



# HISTORIC TOWN OF EATONVILLE, FLORIDA

## REGULAR COUNCIL

## MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 11, 2023 at 5:30 PM

Town Hall (Council Chamber) - 307 E Kennedy Blvd. 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 5:30 p.m. and quorum was established through roll call by Mrs. Veronica King

**PRESENT:** (5) Councilwoman Wanda Randolph, Councilman Marlin Daniels (Arrived after roll call-5:37pm), Mayor Vice Mayor Rodney Daniels, Angie Gardner. (Absent: Councilman Theo Washington)

**STAFF:** (5) Demetrius Pressley, **Interim Chief Administrator Officer** Veronica King, **Town Clerk**, Clifford Shepard, **Attorney**, Rachel McCoy, **Finance**, Katrina Gibson, **Finance Director**

### INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Gardner led a Moment of Silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

### CITIZEN PARTICIPATION - (The Three-minute rule was strictly enforced) – No Citizen Participation

**NY Nithiri** – Request for public comments to be allowed also at the end of the Charter Review; would like to see more of a context as it pertains to the form of government; recommend bringing in an expert who can speak to the advantages of both the Council-Strong Mayor and the Council-Manager forms of government.

**APPROVAL CONSENT AGENDA:** Mayor Gardner Motions to approve the consent agenda approving Town Charter Review Meeting Minutes for June 13, June 22, June 27 (2023); Moved by Vice Mayor R. Daniels; Second by Mayor Gardner; **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES.**

### EXPLANATION OF CHARTER REVIEW:

**ALLOWED FOR OPEN COMMENTS: (Mayor Gardner allowed for comments prior to the Explanation of Charter Review)** Councilwoman Randolph expressed concerns and requested clarity on the appropriateness of the current Charter Review process: there should be more citizen involvement based on past practices. What to ensure that the process is correct. (Referenced Resolution 2016-2). (Vice Mayor Daniels) Recommend seeking counsel from another Attorney or from the Attorney General. Attorney Shepard has presented an option to explore that former attorneys did not offer; feel that he is correct in offering another avenue to go about the Charter Review. (Mr. Bargaineer, former member on a previous Charter Review Committee) gave his opinion that the Council can do what they desire; legal is an advisor. The citizen should be a part of the process. There has always been an advisory committee who presents to Council for approval. Feel the best process is to select citizens to serve on the advisory committee; don't like Council presenting to themselves (A. Gardner) Having the Council as the Charter Review Committee is the most prudent way; there

is nothing to stop the Council for presenting their findings to an advisory committee for further review and recommendations. All actions have been completed in order to submit to Bill Cowles for the ballot by December 12, 2023. (Shepard) The advisory committee will have to go through training about the Sunshine Law and Public Records. (A. Grant) The Eatonville community is used to the citizens being invited to participate; this current way does not work for this community. The citizens want to be involved and disagree that the Council is the best representative to review the charter. It should be an unbiased neutral committee to take a look at it over the long haul, not for political reasons. Ask that Council reconsider and ask the residents to participate by solicit their opinion on problem areas. (Other Comments) Recommendations can be brought to the next meeting. Recommend identifying a primary and alternative and providing the advisory with the red lined recommendation. Attorney Shepard presented the concept of the “parking lot issues” and addressed the three issues identified by Council resulting from review of the Charter; Strong Mayor vs Council Manager form of government, Districting, and Qualifying details for a candidate.

**#1 ITEM - FORM OF GOVERNMENT** - Strong Mayor vs Council Manager Form of Government – Attorney Shepard presented the difference between each form of government: **(Public Participation):** Angela Thomas, requested clarity on why the parking lot issues is still being discussed before selecting the Charter Review Advisory Committee: advisory will review what the Council has recommended along with the Charter and come back with any further recommendation, the Anthony Grant, can’t see an elected official having to resolve a matter by going to a city manager; the Mayor is the head. Eatonville is a very politically charged community: don’t feel the Council-manager is a good fit for Eatonville. Tiffany Simmons, has a Council-Manager government ever been done in Eatonville (No); needed clarity on the authority of the Council in a Council-Manager form of government; feel the council will lose control in helping residents. Angela Johnson, asked for each council member to share their position on their desires towards the two forms of governments in the parking lot. The current form of government would be in the best interest. **(Council Comments):** Randolph will hold views until the process is complete. M. Daniels, can see benefits of both forms of government; in between both forms. The Council-Manager takes the politics out. R. Daniels, will follow up with Ms. Johnson to further discuss. A. Gardner, currently the town is unstable for a Council-Manager form of government. Strong Mayor keeps the stability and keeps down confusion. **#2 ITEM - DISTRICTING:** Based on population distribution based on the last consensus. The goal is to divide Eatonville into districts. Having districts will change the voting from “at large” to voting only in the district one lives in. **(Public Participation):** Louissteen Cummings, having districts will not be good for Eatonville; citizens will not know what districts mean. Anthony Grants, will be a political killer; citizens not being able to vote for certain individuals would be an issues. Angela Johnson, inquired about how the districts are developed based on the population: forward thinking, are there guidelines to how/when districts can to be redrawn due to a change in population: can have an earlier review unless there is a restriction in the charter. how would that affect **(Council Participation):** A. Gardner, this came up resulting from a concern for the additional housing. **#3 ITEM - QUALIFYING CANDIDATE:** The Charter is silent on the qualifying; does not provide criteria for proof of residency. The pro of having qualifying details provides transparency to the public. **(Public Participation):** Tiffany Simmons, Can qualification to be used to help address the increase in population; qualification to be a candidate will not affect the ability to vote. **(Council Participation):** No Comments

**ADJOURNMENT** Mayor Gardner Motions for Adjournment of Meeting; Moved by Councilman M. Daniels; Second by Councilwoman Randolph; **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES. Meeting Adjourned at 7:07 P.M.**

**Respectfully Submitted by:**

**APPROVED**

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**Veronica L King, Town Clerk**

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**Angie Gardner, Mayor**