



HISTORIC TOWN OF EATONVILLE, FLORIDA

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 15, 2025, at 7:31 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 7:31 p.m. and a quorum was established by Ms. Bellenger.

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

STAFF: (5) Demetris Pressley (virtual), **Chief Administrative Officer;** Marissa Bellenger, **Records Coordinator;** Cliff Shephard, **Town Attorney;** Katrina Gibson, **Finance Director;** Valerie Mundy, **Public Works Director;** Fletcher Boone, **EPD Chief**

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 with an additional walk-on item; **Moved by** Vice Mayor Washington; **Second by** Councilwoman Randolph; **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES. Comments:** (Walk on Item) Resolution 2025-13 to Terminate Working From Home Policy.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION – (2)

Before beginning citizen participation, Mayor Angie Gardner reminded the public that there are only 3 minutes to speak with no dialogue with the audience. Mayor Gardner would also like to make an apology to Attorney Holli New, who filled in for Attorney Shephard in the last meeting, because there were comments from the audience that were inappropriate and unprofessional, and she took offense to it. The mayor asked Chief Murray to be the sergeant-at-arms.

Angela Thomas – (Resident) Mrs. Thomas would like to know the status of the historic grant and if possible that the grant could be used with the Historic Preservation Board. Mrs. Thomas would like to see the town build a statue that represents the five founding fathers.

Angela Johnson – (Resident) Mrs. Johnson requested that Item #2 of the Consent Agenda be moved to Council Decisions. Mrs. Johnson provided a copy of a list of questions (to the Clerk) that she would like to be added into the public record.

PUBLIC HEARING: CRA Executive Director Michael Johnson made an opening statement on the updated CRA plan. Mayor Gardner then opened up the public hearing for questions. No questions were raised. Mayor Gardner opened the hearing for questions from council members. Councilman Daniels had a question about

Objective 2.2.2—it was from his understanding that the CRA could not assist in something the town has already established. Mr. Johnson – You do not want to be too specific, but you want to put everything you possibly can in the plan. The language used there is so we can seek funding. You have specific things that you want to do in your capital improvement—those things we [the CRA] cannot do.

APPROVAL CONSENT AGENDA: Mayor Gardner Motions to APPROVE the Consent Agenda with amendment MOVING Agenda Item #2, requesting to approve Public Works Utility Tech 1 Reclassification of Position to **COUNCIL DECISIONS; **Moved by** Councilman Mack; **Second by** Councilwoman Randolph; **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES 4/0. Comments/Notes:****

COUNCIL DECISIONS:

Approval of Public Works Utility Tech 1–Reclassification of Position (Moved from Consent Agenda)–

Councilman Mack starts by stating he has a great appreciation for Valerie Mundy and everything that she does for the town. Mack is concerned with the supervisor being less qualified than the Tech 1 employee. Mack says that he would support approving the reclassification of this position. However, the supervisor needs to be more qualified than the Utility Technician. Councilman Daniels stated that he would like to receive a copy of the questions given by Angela Johnson during citizen participation (Daniels was handed a copy). Daniels – When we have residents coming up with these questions, it has me wondering do we know what we are doing? Can we provide a current organizational charter for the Public Works Department? How many utility technicians are currently budgeted, filled, or planned for the next term? [To Mrs. Mundy] Have you seen these questions? Valerie Mundy – We did not see those questions, but I understand some of the concerns. I would like to recommend that the Utility Tech 1 position report directly to myself. I would train them perhaps until we meet some of those questions and concerns. Councilman Daniels – I do not want the staff to think that I am not in favor of promotion and education of our staff, but I want this to be done right. Councilwoman Randolph – We have already discussed this during the discussion period. And what it seems to me right now is that we need to table this, Mayor, until we come back to the budget. That way you would have all of the paperwork and the background information to support what you are asking for. Mayor Gardner and Councilman Mack state that they would like to go forward with the vote. Vice Chair Washington states that he is also in support of approval because the technician is qualified and deserving. Councilman Daniels – I do not think anyone is saying he does not deserve or entitled to the position. We want to make sure everything is done right, budgetary wise. Mayor Gardner – As a teacher, you may have teachers with a lot of certifications who have been doing their job for years, and you might have a new principal that is not making as much as a teacher. We see this all the time. You supervise processes, not people. I do not see a reason to change your request except to make it clear that the Tech 2 position stays there and you are creating an additional position. All the council is approving is the creation of the Tech 1 position. Councilman Mack – I think I am going to take the recommendation [from Councilwoman Randolph] to table this item. Mayor Gardner stated that the council is in the middle of a motion. She apologized and stated we should all be able to speak our mind without retaliation.

Mayor Gardner MOTIONS to APPROVE the Public Works Utility Tech 1–Reclassification of Position; **Moved by Councilwoman Randolph; **Second by** Councilman Mack; *Mayor Gardner rescinds her motion to Approve; Councilman Mack rescinds his second.***

Councilwoman Randolph MOTIONS to TABLE the Public Works Utility Tech 1–Reclassification of Position; **Moved by Councilman Mack; **Second by** Councilman Daniels; **AYE: (3)** Councilwoman Randolph, Councilman Mack, Councilman Daniels. **NAYE: (2)** Vice Mayor Washington and Mayor Gardner. **MOTION PASSES. 3/2.****

Approval of Town Council Meeting AMENDED Minutes 6-3-25 (Clerk) – Records Coordinator Marissa Bellenger stated for the record that Councilman Daniels submitted an 8B form of voting conflict for the June 3rd meeting due to the special gain or loss of a relative. The form was received on July 1st by Town Clerk, Veronica King. The form will be submitted along with the amended minutes.

Mayor Gardner MOTIONS to APPROVE the Town Council Meeting Amended Minutes for 6-3-25; **Moved** by Councilman Daniels; **Second by** Councilman Mack; **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES.**

Approval of Resolution 2025-12 – Town of Eatonville 2025 CRA Plan Update (Administration) – Ms. Bellenger read the preamble into the record.

Mayor Gardner MOTIONS to APPROVE Resolution 2025-12 – Town of Eatonville 2025 CRA Plan Update; **Moved by** Councilman Daniels; **Second by** Vice Mayor Washington; **AYE: (4)** Councilwoman Randolph, Councilman Mack, Vice Mayor Washington, Mayor Gardner; **NAYE: (1)** Councilman Daniels. **MOTION PASSES. 4/1.**

Approval of Resolution 2025-13 to Terminate Working From Home Policy (Legislative) – Councilwoman Randolph clarifies that this item is not a walk-on, and that it was added and submitted in a timely manner. The councilwoman stated that the issue is that we have employees who are working at home when we do not have a policy. The recommendation is that the council approves this resolution, terminating work from home for any employee or employees, until the council adopts a policy. Councilman Randolph stated that when this item was submitted, there was an email thread to remove it from the agenda. Randolph said no one has the right to remove a legislative person's item from the agenda. I was not trying to administrate the department; I was trying to point out that we did not have a policy. I did not like the way this was presented or the demeanor of this process. When Mrs. King responded with a rebuttal, I had accidentally responded. This was dismissed or rejected by the attorney. Attorney Shephard – We do not have the authority to reject it. Councilwoman Randolph – Well, the way it was written, it was not presented correctly, and I did not really like it as a council person. It says right here [referring to the email], that Mr. Pressley had forwarded a legal opinion recommending the removal from you all. Then, Mrs. King removed the item. I asked her to put it back on the agenda because nobody has the authority. Randolph expressed concerns of how her item was handled. She stated she felt she needed to put a motion to terminate the legal services. Randolph has seen other incidents in the past which seemed like things were one sided and not working for the council. Councilman Mack – Before moving forward, the councilman would like to clarify that the grant writer often works from home and the importance of that work. He is in favor of what Randolph is suggesting but suggests that there needs to be some stipulations. If the councilwoman can agree with Mack on the stipulations, and make some changes, he stated that would be more fair than tabling it altogether. Councilwoman Randolph – The resolution speaks for itself (“to terminate any and all work from home activities for all employees until the Town Council has adopted a formal work from home policy”). This needs to be voted on and put before the council tonight. The second thing Randolph has concerns about is whether the town’s insurance policy covers work from home; or whether the employee is actually working. I am not saying anything unbelievable about the individual, we just have an issue on policies and procedures and holding others accountable. Vice Mayor Washington – This work from home policy came from the pandemic. We should put in individual contracts a policy, but I do not recommend terminating work from home. Councilman Mack reiterates that he does want to terminate working from home. Councilwoman Randolph – I am not in favor of tabling because we know what happens when we table. It will go from this month to the next and so on, and we will not get anything accomplished. Mayor Gardner – [To Councilwoman Randolph] How does this policy change help the town? Councilwoman Randolph – It will put policies and procedures in place. Mayor Gardner – Here is my point: you are having a discussion about policy, but all of the discussion (with council) is about procedure—that is administrative. We do have a policy, and it is that we have full-time and part-time employees (and seasonal or temporary). You are getting bogged down with procedure and how it looks. Councilwoman Randolph – Show me in the personnel manual a work from home policy—you do not have

one. I know what article 2 of the charter states on the responsibility of the administration. You have not told me one thing about a policy.

Mayor Gardner MOTIONS to TABLE Resolution 2025-13 to Terminate Working From Home Policy; **Moved** by Councilman Mack; **Second** by Vice Mayor Washington; **AYE: (3)** Councilman Mack, Vice Mayor Washington, Mayor Gardner; **NAYE: (2)** Councilman Daniels and Councilwoman Randolph. **MOTION PASSES. 3/2.**

Additional comments: Mayor Gardner – If you would allow me to revisit the Public Works Utility Tech position, [to Councilman Mack] because I want to make certain that I understood correctly and I did not offend you. It seemed as though you were going to vote yes, but what I said changed it. I want to make sure what I said does not hurt the work that Mrs. Mundy is doing. I am asking that we vote so that it can continue. Councilman Mack – I want to stay with what I stated in terms of tabling.

REPORTS:

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER: Demetrius Pressley (Virtually)– Reminder that the budget workshop is next week for two days. Just to give the council a heads up, due to a family emergency Mr. Pressley will be out of office until this Friday (7/18/25).

TOWN ATTORNEY: Cliff Shepherd – I want to reiterate that any of you are welcome to call me at any time, any opinion that our office renders for a meeting so it can be fully explained to whomever about whatever issue. We offer opinions based on the law which includes the charter, state statues, and opinions from the Attorney General’s office. Every opinion we offer I can back up in writing with more resources than perhaps may always appear in those opinions just because there are so many. The opinion that was questioned tonight is as solid an opinion as you could possibly get. If it did offend, that is certainly not the intention. Other than that, I greatly enjoy serving this body and will continue to do so.

TOWN CLERK: Veronica King – No Report

TOWN COUNCIL REPORT/DISCUSSION ITEMS -

Councilman Rodney Daniels – Started off by making sure Mrs. Mundy was aware that there is a small gator in Lake King. Councilman requested a meeting with Mrs. Mundy to discuss the issue. Police Chief Murray clarified for Councilman Daniels that the fish and wildlife will not respond if there is no sight of the gator. He suggested residents call 911 and keep a lookout. Councilman Daniels continued his report by stating he would like to schedule a meeting with Mrs. Mundy concerning the yard and making sure it has running water and A/C for public works employees. He would like to see the Wi-Fi issue within Town Hall to be fixed. Councilman stated for the record that he did not vote against golf carts, he just wanted to make sure it was done correctly.

Councilwoman Wanda Randolph – The councilwoman requested an update on Access Realty in which Mr. Pressley stated that they would move forward at the pleasure of the council. She also asked for the dumpster update. Mr. Pressley stated that he contacted the owner to start the process to remove the dumpster as well as contacting the appropriate personnel for a new dumpster. Councilwoman Randolph brought up the issue for the 200 S.W. Street residence which has a water leak outside the building. Randolph requested the water usage for the residence. Mrs. Mundy updated the councilwoman on the issue and although the leak is on private property, she recommended fining the apartment complex. Councilwoman Randolph asked Mr. Pressley if any employees have shifted from part-time to full-time or vice-versa. Mr. Pressley stated that he can look up the report from HR. The grant coordinator and HR positions were the only ones, from his knowledge, which switched from full-time to part-time. The councilwoman wanted to know if this was brought before the council. Mr. Pressley did not know this was an item that needed to be brought before council because the budget was not changed. Attorney Shephard stated that it does not need to come before council unless it impacts [increases] the budget. It is ultimately up to

the mayor to make the decision. Councilwoman Randolph is concerned the town is not backfilling positions. Randolph would like an update on the budget hearing items which have not been sent to council members as of yet. Mayor Gardner answered that as soon as the items are available they will be sent to council. Councilwoman Randolph restated that she would like to move forward with a motion on the floor to terminate legal services. Mr. Pressley stated that the councilwoman's added item was not removed by the general counsel, CAO or administration. Mr. Pressley asked general counsel if the resolution conflicts with the charter. They gave us their opinion based on the law and statute which was then relayed to the clerk. Mrs. King then sent the information over to the councilwoman, and I believe at that point there was a conversation between the clerk and councilwoman about removing the item. That is when the councilwoman stated she accidentally responded. When it was noticed that the item was removed, the councilwoman asked that it be added back to the agenda. It was not a late item, and the general counsel did not try to challenge the request.

Councilwoman Randolph MOTIONS to TERMINATE legal services; **Moved by** Councilman Mack; **Second by** Councilman Daniels. **AYE: (3)**, Councilwoman Randolph, Councilman Mack; **NAYE: (2)** Vice Mayor Washington and Mayor Gardner. **MOTION PASSES. Comments/notes:** Mayor Gardner requests to implement an emergency hire for Attorney Shephard, so the council is not left without proper legal counsel. Attorney Shephard stated that his office's opinions are not motivated by anything but the law. In addition, his office has never asked for anything to be put on the agenda or removed. The attorney stated he and his office have contradicted the positions of the Mayor in the past whether they were appropriate or not. Shepherd stated he understands that this opinion upset the councilwoman and gave her a reason to get rid of him. He will meet with Mayor Gardner to go through transition. Attorney Shephard concluded by saying that this vote was not on the agenda so the public was unaware it would take place.

Councilman Tarus Mack – Thanks to the citizens who come and engage in town business. Regarding Attorney Shephard's termination, the councilman stated that in the best interest and betterment of the people in this community he saw the need of getting rid of him. The councilman continued by giving condolences to anyone who has lost any loved ones in the community. He reminded everyone that the deadline of HostDime is approaching and would like an update on the construction completion. Councilman Mack is hosting his annual cleanup day on July 19th outside of Town Hall. He partnered with Chief Murray and a national organization out of Detroit who are willing to give their health service check-ups (blood pressure, hearing). Concerning the water rates, Councilman Mack does not understand why the town is getting legal advice from Orange County and not from their own attorney. He would like to discuss with Mr. Pressley about the proposed easement of Andre English's property. Councilman Mack gave thanks to Chief Murray who is putting on a Boys and Girls Club event called "Midnight Basketball." Mack would also like to give kudos to Maitland and Edgewater High Schools for their "A" ratings, as well as Hungerford Elementary for earning a "B." The councilman would like an update on the budget hearing packages and what direction the town is heading toward in regard to water reimbursement. He would also like an update to Mrs. Mills' sewer problem. The councilman publicly apologized to the Attorney Holli New who filled in for Shephard in the last meeting as he was not trying to undermine her.

Vice Mayor Theo Washington – Vice Mayor Washington reflected on facilities in Eatonville that need to be demolished (Denton Johnson Center) or renovated. Washington stated that the town does not jump on opportunities for new amenities (or facilities). He is focused on infrastructure and space for the community (e.g., to hold events).

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Angie Gardner – One of the main things I thought this administration brought was stability and we have seen the town start to grow. The worst thing we could do is get rid of one of the strongest attorneys for our own town. Mayor Gardner stated that Attorney Shephard has done nothing wrong and was terminated out of emotional retaliation. Gardner emphasized that the charter is the main law for the town and if something violates the charter, it is the attorney's responsibility to point it out. Gardner states by attacking the grant coordinator, you are stopping progress so it seems like the administration is not doing as much as it could

do. The Mayor presumes that this is all due to it being an election season. She states like a basketball game; they are trying to call a timeout by getting rid or causing the grant coordinator to walk. The Mayor hopes that the Eatonville residents get to the point where they are tired of it. As for receiving legal advice from the County regarding water, the mayor states that in the last meeting Mr. Pressley asked if the situation with the water be reviewed by the county and we all agreed—Attorney Shephard is not to blame, and he probably did not know about it. Mayor Gardner references other municipalities that have 10, 20, 30 year or more town plans and they follow it despite not getting along sometimes. Gardner rhetorically asks why the Town of Eatonville is in the same spot, and when the town starts to grow, why are their people trying to slow progress.

ADJOURNMENT Mayor Gardner Motions for Adjournment of Meeting; **Moved by** Councilman Daniels; **Second by** Councilman Mack; **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES. Meeting Adjourned at 9:41pm.**

(Handout: Questions provided by Angela Johnson pertaining to the Public Works Utility Tech 1 Reclassification of Position.)

Respectfully Submitted by:

APPROVED

Veronica L King, Town Clerk

Angie Gardner, Mayor