

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CITY  
COMMISSIONERS FOR THE CITY OF PORT ST. JOE, FLORIDA, HELD AT  
2775 GARRISON AVENUE, December 13, 2017, at Noon.**

The following were present: Mayor Patterson, Commissioners Ashbrook, Buzzett, Lowry, and Thursbay. City Manager Jim Anderson, City Clerk Charlotte Pierce, Attorney Clinton McCahill, and Chief of Police Matt Herring were also present.

The purpose of the Special Meeting was to address the following:

**Attorney General Opinion  
City Charter Sec. 2-27  
City Charter Sec. 20**

Attorney McCahill shared that a response had been received from Ellen B. Gwynn, Senior Assistant Attorney General Opinions Division stating "Opinions generally are not issued on questions requiring an interpretation only of local codes, ordinances or charters rather than the provision of state law. Instead such requests will usually be referred to the attorney for the local government in questions." The email from Ms. Gwynn also states that Section 775.08(2), Florida Statutes, expressly defines "misdemeanor" as a "criminal offense."

Mr. McCahill noted that, in his opinion, Commissioner Thursbay forfeited his seat by his plea to DUI with property damage.

Commissioner Lowry asked that Commissioner Thursbay remove himself from office based on the Charter.

Commissioner Thursbay shared that he had received numerous cards and letters of encouragement telling him what a good job he has done as a Commissioner and there was only 1 bad card in the bunch. He stated he would not step down and plans to run again. He also noted he has apologized, and this was the biggest mistake he has made.

Commissioner Buzzett noted that Commissioner Thursbay had been a good Commissioner, we all make mistakes, but this mistake was a violation of the Charter and that his seat has been forfeited as of last Wednesday.

Commissioner Ashbrook stated that he agrees that Commissioner Thursbay has done a fantastic job but as a Commissioner he has to uphold the values of the Charter and the attorney's opinion.

Mayor Patterson shared that he has issues with the Charter as it is ambiguous and not easy to interpret. He does not condone the actions of Commissioner Thursbay but everyone makes mistakes.

When asked his interpretation again, Attorney McCahill responded that pleading to a DUI with property damage forfeited his position by law.

Commissioner Lowry reiterated that pleading forfeited the position.

Commissioner Buzzett asked for the attorney's interpretation again and Mr. McCahill responded that pleading to the DUI with property damage forfeits his position by law.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Buzzett, second by Commissioner Ashbrook, to approve the opinion of the attorney.

Commissioner Lowry stated that he did not feel that a Motion or a second was needed, and that he did not come here to vote to remove Commissioner Thursbay. He again asked Commissioner Thursbay to forfeit his seat.

Attorney McCall again stated that Commissioner Thursbay forfeited his office with his plea.

Commissioner Buzzett withdrew his Motion and Commissioner Ashbrook withdrew his second.

Commissioner Thursbay stated he would seek legal advice and will be out knocking on doors in 5 months. He left the meeting at 12:12 P.M.

Consensus of the Commission is that Saturday is the last day to appoint someone to fill the seat previously held by Commissioner Thursbay or someone will be appointed by the governor. There will be a Special Meeting on Friday, December 15, 2017, Noon at the Ward Ridge Building for the purpose of filling the vacancy of Commissioner Group I. Individuals interested in serving until the next election in May should provide their names to City Hall for consideration.

**Citizens to be Heard**

*Christy McElroy* addressed the Commission stating this was a sad issue, she had support Commissioner Thursbay and contributed to his welfare, but this was a major issue which carried consequences and responsibilities for this actions. Ms. McElroy expressed her thanks to Chief Herring and his department for doing their job throughout this issue.

*David Alvarez* stated that he felt the leaving of Commissioner Thursbay from the meeting forfeited his seat.

*Steve Womack* asked that if Commissioner Thursbay should show up on Friday what the plans would be. He also noted that he was a 28 year Army Veteran, felt that Mayor Patterson had failed in leadership, and noted that he should possibly reflect on his values and conduct and suggested that Mayor Patterson might want to resign also.

*Mayor Patterson* responded that he could bring lots of people that like his leadership.

*Teresa Thursbay* stated that she does not condone the actions of her husband, he has been a good commissioner and learned who the people are that he can count on and who the back stabbers are. She noted that she does not care about the decision of the Commission, her husband is a good man, there are those present who drink and drive that have just not been caught and stated, "Shame on you." She noted a sitting Commissioner had a DUI prior to the time of their election.

*Rob Lacascid* thanked the Commission for following the Charter.

*Barbara Radcliff* stated that no one hates William Thursbay but there are consequences to his actions. DUI is a crime, and no one is punishing him.

*Keith Croasmun* asked that the Commission not change the law, and to hold to themselves to higher standards.

*Christy McElroy* again addressed the Commission and asked that an Incident Event Report be entered into the Record showing a text she received from Teresa Thursbay. See Exhibit (A).

*Mayor Patterson* concluded with noting the City Charter is not like the County's or State. There are currently two legislators serving who have DUIs and noted they have not been removed from office but have been taken off several committees.


**Discussion Items by Commissioners**

*Neither Commissioners Ashbrook, Buzzett, Lowry, nor Mayor Patterson* had anything else to discuss.

**Motion to Adjourn**

A Motion was made by Commissioner Lowry, second by Commissioner Buzzett, to adjourn the Meeting at 12:32 P.M.

Approved this 19<sup>th</sup> day of December 2017.

  
James "Bo" Patterson, Mayor

  
Date

  
Charlotte M. Pierce, City Clerk

12/19/17  
Date