



# HISTORIC TOWN OF EATONVILLE, FLORIDA

## REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

### MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 7:30 PM

Town Hall – 307 E. Kennedy Boulevard. 32751

**SPECIAL NOTICE:** These meeting minutes are presented in an abbreviated format intended as a public record discussion of stated meeting according to the Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine law. Meetings are opened to the public, noticed within reasonable advance notice, and transcribed into minutes for public record. *\*\*Audio Recording are available through the Town's website on the Council Agenda Page.*

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#### CALL TO ORDER AND VERIFICATION OF QUORUM:

Mayor Gardner called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and a quorum was established by Mrs. King

**PRESENT:** (5), Mayor Angie Gardner, Vice Mayor Theo Washington, Councilman Rodney Daniels, Councilwoman Wanda Randolph, Councilman Tarus Mack

**STAFF:** (7) Demetrius Pressley (By Zoom), **Chief Administrator Officer**, Veronica King, **Town Clerk**, Clifford Shepard, **Town Attorney**, Stanley Murray, **Police Chief**, Katrina Gibson, **Finance Director**, Valerie Mundy, **Public Works Director**, Brittani Gragg, **Executive Assistant**

#### INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Rev. Critton led the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Mayor Gardner Motions to **APPROVE** the meeting agenda with amendment moving the (Item #4) the Zora Festival 2025 Agreement Between Town of Eatonville and Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community, Inc. (P.E.C.) down to council decision; **Moved by** Councilman Mack; **Second by** Vice Mayor Washington ; **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES.**

#### PRESENTATIONS AND RECOGNITION

Gwen Peirce, MPA, MMC, FACC Central East District Director, representative of IIMC/FACC conducted the official pinning and presentation of certificate to Veronica King (Town Clerk) for her CMC Designation awarded by the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC). Town Clerk was acknowledged by the Mayor and Town Council followed up with pictures and a speech of gratitude and appreciation.

#### CITIZEN PARTICIPATION – (3)

Julian Johnson – Presented an email to the town clerk for public reading into the record. (Copy has been kept for record in the clerk's meeting package) Email reads: This is Julian again and I am requesting a reading for a public comment for Tonight's council meeting on 11/19/2024. This is not on any specific Topic tonight. (Public Comment) Good evening, Council and residents, This comment is coming from Julian Johnson the community organization, 1887 First, as well as our fellow residents of the Historic Town of Eatonville. We've sent a formal request to the Town to potentially work this ordinance into a framework that will allow our organization to run a sustainable farmer's market here in Eatonville. This market has become a vital part of our community, and we have seen firsthand the immense economic opportunity it brings to the town, impacting our ownership in Cultural Heritage Tourism. However, to ensure its continued success and growth, we need proper accommodations, similar to those provided to other markets in neighboring municipalities. As you know, Mr. Pressley and former CRA Director Shan Rose introduced us to Red Top Productions LLC, the for-profit organization that operates the Downtown Orlando Lake Eola Farmers Market. Through this collaboration, we were able to seek mentorship and learn from their model, which includes substantial government support such as a \$75,000 allocation for their Farmers Market, as seen in the proposed ordinance from Downtown Orlando

CRA. Additionally, neighboring municipalities such as Lake Mary, which hosts the Lake Mary Farmers Market, provide essential accommodations for the same for profit vendor that runs their market, including the use of City Hall facilities for restrooms. This level of support has been integral to their success, and it is our expectation that the Town of Eatonville extend the same level of support to the 1887 Night Market. We would greatly appreciate it if you could include this item on the agenda for the upcoming workshop in December, where we hope to share the substantial community support we have garnered from registered voters and online from Night Market Vendors and attendees. We are also preparing a detailed presentation to provide insights from our time in the incubator program and to illustrate the impact the market has had on Eatonville. Our goal is to ensure that Eatonville thrives and that the younger generation can carry the town's legacy forward with pride and opportunity. We look to our elders for guidance and support in making this vision a reality, and we hope the Town Council will consider this as a moment of generational unity. Thank you & Continued Growth Julian Johnson, 1887 First.

Danita Brazil – Expressed a concern for non-responsive town workers who did not give attention and care to an after-hour sewer line issue, the field supervisor who was on call never showed up, chose to keep playing dominoes in Catalina Park rather than coming out to assess the sewer line, There was another town worker, who was off that weekend who did come and stayed while working with the representative from Brownies, Councilwoman Randolph stopped and stayed as well, the manhole up the sewer line was so dry and packed full of dry mud and dry dirt, have to do a better job as a city in maintaining our sewer lines, To date, no one from the town has come back to check out the line, Brownies opened up the line and it is not a collapse pipe, feels that the town let her down, the field supervisor should not be in a field supervisor if he cannot show up.

Greg Ware – Came before the council in 1975 needing money for the drums, which was received, forming the first and only Eatonville Drum Corps, the drum corps took trophies from Eatonville to down south; acknowledged positive things that are happening; extended congratulations to Mrs. King; express concerns about the removal of the speed bumps, why were they taken; have to asked what was the purpose of the speed bumps (to regulate the speed of vehicles and the flow of traffic, protects investments such as houses, vehicles, and children; the speed bump can be an assistant to the police officer; why not place them even if you have to move them from where they are, asked question about notification, were the homeowners notified, as a homeowner no notice was provided by mail nor email, people are speeding up and down the street and will not stop at the four way stop signs, they are speeding from Warren Avenue and it is dangerous; admonishes to stop the cycle of taking one step forward and two steps backwards, stop imploding ourselves creating problems and hassles for ourselves, help our community, help the residents, and help the police department, this is not just Eatonville, this is a town that we all love.(Mayor Gardner will reach out to both Ms. Brazil and Mr. Ware).

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Gardner Motions to **APPROVE** the Consent Agenda (Items 1, 2, and 3 Only), approval of Resolution 2024-35 Repealing Resolution 2024-34, approval of Resolution 2024-36 Updating Fair Housing Policy and Procedures, approval of Resolution 2024-37 Updating the Excessive Force Policy; **Moved by** Councilwoman Randolph; **Second by** Councilman Mack; **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES.**

## **COUNCIL DECISIONS:**

Approval of the Zora Festival 2025 Agreement Between Town of Eatonville and Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community, Inc. (P.E.C.): **Mayor Gardner Motions to APPROVE** the Zora Festival 2025 Agreement Between Town of Eatonville and Association to Preserve the Eatonville Community, Inc. (P.E.C.); **Moved by** Councilwoman Randolph; **Second by** Vice Mayor Washington; **Comments:** Clarity of changes from the workshop was stated; the approval is with the amendments to the agreement that one payment is due January 20<sup>th</sup> (2025) and the final half is due January 27<sup>th</sup> (2025). **Mayor Gardner calls for the question;** **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES.**

## REPORTS:

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER: Demetrius Pressley** – The library district did approve the agreement with the additional cost and will start on January 1st with the new rates coming, this was approved in August of this year, was waiting on their process to get done through the library district, it has been approved with plans to move forward; have a few meetings that will be coming up in the upcoming weeks regarding special events, and will bring to the first workshop in December for discussions on how town council would like to proceed forward with all special events; Happy Thanksgiving to everyone.

**TOWN CLERK: Veronica King** – We do have our new higher for the Records Coordinator's position (Nicole Direnzo); this is her first week, which she started on Monday, I am excited to have her on board, hopefully town council will have an opportunity to meet her within the next couple of weeks; again thank you for the opportunity to acquire additional training and development, getting ready to go for the MMC which is also issued through the International Institute of Municipal Clerks.

**ATTORNEY: Clifford Shepard** – This is a big deal for this town having someone with the skillset, something the town has not had regarding responding to the records request and all the other things that most people who are involved in town government never know, certainly the residents do not understand, it is a complicated job to do correctly, having this certificate (CMC), affirms she is doing the job correctly, if she goes for the master level (the next level), the town clerk will be performing at the highest level acquired, this is fantastic news for the town; On the 12<sup>th</sup> (November), the Mayor, legal, Mr. Pressley, and others assembled to go to the school board for the four o'clock public participation session to speak for the town, it was a positive presentation showing community support, a solid statement was given with representatives of not just Eatonville, but also the surrounding community, well known people who were in support, this was the last meeting for Karen Castor Dental who has been elevated to Supervisor of Elections, she expected things to still go smoothly for the town, since submitting the lease purchase agreement to the school board, the school board have had two or three shade meetings regarding the SPLC lawsuit with PEC, have not heard anything resulting from the meetings; no new lawsuits.

## TOWN COUNCIL REPORTS -

**Vice Mayor Theo Washington** – The debris was gone from the streets on Lincoln, people are coming in our town dumping debris on the streets; attended the veteran's event; need to do something as soon as possible on the house located on Bethune, it has several liens, if the town has to take on the cost, the town will get it back on the back end; condolences to the Wynn and Alexander family; TD Bank donated some trees to Elizabeth Park, you cannot see the lights because of trees, did not pressure wash the basketball court, did not go to the event but did take a picture of the tree that is leaning to the right, they planted the tree, we need to make sure that the trees are taken care of, putting suspensions on them to hold the trees up, thank TD Bank for donating the trees to the town; desire for the pool to never close (open year-round), recreation for any community is not a money making effort, if money can be made through event or having adult evening swimming, need to consider for the future; the town's branding is not good, if you put out negativity that is what comes back; need to go from speed bumps to speed humps, the speed bumps will tear up your car; congratulations to Mrs. King, met Ms. Wynn at the Florida League of Cities and she says good things about Mrs. King; provided a book (FLC Florida Municipal Officials Manual 2022) to the clerk, request that the book be provided to the Town Council.

**Councilman Rodney Daniels** – Offered condolences to Gil (Lopez) and the John (Wynn) families; congratulations to Mrs. King, you have every qualification to take Eatonville to the next level, thank you and whatever we need to do to help you get that master level certification let us know; Offered apology to Ms. Brazil, when matters are brought to the forefront, it gives council an opportunity to get it right and do a better job of having on call staff to properly respond to a resident, it is up to the public works director and administration to find out what happened and put policies and procedures in place; received the email to go to

the school board meeting and that there would be a vote, talked to Ms. Castor Dental who gave the assurance that discussions would be had as they go in session to discuss whether or not if the town would get the property back, the school board, like any other municipality, is a business who may be accounting for the funds resulting from the sale of the property; the speed bumps were bad on cars and council wanted to replace them with better ones, are aware of traffic control and the safety of our kids and do not want cars speeding, was the impression that they would be replaced; good branding for the town is bringing in good revenue; need to capitalize on Eatonville being the oldest black municipality in the United States, need to brand by getting funds to bring Eatonville up; the statement on Facebook made by 1887 First was an unfair statement knowing that Eatonville had the opportunity for the first time to be an early voting precinct, working together with understanding can help us go further, that was one of our models (Progress Through Understanding), did not appreciate speaking against the council and will be looking for an apology from 1887 First; had a Veterans Day program and hoping it will continue with the next person who sits in seat three, it gives back to the community showing veterans that we appreciate what they do, appreciate the freedoms that we have, the freedom of speech, freedom to assemble, thanks for the fight, want to thank staff, Darius Washington, Ms. Johnson for the audio system, Ms. Brittani efforts in putting a program together, and appreciate the recreation and Public Works departments, for record requesting for next year a podium, tent, twenty chairs, a silent generator, it was a great event and thanks to Vice Mayor who represented in the Mayor's absence, it was stated that this was one of the best events in a long time; thanks to All Seasons pool, the pool is sentimental having almost drowned in the pool.

**Councilman Tarus Mack** – Thanks to everyone for coming out and being engaged in the town business; stated that the 32 percent out of the 14,000 clerks who sit with the CMC designation is tremendous, will continue to give the clerk her flowers knowing the scope of work done for the Town of Eatonville, many do not know the importance of the clerk, every time an email was sent or made a phone call, the response was quick, you make us better as a town; recognized the mayor and the administration she runs, the administrations does an impeccable job from public work and throughout, never seen the administration run this since 2016, see a difference and like the scope of work that has been done, the professionalism and doing what is needed (the entire staff); commend All Seasons pool for coming into our community to help, especially with the youth, in support of the pool remaining open; expressed concern with HostDime and requesting feedback from Mr. Pressley; always known the Zora Neale (Festival) to be successful and want to ensure that it continue to go down that path of success, hoping to iron out the kinks and get a better understanding as a community, we want to help you so you can help us; pertaining to the trash venue, thanks to Mr. Pressley for his diligence in making sure the town is covered, if people knew exactly what was going on, there would be different thoughts on the previous vendor (hauler); congratulations to Edgewater High School for reaching the Class 5A Regional Two Second Round in the playoff, chasing the site, chasing the state championship ring (son is one of the top safeties in the country), come out this Friday to support Edgewater; it is a pleasure to walk and ride down my street not seeing the debris in the road, thanks Ms. Mundy, public work, and other associates for making that happen, it looks better with all that debris gone since the storm, everyone needs make sure that the town is clean, that is why the annual cleanup is done; concerned also about the statement made on social media, to put information on social media and bash the people that is looking out for you is a shame, hoping to have a sit down conversation to resolve this situation; condolences to the Alexander family, Gil Lopez, a great kid who always brightened my day seeing him walk around community helping people; disturbing for wife's mother to experience frustration with the on call staff (public works), if you are on duty you have to do your job,

**Councilwoman Wanda Randolph** – Thanks to Mrs. King for your accomplishments and efforts; condolences and prayers to the bereaved families of Eatonville; attended the FRA conference (about CRAs), was a great conference, learned a lot, acknowledged Attorney Shepard who is well respected among many people here, attended both of his sessions, see a different side of Mr. Shepard, we are fortunate to have Mr. Shepard as a part of our legal counsel; having problems with the basketball courts on the streets and the liquid on the street has not been resolved, there is a mobile (RV) blocking the sidewalk interfering with children needing to get to school (Chief will check into this matter located on Wigman and Eaton); request an update on the trash (Mr. Pressley will follow up), trash pickup was done at night; gave a reminder about the Thanksgiving drive on

Monday, there are enough turkeys for everyone, thanks Ms. Brittani for the flyer; request an update on the house located on Bethune (Mr. Pressley will follow up).

**MAYOR'S REPORT - Mayor Angie Gardner** – inquired of legal as to if the RV mobile situation would be a police or a code enforcement matter (depends on what the ordinance states, it could be a safety hazard); the complaint about the speed bumps before was that height of the bumps were causing damage to cars, if it happens enough times it can become very costly, will address; thanks to Mrs. King; apologized to Ms. Brazil, Ms. Mundy is the reason why the town is looking at \$34 million to help replace and fix our pipes, because of decades pipe erosions, please know that the administration is not ignoring the bigger problem that resulted in a problem for you (Ms. Brazil), administration is trying to fix the problem across the board; people automatically are seeing us (the town) differently, for every negative, there are plenty of positives, branding starts with the change that is being made, we are making that change, the culture is changing, expectations have changed, our branding has already begun without paying attention to pens, pencils, and mugs, that is important, the pens, pencils, and mugs are cute and they are coming, for right now, we need to get the house in order; had a great masterplan session; Stakeholder's meeting is Monday at 5:30pm; please refer to the schedule events provided, there is bingo on the 20<sup>th</sup> at Denton Johnson, the Turkey Drive on the 25th, and bingo again on the 18<sup>th</sup>; condolences to all the families; the trees being planted was an extension of the former CRA director, it was a CRA project, thankful that Mr. Pressley and Ms. Gragg helped to bring that project to close; congratulations to the new hire; gave appreciation to Ms. Nathiri, if the agreement states it then that is what is binding, please present a then we can see about the support on the revenue side; do not care about apologies from anyone that is not going to be sincere, you cannot cancel something that no one applied for, the election (early voting) was discussed early in the year around June, July, August, the town gave a 10 day notice and there was no application at that time to consider, staff will not assume that something is happening, it is a pilot program and just like we have the same stipulations for Zora, the same stipulations will be applied for any other event, the law enforcement was expected to be paid, it is believed that one of the biggest problems behind those posts (Facebook), it is difficult to sustain something that does not have a real plan, the staff has been working with all events that have come in the town, for them to be put down is unfair.

**ADJOURNMENT** Mayor Gardner Motions for Adjournment of Meeting; **Moved** by Councilman Mack; **Second** by Vice Mayor Washington; **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES. Meeting Adjourned at 8:41 pm.**

**Respectfully Submitted by:**

**APPROVED**

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**Veronica L King, Town Clerk**

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**Angie Gardner, Mayor**