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**Mayor: No Publix for Williston;
City Hall to open soon;
Preliminary plat approved on subdivision**



Williston Mayor Jerry Robinson

Story and Photos

By Jeff M. Hardison © Oct. 17, 2018 at 2:28 p.m.

WILLISTON -- In what promises to be one of the last meetings in the temporary Williston City Hall, Mayor Jerry Robinson made a few proclamations Tuesday night (Oct. 16).



Williston City Council President Nancy Winger

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Williston City Councilman Vice President Marguerite Robinson and City Councilman Justin Head



Williston City Councilman Elihu Ross and Williston City Councilman Charles D. Goodman



Joyce Bullock Elementary School second grader Ava Fret looks at people in the audience as Mayor Jerry Robinson reads why she was selected as the Mayor's Student of the Month from that school.

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Joyce Bullock Elementary School second grader Ava Fret (left) and Ashley Kline an eighth grader at Williston Middle High School listen as Mayor Jerry Robinson reads why Kline was selected as the Mayor's Student of the Month from that school.



(from left) Ava Fret, Mayor Jerry Robinson and Ashley Kline pause for a photo opportunity after the two girls were recognized as the Outstanding Students of the Month.

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City Manager Scott Lippmann said in no uncertain terms that the city staff is moving into the new \$2.5 million City Hall structure on Oct. 26.

Before City Manager Lippmann made his announcements for the evening, Mayor Robinson doused the flames of rumormongers, as well as to make a couple of other mayoral decrees before leaving the former Band Room of the former Williston High School. He did not stay for the whole meeting Tuesday night.

Mayor Robinson's first statement was to dispel gossip. His next set of declarations were to recognize two young scholars. His final reading from a certificate that night was to name a day after a man who has a planned visit to Williston and is a state leader of the Masons (Freemasonry or Masonry consists of fraternal organizations that trace their origins to the local fraternities of stonemasons.)

And as for building, the City Council granted, by a 5-0 vote, a request for "re-approval" of an updated plat for the Stonewall Subdivision (44 homes) that was first approved 11 years ago.

First there is that rumor.

NO PUBLIX

The mayor opened his statement by saying the Levy County School Board property that was formerly Williston High School and where the multipurpose room has become the temporary City Hall, and even the former WHS Band Room which is serving as the City Council Meeting Room, is for sale.

He mentioned there is a potential buyer, as best as he understands now, for the property.

The rumor is that the anchor store for whatever is to be potentially built on the former WHS property will be a Publix.

"We need to quash that rumor," Mayor Robinson said, "as that has been vehemently denied."

Therefore, Robinson said, do not believe that rumor.

The highlight for some City Council meetings is the recognition of students put forth by the schools as Outstanding Students of the Month.

STUDENTS HONORED

Joyce Bullock Elementary second grade teacher Kaitlyn Bannon noted that second grader Ava Fret was the most deserving student for the month.

Ava is the daughter of Jennifer Fret.

Bannon nominated Ava Fret as the student of the month "because of her outstanding attitude and character during the first weeks of school.

"She is already showing leadership traits by following the rules of our classroom and school," Bannon noted. "Ava loves to participate in discussions and brings great thoughts into our learning environment.

"She is not only kind and respectful to her teacher," Bannon continued in her notation, which was read by the mayor with some adlibbing, "but also her peers."

The next outstanding student who was in attendance Tuesday night was Ashley Kline. Ashley Kline is in the eighth grade at Williston Middle High School. Her mother is Diane Kline.

She was nominated by the 8th Grade Team, which noted the following comments:

"Ashley is a dream student. She excels academically and is also very involved in extracurricular activities such as band. She is admired by her teachers and peers

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because she takes the time to listen and absorb.

“She reflects on what is being discussed in class and always adds something of value. She advocates for herself, as she is always seeking clarification and asking for more detail. In class, she always has a can do - positive attitude.

Outside of school, she loves to read and listen to music. Ashley is a dream student and a wonderful individual and for these reasons the eighth-grade teachers unanimously chose her as our Student of the Month.”

One of the three students nominated was not in attendance Tuesday night.

Lauren Faircloth, a senior at WMHS, was nominated by Angela Pompeo.

Lauren Faircloth is the daughter of Tamara Faircloth. The young Miss Faircloth was not in attendance at the City Council meeting on Tuesday night.

Teacher Pompeo had noted however that “Lauren is always respectful to all. Does all her assignments on time, is dual enrolled and is a great role model for her peers as well as students of any age.

“She takes initiative, never has an unkind word about anyone and continually goes above and beyond to help others.”

DAY PROCLAIMED

In another act, the mayor proclaimed a day.

The proclamation he read stated:

WHEREAS: John E. Karroum was elected Grand Master of Masons for the State of Florida at the 189th Annual Grand Communication; and,

WHEREAS: Most Worshipful John Karroum is making his official visit to the 12th Masonic District on October 26, 2018; and,

WHEREAS: Ornan Lodge Number 117 F&AM of Williston, Florida is a member of the 12th Masonic District.

As a result of those facts Mayor Robinson officially proclaimed Oct. 26 as John E. Karroum Day, “recognizing him for his many accomplishments.”

SUBDIVISION STARTING

The City Council by a unanimous vote reaffirmed a plat for 44 homes in in the Stonewall Subdivision.

The Planning and Zoning Committee discussed this application at two separate meetings, City Manager Lippmann said. At the second meeting, the committee recommended approval by a 4-2 vote.

Every aspect of development was address, including:

Infrastructure- electric, water and sewer

- The increase of traffic and how it will impact SW 6th avenue
- Impact on surrounding property values
- Water run-off, drainage & retention
- Open space

Before voting to approve it, City Councilman Justin Head said he believes there may be issues with traffic on U.S. Highway 41 and Southwest Sixth Avenue.

A few residents of neighboring the Camellia Plantation Subdivision expressed their concern about the potential increase of 88 more cars in the area, as well as these lots being as small as one-quarter of an acre, when all of their lots are at least one acre.

The general price range of single-family homes in the Camellia Plantation Subdivision is in the \$250,000 or high area; where these single-family homes of

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Stonewall with two-car garages are said to be priced in the range that is going to be less than \$200,000.

Ron Bastura, an area resident, said he is not going to give the developer access to put soil and erosion controls on his property, despite a document showing that on a diagram.

Troy E. Burrell Jr. of Florida Burrell Engineering Inc. (BEI) of Dunnellon said the diagram shows that, but that is not what is going to occur. All of the work and controls will be on the developer's property, Burrell assured the neighbor.

Bastura also told the City Commission that a six-foot drop on the retention pond should be fenced to keep children safe, Burrell said it is a one-foot drop every four feet; so, it is not going to be steep enough to cause concern.

Andy Robinson said he was at the City Council meeting when this preliminary plat was first approved. He said he should have objected then, because all of the surround residences are one-acre or more. Robinson said he did not object then, but he is now.

IN OTHER NEWS

In other news from the Williston City Council meeting:

* City Manager Scott Lippmann announced that he is close to selecting the next city planner to fill that staff vacancy.

* City Clerk Fran Taylor said there are open positions for volunteers on the city's boards – Community Redevelopment Agency, Planning and Zoning, and the Chapter 185 Police Pension Board. Qualifications and other details are on the city's website.

* John Gray of Williston Peanut said that while his company is finished drying the locally harvested peanuts, it is going to restart drying machines to help the peanut farmer who have been affected by Hurricane Michael. The plan is to use the driers at the main location for Williston Peanut, however there may be a need for some offsite peanut dryers to start.

* It was announced that there is a meeting on **Oct. 25 (a Thursday) at 11 a.m. in the former Bronson High School cafeteria** (behind the County Courthouse) to discuss flow control and franchises at the Levy County Solid Waste Transfer Station (the dump). Cities like Williston that require garbage pickup have expressed dismay that those residents pay the special assessment of \$116 to the dump, even though they do not bring their own household garbage to the dump.