

# Palm Bay may allow concealed weapons inside City Hall



Rick Neale, FLORIDA TODAY 12:42 p.m. EST December 19, 2015



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Bad people seek out gun-free zones, Palm Bay City Councilman Tres Holton believes — so residents should have the right to protect themselves and their families.

During Thursday's Palm Bay City Council meeting, Holton called for a future discussion on letting people with concealed weapon permits bring guns into Palm Bay City Hall.

"Specifically, what I'm asking for is for us to mirror what the county commission did with regard to allowing law-abiding citizens who have concealed-weapon permits to carry into government buildings — provided that they are not carrying into a meeting," Holton said.

The Brevard County Commission unanimously approved a policy change last month that lets permit holders bring guns to the Government Center in Viera, but not into commission meetings.

Councilman Harry Santiago supported the proposal. He agreed that criminals target gun-free zones.



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[Guns now allowed in Brevard Government Center in Viera](#)

<http://www.floridatoday.com/story/news/local/2015/11/03/brevard-commissioners-allow-guns-government-center/75047886/>

"I'm from New York City. I come from a place of 'don't carry any guns.' The schools I used to go to all had metal detectors. Guess what? Guns still went in. Knives still went in. People got stabbed. People got shot. Didn't matter," Santiago said.

"It's always the bad guys with the weapons — and the good guys without them," he said.

However, Mayor William Capote said he needed time to consider a decision: "That's something I would have to dissect and over-dissect." He pointed out that he lived in the Northeast during the 1970s.

"I've been there and done that. And being part of this community for 21 years, with no incident at City Hall under the current situation, I like my situation. But I'll entertain the discussion," Capote said.

Last week, Brevard County Sheriff Wayne Ivey generated national attention by contending "the only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun" in a Facebook video and a front-page FLORIDA TODAY column. He called for citizens to prepare to immediately respond to active-shooter scenarios or other attacks.

Deputy Mayor Jeff Bailey said a Palm Bay concealed weapon policy change would not guarantee anyone's safety during an emergency, but neither does today's policy.



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<http://www.floridatoday.com/story/news/2015/12/07/sheriff-calls-citizens-ready/76922098/>

"I guarantee you that our current policy only serves to keep those who are honest from carrying. And that it does not stop anybody else," Bailey said.

Councilwoman Michele Paccione opposed Holton's idea, saying that people suffering from mental illnesses can obtain firearms.

"If these people are getting guns, I don't want that person in our building. Right now, I like our policemen having guns. It's just my personal opinion, and I'll never support — ever, ever — guns in this building," she said.

Paccione also announced Thursday she is not running for re-election next year, and she is on her "farewell tour."

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