



HISTORIC TOWN OF EATONVILLE, FLORIDA

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 17, 2025, at 7:32 PM

Town Hall – 307 E. Kennedy Blvd.

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.*

CALL TO ORDER AND VERIFICATION OF QUORUM:

Mayor Gardner called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. and a quorum was established by Mrs. King

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

STAFF: (5) Demetris Pressley, **Chief Administrative Officer**; Veronica King, **Town Clerk**, Cliff Shepherd, **Town Attorney**, Valerie Mundy, **Public Works Director**; Katrina Gibson, **Finance Director**,

(Regular council meeting was RECESSED at 7:32pm; Mayor Angie Gardner RECONVENED the council workshop [approximately 7:33pm.]

Discussion of the Drinking Water and Wastewater Facilities Plan Presentation: Public Works Director Valerie Mundy presented an update on the facilities plan for the water and sewer infrastructure program. Director Mundy asked the project engineering consultant to explain what he included in the facilities plan. The consultant started by going over six (6) water projects, with an estimated total cost of \$43 million. These include the Forest City road water main extension to serve the Forest City area. The second project is a water main extension along West Kennedy Boulevard, which addresses both road widening conflicts and the replacement of aging asbestos cement pipes. Another project is the East Kennedy water main replacement, which involves upgrading deteriorated pipes east of I-4 with larger, modern infrastructure. The consultant also introduced the plan for a new water treatment plant near Town Hall, which will include a connecting main to East Kennedy Boulevard. In preparation for potential emergency needs, two interconnects with the City of Maitland are also proposed. Lastly, a town-wide water main replacement project will target undersized and outdated lines throughout several neighborhoods, replacing them with new mains, hydrants, valves, and service lines. This portion of the work is partially funded by a secured 100% DEP grant with no loan component, meaning there will be no financial impact on residents. Additional grant funding will be pursued to cover remaining costs. The consultant then outlined six (6) wastewater system projects, totaling approximately \$35 million. These include the replacement of the Vereen Road lift station and the rehabilitation of the Vereen Road collection system in the town's southeast area. The Lake Lily, East North Kennedy, and Eastern South collection systems are also scheduled for full gravity sewer replacements due to aging infrastructure. The final wastewater project involves extending service to the Forest City area with the construction of a new pump station and force main to integrate wastewater from that area into the town system. Similar to the water projects, the wastewater improvements are partially funded through a DEP principal forgiveness grant, with no current financial impact to customers. Future grant opportunities are anticipated to fund the remainder of the project costs. Councilwoman Randolph asked Valerie Mundy if this means the town will be able to treat their own wastewater. Valerie Mundy – No. This is the collection system. The wastewater is still being treated by Altamonte. We are not putting the wastewater treatment facility in the town yet. [In regards to the consultant's presentation], those numbers exceed the funding that we already have. And so having this facility helps us calculate what the difference is.

Update and Discussion – African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund (AACHAF) Grant With NTHP: Town Planner Tara Salmieri gave an update on projects under review or already underway. She reported that, as of September 2024, the Town utilized a community assistance grant to produce several historic preservation documents, limited to 100 parcels within the current historic district boundary established in 1997. This effort included training for officers of the Historic Preservation Board, leading to the board’s revitalization. The next step under consideration is conducting a formal historic resource survey, which would assess architectural and archaeological assets and could result in recommendations to expand, reduce, or reclassify historic boundaries. Town Planner Salmieri noted that the Town opted not to pursue a competitive CLG (Certified Local Government) grant in June due to uncertain state funding and a delayed timeline for access to awarded funds (July 2026). Instead, the Town is moving forward in partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which is offering assistance through a faster and more flexible grant process. Planning consultant Mr. Ennis Davis of the Community Planning Collaborative (CPC)--who has ancestral ties to Eatonville--has been engaged to develop a more robust scope for the survey. His firm has extensive experience with historic Black communities and will include council and public workshops as part of the process. As part of the proposed effort, the firm will conduct a new historic resource survey which has not been done since 1997, and such surveys are recommended every 10 years. The survey process will include historical and architectural context, resource inventory and evaluations, and recommendations, which may include boundary expansions, reductions, or identification of additional historical sites. Included in this will be a focus on public engagement, including workshops with council and community outreach before survey work begins. Councilwoman Randolph – The grant for \$125,000, now that is for just a survey, is that correct? Town Planner Salmieri states it is not just for the survey. Councilwoman Randolph – Because I see there is another grant listed for \$25,000 that has to do with support. It says here to reinforce planning contractors' community engagement with the residents. Town Planner Salmieri did not have a copy of the contract Councilwoman Randolph was referring to, so Chief Administrative Officer Demetrius Pressley answered that the \$25,000 was to help cover costs that may be used by administration or by our [planner] consultant. Councilwoman Randolph – My other concern I would say is the lateness in getting this off the ground. We know that all grants must come before the council. We run it against a deadline of June 30th, is that correct? For this grant to be signed off on and executed and sent to, to the office, the national office? Mr. Pressley – Yes. We have already sent the correspondence over to them moving forward on our end, so I am just waiting back on the response. Councilwoman Randolph – Okay. So, my question is, because of the funds that we are going to be utilizing here in the town, should this come before council? Mr. Pressley clarified that it was already approved by the council and Councilwoman Randolph asked for a copy to see what they approved. Before moving forward, Mr. Pressley wanted to address a concern made by resident Angela Thomas about her water meter. Staff contacted the plumber and gave an update that there is a meter and an account that is based on the usage. Mr. Pressley explained that he would be more than happy to have staff meet with Mrs. Thomas and to make sure she can verify.

(The council workshop ADJOURNED at 7:58pm; The Regular Council Meeting at RECONVENED at 7:58pm by Mayor Angie Gardner)

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

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

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Mayor Gardner Motions to APPROVE the meeting agenda; Moved by Councilman Randolph; Second by Vice Mayor Washington; AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES.

PRESENTATIONS AND RECOGNITION:

Mayor Gardner presented a reading of the Proclamation celebrating the 2025 Juneteenth holiday.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION – (2)

Angela Thomas – (Resident) Mrs. Thomas made a public records request to Mrs. King regarding documentation showing that a water meter was installed at her house. Mrs. Thomas also asked the council and administration if the water was able to be turned off and on, what was the purpose of putting the meter in? Also, the pool is still not open. These young men have asked me, “Mrs. Thomas, why is the pool not open?” So, if we are not going to open the pool, can we just be honest and say we are not going to open the pool and find other kind of way to help these young men. [Request: Copies of the installation of meters]

Anthony Grant – (Resident) Mr. Grant had a question for Attorney Shepherd regarding whether a resolution can establish water rates without ordinance. Attorney Shepherd answered that it can if the ordinance says so. Grant argued that the current ordinance repealed the previous one. Grant then asked Attorney Shepherd if the interpretation of the legislature is law or is it what is written in the bill that becomes law? Attorney Shepherd replied it depends on who is doing the interpretation of the law. Mr. Grant then spoke about a public records request through the Town Clerk and Mr. Pressley in which he received two different documents on the water rates. Mr. Grant stated the copy the Town Clerk provided him was the one approved by council, whereas the copy Mr. Pressley provided had asterisks next to the per thousand gallons and was not approved by council. Mr. Grant said that he felt misled by Mr. Pressley because it seemed like he was the only person with that document. He stated that he feels “that if that is the case, which is a problem for the highest office in the town under the mayor to mislead the public with water rates because they made an error. If you made an error, just correct the error, just bring it back and correct it. We made an error a few years ago and we had to correct it, and we reimbursed residents because we made a mistake.” Mr. Grant said that he would like to know when this document was authored and who authored it. As for the water rates, multifamily homes are being charged the same as single-families and residents are being charged more than commercial. Mr. Grant stated that there must be some tier system here. If not, you have problems.

APPROVAL CONSENT AGENDA: Mayor Gardner Motions to MOVE the Item Agenda #3 approving the Amended Resolution 2025-10 (Utility Rate Clarification) to COUNCIL DECISIONS; **Moved by Councilman Mack; Second by Councilwoman Randolph; AYE:** Vice Mayor Theo Washington, Councilwoman Wanda Randolph, Councilman Tarus Mack, Councilman Rodney Daniels; **NAYE: Mayor Angie Gardner, MOTION PASSES 4/1. Comments/Notes:** Councilwoman Randolph requested for item 3 (Resolution 2025-10 Utility Rate Clarification) to be moved to Council Decisions.

Mayor Gardner Motions to APPROVE the Consent Agenda Moved by Councilman Mack; Second by Councilwoman Randolph; AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES. Comments/Notes: Consent approval only included Item 1 Approval of Meeting Minutes 6-3-25) and item 2 Approval of the Drinking Water and Wastewater Facilities Plan.

COUNCIL DECISIONS:

Approval of the Amended Resolution 2025-10. Utility Rate Clarification – Vice Mayor Washington – Asked to table this item for clarity on the rates, ordinance, or clarity on what needs to be done. Finance Director Katrina Gibson – To say that our department or administration is doing something illegal or wrong—I put a lot of work into that document with the Florida Rural Water Association, and when she came here and presented that documentation, if you go back and listen to the workshop, it was stated in there: per thousand gallons. I do not know why there are two different documentations, but I do have a document that says per thousand gallons. Councilman Mack – I am not concerned about that document. What about the document that was requested through public records and redacted? Do we have a copy of the redacted document that was given to the citizen? Mr. Pressley – There was no redacted document. There was a document created separately that came from the Florida Rural Water Association that had the asterisks on it that were sent. That was the document I had, I did not modify it. Councilman Mack – Then let us say changes. Katrina Gibson – A line was added on the following.

Councilman Mack – This was changed without the consent of council, am I correct? And this was identified over a month ago. Why didn't you [Katrina Gibson] notify each council member once you identified this? Councilman Mack clarified that he was not concerned with the document Katrina was sharing with council, but the document that was modified. Councilman Mack – I feel like the Attorney and CAO are not being truthful to me. And if they are not being truthful to me, they are not being truthful with the citizens. This was never brought to me as a council member to understand what was going on. But moving forward, it is in everyone's best interest, as an employee for the Town of Eatonville, especially on the administrative side, to dot your I's and cross your T's. This is not a threat. This is just a biblical truth on what needs to be done because the truth will set you free. Mayor Angie Gardner interjected to tell councilman Mack to tell the truth on the situation because he accused Mr. Pressley of manipulating the document. Mayor Gardner told councilman Mack he is not repeating what is on record correctly. Mayor Gardner – The document was not changed. Two different documents were sent from two different locations. Councilman Mack – Why is it different if there should be just one? Mayor Gardner – Because two existed. Councilman Mack – No, only one existed, which was changed. He said it was changed. He made the corrections without even going through the council. Mr. Pressley – You are misinterpreting what I said. I did not say that I adjusted the document. I received the document from the staff and when the request came from the citizen, I sent what I had. That was the latest one that I thought was in the record, I did not adjust it. Mayor Gardner [to Councilman Mack] – Before we use the word “liar” and “misleading,” have you seen the actual packet? So, when you sit here, you can say “this is what was said.” But right now, you are basing what you are saying off someone else. Councilman Mack – But he made changes. I understand your [inaudible] because it is your administration. At the end of the day, it falls onto you. Mayor Gardner – The truth falls on me. But you have nothing in front of you to even talk about what you are saying before you call people “liars.” Councilman Mack – You want me to identify a lie? When I asked the attorney if we have any lawsuits and he told me no—that is a lie. I will ask you [Mr. Pressley] again: the document that you received from Mrs. King [the clerk] that was a public request from a citizen. She gave it to you, right? Was that the same document that you sent to the citizen? Was that the same document, yes or no? Mr. Pressley – No because she did not send me that document. I sent the document I had directly to Mr. [Anthony] Grant. We both sent a document. And what I am saying is that is when it was brought to my attention that we did not have the same document. So, nothing was fabricated in between that time. Councilman Mack – But, she had the item that was approved. So rather it came from a staff or whoever it came from—you dropped the ball. Mr. Pressley – I stated that already. Councilman Mack – But do not sit here and try to say you did not do it when you did it. You just said you made a correction on the document she gave you. Mr. Pressley – I did not say that. Mayor Gardner – What should have happened is that the document should have been included in the [agenda] package on the final approval and it was not. So, Mrs. King would think that the documents she had were the final. But, Mr. Pressley thought they had the same document. It was simply an error. Councilman Mack – If they dropped the ball, give the people their money back and let us start all over again and hope we do not make the same mistake. Mr. Pressley – The request for rebate that you are asking for does not change the need to do this item. We can vote [on] this and direct staff to proceed with looking into. Councilman Mack – It is a hard no for me. Mr. Pressley – I am just telling you the options you have. Councilman Mack – If we cannot move to table it, it is going to be a hard no for me. We should table the item or vote it down until we can come up with a better solution. **Mayor Gardner Motions to TABLE Agenda Item #3** approving the Amended Resolution 2025-10 (Utility Rate Clarification); **Moved by** Vice Mayor Washington; **Second by** Councilwoman Randolph; **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES**

REPORTS:

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER: Demetrius Pressley – No Report

TOWN ATTORNEY: Cliff Shepherd – No Report

TOWN COUNCIL REPORT/DISCUSSION ITEMS -

Councilman Tarus Mack – Thank you to all the citizens who came tonight. Condolences to the Bradshaw family. When I think about Juneteenth I think about freedom. I think about everything that went on with us in terms of freedom. I advise everyone to come out and get involved and reflect on how important this holiday is. The situation of my cleanups, which I have every first Saturday of June every year—I felt like it was a failure. I will let you all know about this in April about this cleanup and I was assured that it was going to be done. I had no flyers, no communication. Councilman Mack asked Attorney Shepherd if the town has any pending lawsuits. Attorney Shepherd reported that to his knowledge, the town does not have any lawsuits. Councilman Mack brought up the need to engage with Catalina Park residents before pursuing plans to build a new police community center in the area. Issues with potholes “all over the town.” Citizens keep asking when the pool will open; hopefully, we will move in a direction to make things better in regards to the pool situation. We are coming up on July and we have \$1.5 million in grants that need to be spent by January 2026—what are we doing? We are sitting here buying all these properties from the interlocal agreements with CRA, but what are we doing? As long as I have been sitting here, we have not developed anything. What are we doing with the OCPS property and when are we going to move forward with an agreement? Hopefully, we have a plan to do something great on this property, but we need to communicate. Asked for updates on the sidewalks on the west side of town. Alligators are crossing on the sidewalks, which is dangerous.

Councilman Rodney Daniels – Condolences to the Bradshaw and Atkins families for their loss. Disappointed with Mr. Pressley on the lack of timely administrative assistance regarding updates to the council, specifically the OCPS meeting about the Hungerford Property which Councilman Daniels was not aware of. Daniels would like to discuss with Mr. Pressley about a potential facility for Public Works. Another concern is making sure golf cart drivers are certified and going through the classes. Daniels has an issue with not knowing pending lawsuits since it is the job of a separate town attorney (not Attorney Shepherd). Respect to Councilman Mack; I have also felt disrespected; whenever that motion comes I will second it.

Councilwoman Wanda Randolph – Worried that not all council members are treated with the respect they deserve. At a recent event that displayed official photos of elected municipality officials, Councilwoman Randolph did not have an official photo. Randolph said this was not done on accident as she believes that she has been left out and not informed on different things. Randolph is on the committee for the Juneteenth event and was not invited to speak on a radio show with Mayor Gardner promoting the celebration. We were supposed to have a cleanup day and there was no communication whatsoever. Councilman Daniels and I attended the school board meeting and the last meeting I received a phone call one hour before the meeting started. It seems like these things are done on purpose. Moving forward, another issue that has been addressed over and over on Clark street. One of our business owners took it upon himself to comply with the requirements of the waste container. There are 9-11 containers with no enclosures, including Town Hall. But we are going to force other people to do it, but we are not. We are not disciplined as far as showing leadership to our business community. One of our business owners has spent \$25,000-\$30,000 with that dumpster; [to Mr. Pressley] this is something that needs to be taken care of. It is not right, and it is not fair. These are the people that we say that we want in our community. These are the individuals who are shareholders. They are bringing something to our town. Councilwoman Randolph wanted to know if the town was buying a bus. Mr. Pressley stated that the administration is looking into the [buying] process and then it will be brought before council. Councilwoman Randolph asked why the town would purchase a used bus and not new. Mr. Pressley said administration looked at both options and that was the recommendation from staff. Councilwoman Randolph asked Mr. Pressley to follow up with the police chief as to why the ordinance is not being enforced in regards to golf cart drivers? Councilwoman Randolph also asked whenever anything is filed on the town, whether or not Mr. Shepherd will be involved or not, it does not hurt to let him know about cases. At the school board meeting, an attorney gave some good information on the prosecution. Per the attorney, according to the Florida statues, they cannot donate property. Mr. Pressley – He stated two areas. He said that it is not that they cannot, they just needed to be careful with it. And that was the interpretation I had. The attorney said they just needed to make sure it was in the best interest of the school board. And if they did, they had to worry about repercussions from the Department of Education. I have already spoken

to an attorney about looking into that and there will be follow-up meetings about it. Councilwoman Randolph reminded everyone about the Juneteenth event at St. Lawrence at 6:30pm. There will also be a festival on the Hungerford field. Also, a resident died about a month ago—Mayor Gardner, can you tell me if the resolution has been delivered? Mayor Gardner – a resolution was delivered at the wake the night before. That resolution was misplaced by Saturday morning, which is why I was not there for the funeral. Finally, councilwoman Randolph has been without a laptop for about four months and thought that the administration would have ordered one, but she will have to get her own.

Vice Mayor Theo Washington – Working with the police chief on the signage and the decals for golf carts. We are trying to get with other municipalities to understand where they get their signage from. And that is something coming up in the next several months that we get signage out and certifications with the town. In regards to the aquatics center (pool), we need to figure out what is wrong with it, get it fixed and get these kids in the pool.

MAYOR’S REPORT: Mayor Angie Gardner – The pool was not open because of a lightning strike that caused damaged. There was a part that they had to wait on—which they got. But you cannot swim without lifeguards. Does not matter how much is in your budget. If you cannot get lifeguards, if there is a shortage, there is a shortage. So that is what we are working on. It is not about the pool or opening it. Mayor Gardner reminded everyone that she is up for reelection. Every decision made by this administration, whether it is a mistake made or not a mistake made—we are human, but I would still put this administration (and this staff) above any that has come before us, some of the mistakes that are being made, they're being made because there were no things in place. Mayor Gardner and the administration are creating new procedures. Some of the complaints, Mayor Gardner has addressed it, Mr. Presley has addressed it, but “no one is lying.” No one is misleading—that is not what we are about. I think the meeting with the school board went well. Mayor Gardner hopes more people will come out for the next master planning session. In regards to the picture displayed on the screen at the State of the County event: When you get the invite, you say, “yes, you're going,” or “no”—no one asks for a photo. The only reason they had my photos is because I am on the Tourist Development Council, so they probably already had them in their records. I do not know where they got the other photos from. And I think you responded too late. So, there was no undercutting anyone. In regards to the radio show, I did not put that together, but I can understand how you may feel Councilwoman Randolph, and that is probably a little bit how I felt when you were on the radio in about 2023. And that would've been something that the mayor of the town should have been a part of. So, I think we kind of understand that. But, I didn't put it together. So, I would apologize, but there was no intent. Confusion is an enemy. And when you're not given the truth, that creates confusion. Please know that this administration is not doing anything that's going to harm this town. We've worked too hard to get where we are. We have established relationships that are based on trust, more trust than has been in the past. And we are going to hold onto that. We don't hold onto that by starting now to be dishonest. We don't have to. All our moves have been smart moves. But again, if a mistake is made and we have to fix it, that's what we will do. But I apologize to the staff for having to put up with what you've had to put up with. I know people have the right to say what they want to say, but we've been doing a great job and I'm going to stand on that every single day.

ADJOURNMENT Mayor Gardner Motions for Adjournment of Meeting; **Moved by Councilman Mack;**
Second by Vice Mayor Washington; AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES. Meeting ADJOURNED at 9:29pm.

Respectfully Submitted by:

APPROVED

Veronica L King, Town Clerk

Angie Gardner, Mayor