. If that goes through, it will be the first one they've ever had, and that will eliminate a lot of problems we've had with the unincorporated areas in the City of Niceville.

Some of you know, some may not know. Part of the roadway, for example College Boulevard, just to the other side of the pond, is Niceville's. From the pond to the intersection is the County. Then it goes back into the City. When there's a crash, what's supposed to happen is they call the County. The County calls the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP), who comes down and works the crash. I was talking with Mr. Corbin; to me this doesn't make sense that sometimes we are having to sit here for an hour to two hours waiting on the FHP to work a crash that we could work. We have four traffic homicide detectives who are certified, so even if it is a multiple car fatality, we can work that.

I've talked to Sheriff Aden. He has got the MOU. His words to me were that they were going to sign it. There were still a few things they need to work on. So, if that happens, it would be the first time in the history of Niceville that has happened. So, basically any roadway within, what I would call the mitten of Niceville, that was a traffic violation, we could enforce. We would not be going after criminal violations or other stuff. If it happens, it will be a good thing for us.

The last, and most important thing, some of you may know her, Ms. Crank turned 91. We went to her birthday party, and just made an appearance and said hi. She's just a really cool lady.

Our canines participated in the US Police competition. It was the second time for Kodi. Corporal Richardson with canine Blue, along with Corporal Kristin Pond with Canine attended the US Police Association's Canine Association Regional Field trials in Pensacola earlier this month, where they competed against every other canine team in the state of Florida. Corporal Pond and Kodi received a perfect score of 100 in the narcotics indoor detection competition. They ended up placing second in the event because there were two other teams with a perfect score and first place was awarded to the team with

the faster time. Corporal Richardson and Blue scored near-perfect, 99.33 on vehicle searches. Richardson and Blue, and Pond and Kodi took fifth place overall in the narcotics detection two-person team event. Blue and Kodi were both certified by the US American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), earning their second certification. Both handlers involved were certified by the Alabama Canine Association. There were 70 teams from over 20 agencies, and there were a total of 72 canines involved in the competition. So, they did really well, and you can see them on the billboard, said Chief Popwell.

Councilwoman Alley asked Chief Popwell why everything increased so much compared to last month? For example, with vehicle crashes, property damage was over \$400,000 compared to a little over \$100,000 last month? It just depends on the amount of property damage. For example, we did have one tractor trailer crash. So, anytime a tractor-trailer crashes, that bumps everything up, said Chief Popwell.

Councilman Williams said Corporal Pond was recognized last night as the Niceville Police Officer of the Year, at the Niceville-Valparaiso Rotary Club meeting, so I just wanted to congratulate her on that. I got to hang out with Kodi. Very cool; I love that dog. Amazing job, said Councilman Williams. Thank you, sir, said Chief Popwell.

Mayor Henkel said my neighbors tracked me down to let me know they were most appreciative of the Niceville Police force and their ability to take care of business and do it quickly and efficiently. They had a neighbor with a burglary. At about 2:15 the alarm went off and at 2:17 the police were there. That's awesome, said Mayor Henkel.

### **Fire Department – Update**

Chief Mayville greeted everyone and stated, during the month of March, the Niceville Fire Department responded to 144 calls and Valparaiso Fire Department responded to 40 calls for assistance. Not to scare you, but to put you on notice, we are still responding to COVID-19 calls. We are dealing with some respiratory issues on patients, and we responded to about five reactions to the vaccinations. Those reactions were mild, but they were interesting, pertaining to some who were older in age and had respiratory reactions to the vaccine. I don't tell you that to scare you. I tell you that for information only.

Our Fire Department was honored by the Rotary Club. Matt Webster is a Battalion Chief with Niceville. We also had a Lieutenant that was honored by the Rotary Club for Valparaiso. We really appreciate that Councilman Williams. Thank you, said Chief Mayville.

We had our hose inspection and testing completed. It's about 8,000 feet of hose. All of our apparatuses were pump-tested and certified. They passed with flying colors. We had our annual bladder testing. They all passed. We inspected all of our Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) within the City. There's one on the wall right here. They're throughout the City and we have them on our trucks. We check the businesses all around town, so we know where they're at. We also offer cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and AED classes.

We just received word today that we were awarded a decontamination grant by the federal government. We were awarded two other grants, a grant from Firehouse Subs, and an equipment grant from FEMA for several thousand dollars. We're still waiting on two big grants from FEMA. If we were to get both of those it would be over a million dollars. We should find out soon about that.

One of the biggest things we have been working on for two and a half years is the Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating. We lowered it down from a three to a two. So that means we are at an excellent rating now. We missed a superior rating by eight points. We're still working on it. We'll call them back to see if we can get another rating adjustment soon. There are other things we're working on, but that took us about two and a half years to get to this ISO rating of two. We brought Valparaiso along with us. So, Valparaiso has an ISO rating of two also. That was huge for them, and it takes a lot of work.

We're preparing to begin working on about 1,000 fire hydrants. There's about 800 in Niceville and about 240 in Valparaiso. We're going to check flows, static and residual. Then we're going to put markers out. We've also been monitoring the businesses moving in and out. We're keeping up with the Knox boxes and emergency contacts. We have another fire inspector, Matt Webster helping out Mike Valenzuela so he can take time off for vacation or whatever he needs to do.

We've been very busy. The commotion on the bay the other day was where we had four boats catch on fire. A couple of them were fifty-something feet long. We had the dock on fire and had to pull about 600 feet of hose out to the end to put it all out. Our boat's in the shop right now. It's getting annual maintenance and having some things fixed on it. So, the guys had to pull hose from Bayshore drive, all the way to the end of that dock to put those boat fires out. Then we had a couple of them sinking. So, I had to ask Johnathan to bring me a pump. We had a 52-footer and a 38-footer sinking. So, we used a three-inch pump to pump them out. That's what we were doing when Bayshore Drive was closed down for about two hours the other day.

Do you know what caused those fires on those boats, asked Councilwoman Alley? We kind of have it narrowed down right now. We're still in the investigation mode. I think it's safe to say when you get electronics around salt water, you can have a little bit of corrosion and shorting of equipment. We're leaning more towards that right now. The dock was on fire and the guys did a tremendous job putting that out and keeping those boats from sinking. If those boats had sunk, we'd have a mess, because there would have been oil and diesel fuel in the bay. Again, thank you Mr. Laird for helping out with that, said Chief Mayville.

When I tell you that we worked so hard on the ISO certification, I want to thank not just us, but the Water Department, Steve Rausch and the Finance Department, Mr. Doucet, and Wendy Farmer. I can't say enough about the team of the City of Niceville. It really says a lot about Mr. Corbin and you all for believing in us as a fire department. So, thank you, said Chief Mayville.

So, let me ask you. You earned a two ISO rating? So that means you will not need new equipment, asked Mr. Corbin? I didn't say that, replied Chief Mayville. I want to maintain that two, so we need to stay on top of that. I'm leaning toward trying to get us to a one ISO rating, said Chief Mayville. By the way, there are only 1,700 fire departments across the nation that have an ISO rating of two. So, I encourage you to contact your insurance company. You should have some kind of adjustment on your homeowner's policy and also on businesses. So, when you get to an ISO rating of three or lower, it starts affecting commercial businesses. So, now that it is at a two, you should definitely contact them, said Chief Mayville. Good job, said Mr. Corbin.

Councilman Nodjomian said that's something we really should publicize. You can go to our website and we put something there about what this means to our residents, said Chief Mayville. Jessie Mason also put something up on the Boggy Gazettes Facebook page. Councilman Nodjomian said once we know exactly what that means that should be put on the water bill, or whatever goes to everybody, so they know exactly how to go about getting an insurance adjustment. It took a while, but you got there explaining what that ISO rating really means to all of us, said Mayor Henkel. Thank you.

The Regional sewer board met on the first of the month, said Mr. Corbin. We met with Jackson Guard, a little squad out of Eglin, the environmental folks, and had a pretty good meeting. We are good for at least another five years. The only thing we probably will have to do is add some testing wells, maybe two monitoring wells on the big spray field. But, you might want to add to that Councilwoman Alley. What did you think of the meeting? I think it has done really well, replied Councilwoman Alley.

Councilman Nodjomian asked at what point, and what the trigger mechanism would be for the City to conduct a true cost analysis of whether or not we continue to operate our own plant, or divest ourselves of the plant and connect to the County's plant, which as we all know has capacity. The land that plant sits on is probably approaching an all-time high. We need to think about how that could be potentially repurposed. Potentially, a calculation could show that we may be better off moving away from our own sewer services, said Councilman Nodjomian.

I am looking at that, said Mr. Corbin. We're working with our auditors, Ms. McGaughy, in coming up with those numbers. Once we get those numbers together, we'll get back with the Council and make those decisions, said Mr. Corbin. Okay; thanks, said Councilman Nodjomian.

With the community redevelopment, we own 170 feet on the shoreline of Boggy Bayou. We have a chance of getting 57 more feet. That would give us 227 feet on the Bayou, which would really add to that footprint. Mr. Ferrol Spence owns that property and he's asking \$300,000 and that's the same price that a builder has already offered him. I asked the builder, if he would, to back away and give us a chance to take a look at that. It requires a decision by the City Council and the CRA Board which are the same individuals who are the City Council. What I'm asking for you to do is to let me pursue this and come back to the Council with this. It's another 57 feet on Boggy Bayou and I'd like to see us favorably consider this. Councilwoman Alley motioned approval. Councilman Donahoo seconded. Councilman Nodjomian asked would that be CRA funds? Yes, replied Mr. Corbin. I asked Steven Rausch to take a look at where we are going to come up with the money, and he has. Steve, you might want to address that, asked Mr. Corbin?

Mr. Rausch said, yes sir. I just put together a Niceville CRA cash-flow analysis for Mr. Corbin and it shows, based on the projections that Dr. McCartney and I did last August, that we should be in good shape, even if we go forward with interfund agreement between the Niceville CRA and the City's general fund, like we had planned with our bond counsel's and our City attorney's recommendation. We still should be in a decent situation to be able to afford a \$300,000 purchase with the City's general fund, and then a \$300,000 loan agreement between the Niceville CRA and the City. So, I would recommend that you approve it. No further discussion followed.

Mayor Henkel said the motion on the floor is to give the City Manager the opportunity to pursue and negotiate the purchase. Council Vote: Williams-yes; Donahoo-yes; Alley-yes; Schaezle-yes; Nodjomian-yes. Motion passed.

Mr. Corbin said obviously Deer Moss is doing well. They finished one of the subdivisions. I think they're now planning another one. I think they sold one of the properties for the apartments. That's may be a 300-apartment complex. I don't know because we haven't received the plans for that one yet, but we anticipate that. There's a new subdivision on the west side of town called Hideaway Ridge. That's 17 homes there and they've already sold about half of them. That's looking very good. The U-Haul location that was at the intersection of John Sims Parkway and Highway 85 has sold recently. We expect that property to be developed. The reason I bring that up is because it is all in the footprint of the CRA and that's what we were just talking about, said Mr. Corbin. That's a good thing.

Next, at the park, there's an old tennis court and we're going to convert that into pickleball. At the Senior Center, you have to wait in line to use the pickle-ball court. We're building three more, as part of the recreational area at the Senior Center. Hopefully, we'll finish that project before the summer starts, said Mr. Corbin.

There are a lot of storage areas in Niceville. We have a lot of airconditioned storage areas and they are planning two more, believe it or not, on John Sims Parkway. But, up to this point, there have been no more service stations other than the one that's being built.

A quick note, the teacher of the year at Plew Elementary is Jessica Landry. I thought I would mention that for her. My daughter made me do that. She's a teacher at Plew Elementary School.

But, the City is rebuilding as we speak. We have a lot of new areas, but if you drive down Bayshore Drive and some of the other streets in town, you'll see some of the older places being torn down and new places being built. So, it looks very good for our continued growth and I think it's growing in a good way. John Sims Parkway is pretty loaded, but maybe the bypass road will take some of the traffic off of it. I think things are looking good for the City of Niceville said Mr. Corbin. That's all I have.

### **Other Business:**

#### Emergency Ordinance 20-03-02 – COVID-19

Mr. Doucet said every 60 days, we look at extending Emergency Ordinance 20-03-02 – COVID-19. We did it two months ago, said Mr. Doucet. It's my understanding that the Governor has not changed his ordinance yet, so the emergency ordinance still is in place there at the state level, asked Mayor Henkel? Yes sir, said Mr. Doucet. So, do I hear a motion to approve extending Ordinance 20-03-02 for COVID-19? Councilman Williams Motioned approval. Councilman Donahoo seconded. No discussion followed. Council

---

Vote: Nodjomian-yes; Schaetzle-yes; Alley-yes; Donahoo-yes; Williams-yes. Motion passed

### **Bills Payable**

Councilman Schaetzle motioned approval to pay the bills. Councilman Donahoo seconded. Council Vote: Williams-yes; Donahoo-yes; Schaetzle-yes; Alley-yes; Nodjomian-yes. Motion passed.

Mayor Henkel asked the audience if anyone else would like to come forward to address the Council.

Mr. Michael Panarisi introduced himself and said he was just speaking to inform the City Council of a current Youth Advisory Council project. We will have posters with quick response (QR) codes, just like Youth Advisory Council's parking naming contest advertisement signs, for access to the COVID-19 vaccines. I'll pass around a copy of the sign, said Mr. Panarisi. Go ahead and explain where it is going up, said Councilman Nodjomian. The intent of this is to be just like the other preventive measure signs that you may see everyday in hallways or restrooms, or places of business, usually posted by the Department of Health or the Center for Disease Control. Northwest Florida State College has a lot of signs like this. I was hoping this would spread the word of the importance of vaccines, and the COVID-19 vaccine especially. They've been helping stop the spread of deadly diseases for hundreds of years now.

Many of us here in this room have had to experience the chicken pox at least one time in their life, whereas my generation in the Youth Advisory Council, or a majority of us did not have to experience that, thanks to effective vaccines against the varicella-zoster virus (shingles). Please spread the word about the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine on behalf of the Youth Advisory Council.

Mayor Henkel said something everybody needs to know is that it will be open to all folks, ages 16 and older and the places in Niceville where it will be available are: CVS Pharmacy, Publix, the Okaloosa Department of Health, the Prescription Place, Winn Dixie, Walmart, and Walgreens. So, if you haven't had your vaccine, although it's not mandatory, I highly encourage it, said Mayor Henkel.

Personally-speaking, I got COVID-19 last February and March, and I got to spend eight days in a hospital. You don't want to get it, especially not like I got it. So, if you haven't gotten the vaccine, I would encourage you to do so. I just took my second vaccine today by the way, said Mayor Henkel.

I got my first COVID-19 shot last Wednesday, and this is my card right here, said Mr. Panarisi.

I do have one other thing, said Mr. Corbin. By the way I had the Vox and the Chicken Pox. The City picnic is on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, which is next Thursday. We'll have our little golf tournament. We'll start at about 11 a.m. at the mullet festival site. So, I hope all of you can attend.

Councilman Schaetzle said for those of us who are following the legislators up in Tallahassee, the good news is it started March 2<sup>nd</sup> and we're on the downhill stretch. The regular legislative session adjourns on April 30<sup>th</sup>, which is about three weeks away. The other thing I'd like to say is also an attaboy to our Public Works Department and the men and ladies who work for them. I was a big advocate of getting Rocky Bayou Drive resurfaced. It's a great raceway now. It's up to the Chief to keep the speed down and enforce the speed limits, or maybe it's time to look at bumping them up a little bit, but that's your call. Also, for the sidewalk repairs that are being done in the Rocky Bayou area, there's a gentleman who's 98 years old, and he's sure looking to get back on the sidewalk with his rollator once they complete the repairs. That's all I have, said Councilman Schaetzle.

Councilman Nodjomian said I just have a general appreciation for everything our staff does, so I thank you all.

Councilwoman Alley said I just have a couple of things. Councilman Schaetzle and I will not be able to come to the City picnic next Thursday because we will be on our way to Daytona, in separate cars, not together, for the Institute for Elected Municipal Officials (IEMO) training, class two. Another thing that happened in Legislative session yesterday is the Governor signed a bill to reduce rent tax from 5.5 percent to two percent. It was a huge win for businesses in the State of Florida coming into Florida. I'm very proud to say that Florida Realtors was a big part of pushing Governor DeSantis to reduce that tax. There's not any other state in the Union that charges a commercial real estate tax, other than Florida. So, going from 5.5 percent to two percent is a huge deal for the State of Florida. And, I just appreciate all of the City workers. You guys do a phenomenal job to keep the City of Niceville nice, and I appreciate being up here on Council. Thank you.

Councilman Williams said I just want to echo the sentiment and thank the City staff for a good job. Thank you; I appreciate it.

Mayor Henkel said thank you all for being here and participating in City government. I appreciate all our City employees do for our citizens and likewise what our citizens do, in terms of making the City a better place as well. I appreciate you all.

There being no further discussion the meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY CLERK

Minutes0413.21