



MINUTES

City Commission Meeting

6:00 PM – Thursday, October 03, 2024 – City Hall

INVOCATION: MOMENT OF SILENCE

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: COMMISSIONER GARY ASHCRAFT

CALL TO ORDER: 6:01 P.M.

ACKNOWLEDGE OF QUORUM AND PROPER NOTICE

PRESENT: Commissioner Gary Ashcraft, Commissioner Christine Cruz, Vice Mayor Emily Lee and Mayor Michael Holland

ABSENT: Commissioner Willie Hawkins

1. AGENDA UPDATE

Tom Carrino, City Manager, announced that due to a noticing issue the Local Planning Agency meeting was not held; therefore, staff is requesting that Ordinances 24-35, 24-36 and 24-37 be rescheduled to October 17th.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

September 11, 2024 City Commission Special Meeting

Motion made by Vice Mayor Lee, Seconded by Commissioner Ashcraft, to approve the Minutes. Motion passed on the following vote:

Voting Yea: Commissioner Ashcraft, Commissioner Cruz, Vice Mayor Lee, Mayor Holland

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Police Department Swearing-in of New Officers

Police Chief Craig Capri swore in new officers Mekeshia Johnson and Manuel Santos. Officer Johnson was pinned by her mother and Officer Santos was pinned by his daughter.

Chief Capri commented on the Eustis Police Department and how they work to keep the community safe.

Mayor Holland recognized Elena Pasek, a member of the Chief's command staff. He congratulated the new officers and expressed pride in the overall department.

3.2 Organization and Event Support Grant to Lake Cares, Inc.

Mr. Carrino invited representatives of Lake Cares to address the Commission and then their award check would be presented.

Kelsey Gonzales, Executive Director for Lake Cares, introduced Lucy Hoeffner, their Director of Development. She provided a brief overview of Lake Cares work over the past year and cited the number of Lake County and Eustis residents served by the organization. She cited some of their programs and partner organizations including Forward Paths, Meaningful

Milestones, Alee Academy, Eustis Heights Elementary, Lifepointe Church, Public Serves Day which include Vice Mayor Lee and 182 Publix volunteers, Agape House and WIN-1 Ministries. She commented on changes to their intake process to serve more clients faster. She commented on the progress on their new facility and thanked the City for its support.

Mayor Holland noted that Commissioner Hawkins also sits on their board.

Vice Mayor Lee commented on her involvement in the pantry days and the abundance of food provided.

Mr. Carrino presented Ms. Gonzales with their grant award check.

3.3 Organizational and Event Support Grant to LovExtension, Inc.

Linda Krupski from LovExtension expressed appreciation for the support they have received from the City of Eustis. She expressed thanks to the Eustis Police Department, Eustis Fire Department, Commissioners and staff members for assisting them with their food drives. She provided an overview of their programs and activities and cited the following partnerships Bay and Lake Pharmacy, Paws Therapy Group, FBCU Ladies Group, the lower school at Montverde Academy, the Littlest Bake Shop, and Unitarian Universalist Church. She commented on the program to turn plastic grocery bags into benches. She stated that the organization between October 2023 and September 2024 spent \$20,576 at the Hometown Market due to a Covid grant received in 2023 with a total spent in 2023 at Hometown Market of \$53,100.75 for fruits and vegetables.

Mr. Carrino presented the check to Ms. Krupski.

Mayor Holland and the Commissioners thanked Ms. Krupski for all they do to support the community.

4. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

Bryan Broomfield indicated the work on Grove Street is inconvenient to residents. He asked why it was not planned to be done after hours. He asked the City to consider fixing the manhole covers as part of the project.

George Asbate commented on vacant land costs and concerns of citizens regarding increased growth. He asked for a short term hold on new development until the City updates its building guidelines to guide the City's future growth. He asked for growth focused on the Strong Towns model and America in Bloom mindset. He asked that it be placed on a Commission agenda in the near future.

Mayor Holland asked when the report would come back from Kimley Horn with Mr. Carrino indicating that it was originally intended to be on that night's agenda. He explained that there are some concerns regarding the legality of what the City can regulate regarding the design of single-family homes. He stated staff is working with Kimley Horn, the City Attorney and Development Services staff to address those concerns. He indicated that it is planned to be brought back to the November 7th Commission meeting. He further explained that the City can regulate items such as lot width, setbacks, landscaping such as where it happens, and certain street elements. The City cannot require the use of certain materials in single family homes nor the use of certain types of roofing materials. He stated they want to avoid the "cookie cutter" look and Kimley Horn is working on those requirements that will help do that and some optional design guidelines that the City could adopt but would not be mandatory. He added that they can get valuable input from the Commission on November 7th on how to move

forward. He indicated that they could have discussion at that time whether or not a short term hold would be appropriate.

Vice Mayor Lee asked if it would include a discussion about reducing the maximum dwelling units from five units to three.

Mr. Carrino stated it would be less about the density number since you can have a bad design at three units per acre as well as at five units per acre. He indicated the intent is to adopt design elements which would get a good design rather than restricting just the density. He added that there could be some Bert Harris issues if you change a property from five units to three units per acre.

Commissioner Cruz asked why the discussion is being postponed to November 7th rather than the October 17th meeting with Mr. Carrino responding that the consultant would be out of the country and not available on October 17th.

Commissioner Cruz asked if overlays would be part of that discussion with Mr. Carrino indicating staff would be discussing overlays with the City Attorney as a separate matter. He stated they have not discussed overlays with Kimley Horn. He added they are concentrating on the Suburban Residential future land use category which would apply to all SR properties in the City. He explained they are not regulating specific properties but would be regulating the land use category.

Commissioner Ashcraft asked if the state says the City can't regulate garages with Mr. Carrino responding that the state has said that the City can't tell someone if the garage should be a primary element or recessed. Cities can't state where the garage should be in relation to the front of the home. He confirmed with the City Attorney that what he said was accurate.

Attorney Garcia added that it also concerns the orientation of the garage and location of windows, doors and other aspects. She offered to provide a copy of the statute to the Commission. She noted that there are separate historic preservation guidelines. She indicated she would prepare a comprehensive response for the Commission to consider. She added that it is brand new legislation and the state is providing little guidance regarding the new legislation.

Mayor Holland commented on the need to work with the state legislature and expressed concern regarding the Live Local Act.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

5.1 Resolution Number 24-77: Events Department Holiday Purchase in Excess of \$50,000

5.2 Resolution Number 24-78 JAGD Grant Ballistic Helmet

5.3 Resolution Number 24-79: 2024/25 FY Police Vehicle Budget

5.4 Resolution Number 24-81: Approval of purchase in excess of \$50,000 for Customer Service Postage costs

5.5 Resolution Number 24- 82: Library Purchase in Excess of \$50,000 for Books and Other Reading Materials

5.6 Resolution Number 24-83: Authorizing Multiple Annual Purchases in Excess of \$50,000 for Products and Services Essential to the Daily Operations of Public Utilities

5.7 Resolution Number 24-84: Coolidge Street Supplemental Agreement #1 – Bidding and Award, Grant Administration, and Construction Phase Services

5.8 Resolution Number 24-85: Approval of purchase in Excess of \$50,000 for Annual payment to Verteks Consulting, Inc as well as the one-year extension of the contract

Commissioner Ashcraft asked to pull Item 5.4 (Resolution Number 24-81) with Mayor Holland suggesting they discuss the item and then they could possibly move forward with voting on the entire Consent Agenda.

Commissioner Ashcraft asked why the City isn't sending the utility bills by email with Mr. Carrino responding that people have to opt in to electronic billing. He indicated that mail is the default billing method and noted there are customers that still do not have computer accessibility.

Nichole Jenkins, Customer Service Manager, reported that email billing has been available for over three years; however, there is no incentive. She commented on the recent increase in electronic billing and noted that whenever someone calls to complain they didn't receive their bill, the first thing staff does is recommend they sign up for electronic billing.

Commissioner Ashcraft asked about providing an incentive for signing up for electronic billing with Mr. Carrino responding staff could look at the total cost for postage, envelopes and staff time and try to put a number on mailing out the bills. After that, staff could look at implementing an incentive.

Discussion was held regarding the need to reduce costs, being more environmentally friendly, providing some type of incentive and possibly having the default be the electronic billing and people would have to request to receive a paper bill. Lori Carr, Finance Director, noted that the City still needs to recoup the costs for postage. She noted they have reduced some costs due to having the collection department instead of sending out collection notices. It was noted the number of existing customers that have not embraced technology.

Commissioner Ashcraft agreed to leave Resolution Number 24-81 on the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Lee, Seconded by Commissioner Ashcraft, to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion passed on the following vote:

Voting Yea: Commissioner Ashcraft, Commissioner Cruz, Vice Mayor Lee, Mayor Holland

6. ORDINANCES, PUBLIC HEARINGS & QUASI-JUDICIAL HEARINGS

6.1 SECOND READING

Ordinance Number 24-38: Conditional Use Permit for an Accessory Dwelling Unit at 514 East Washington Avenue

Sasha Garcia, City Attorney, read Ordinance Number 24-38 by title on second and final reading. An Ordinance of the City Commission of the City of Eustis, Lake County, Florida, approving a conditional use permit for an accessory dwelling unit to an existing single-family residence in the Suburban Residential (SR) future land use district on approximately 0.2 acres located at 514 East Washington Avenue.

Attorney Garcia opened the public hearing at 6:45 p.m. There being no public comment, the hearing was closed at 6:45 p.m.

Motion made by Commissioner Ashcraft, Seconded by Commissioner Cruz, to adopt Ordinance Number 24-38 on final reading. Motion passed on the following vote:

Voting Yea: Commissioner Ashcraft, Commissioner Cruz, Vice Mayor Lee, Mayor Holland

6.2 Explanation of Ordinances for Annexation of Parcel with Alternate Key Number 1443270:

Ordinance Number 24-35 – Voluntary Annexation

Ordinance Number 24-36 – Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Ordinance Number 24-37 – Design District Assignment

FIRST READING

Ordinance Number 24-35: Voluntary Annexation of Parcel located at 2505 E. Orange Avenue with Alternate Key Number 1443270

6.3 FIRST READING

Ordinance Numbers 24-36: Comprehensive Plan Amendment Assignment of Future Land Use for Annexed Parcel located at 2505 E. Orange Avenue with Alternate Key Number 1443270

6.4 FIRST READING

Ordinance Number 24-37: Design District Assignment for Annexation of Parcel located at 2505 E. Orange Avenue with Alternate Key Number 1443270

Ordinance Numbers 24-35, 24-36 and 24-37 were removed from consideration.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

7.1 City Commission

Commissioner Cruz reported on a tour she took of Florida Buddha Camp, which is dedicated to Japanese arts and culture. She noted they have a Joy ambassador who comes from Japan and stays in the City for two years whose purpose is to teach Japanese arts, culture and language. She asked for a presentation from them be on a November agenda. She commented on the amount of downtown construction and safety improvements to the intersections. She expressed support for the City to work toward a zero-incident rate for bicyclists and pedestrians. She noted that public safety is already working on that and asked that the Commission make a commitment to that as well which could provide additional support for grant applications and project requests. She stated the actual program is called Vision Zero which is a national program.

Commissioner Cruz then reported that she spoke with FWC who would like to come and provide a demonstration on some of their boating safety programs. She expressed support for working with them on boating safety. She asked that the City also look at some of its purchasing thresholds and establishing standard operating procedures for large emergency purchases.

Mayor Holland indicated staff is already working on that and asked Mr. Carrino for an update.

Mr. Carrino noted that was discussed during the budget workshops. He reviewed the current thresholds and indicated that staff has been researching that issue and the plan is to bring it to an upcoming meeting for discussion and then bring back an ordinance to make the changes.

Commissioner Cruz congratulated 10-year-old Bella Carter who placed first place in the Junior World Wakeboard Championships in Australia. She noted that her parents own Carter Ace Hardware. Mayor Holland indicate they could invite her to an upcoming meeting to present her with an award in recognition of her accomplishment.

Commissioner Cruz requested an update on the Rails to Trails project. Mr. Carrino responded that the Commission had approved as part of the budget some funding for a feasibility or siting study. He explained they need a consultant to help determine a location for the trail. He indicated that CSX may be more receptive since they have had a leadership change. He explained that staff would need to contact the local partners to discuss - Tavares, Umatilla and Lake County - regarding the North Lake Trail and then they could bring it back to the Commission.

Commissioner Cruz announced that Clean up Eustis would be held Saturday beginning at 9:00 a.m. in Ferran Park.

Commissioner Ashcraft asked for an update on the maintenance of the railroad right-of-way. Mr. Carrino indicated that the City cannot force them to maintain the ROW; however, the railroad has said they would grant the City access so the City can maintain it if they want. He commented on the City winding up doing work that is other agencies responsibility.

Commissioner Ashcraft then commented on the use of E-Bikes. He noted one he saw riding on the sidewalk in excess of 35 mph. He questioned whether or not that is allowed. He then announced that the EHS Homecoming would be that weekend and encouraged everyone to support the high school and its athletic programs.

Vice Mayor Lee reported on the City team's trip to Ohio for the 2024 America In Bloom Conference. She noted they were nominated for three categories and won for one of those. She stated that the team would provide a presentation to the Commission on November 7th. She stated that those cities that won had the entire community involved. They presented a short video to help begin the discussion and increase awareness.

The Commission discussed the need for more City pride with Vice Mayor Lee commenting on the need to acknowledge the City volunteers. She expressed support for including the America In Bloom ideas into some of the development guidelines.

Commissioner Cruz noted that Lake County tracks volunteers and suggested the City could perhaps use that software to help track volunteers.

7.2 City Manager

Mr. Carrino stated that the Master Plan Community Meeting has been tentatively scheduled for Thursday, November 14 at 5:30 p.m. He reminded the Commission that it is not a Commission meeting but is for the consultant to present the draft plan to the community. He indicated that the Commission cannot participate but they could attend and hear what the community comments are. He added that will be held at the Eustis Women's Club.

Mr. Carrino then noted the Kimley Horn presentation would be November 7th and asked what time they wanted it to start. It was agreed to begin that workshop at 4:30 p.m.

Mr. Carrino indicated he would be out of town the week of Thanksgiving and would probably not be reachable. He requested Commission consensus that Miranda Burrowes would be Acting City Manager during that time.

Mr. Carrino congratulated Miranda Muir on her promotion to Department Director over Events and Communications. He announced that the October 4th First Friday event would be Fire Trucktober.

7.3 City Attorney: None

7.4 Mayor

Mayor Holland commented on the EHS Homecoming and encouraged everyone to attend and show their support for the high school and the players. He commented on the lack of attendance at the games. He cited the lack of parental and community support for the education system as the fault with the education system. He then noted that the high school association has allowed high school players to be paid which has affected the small town schools, such as Eustis. He praised the City workers and asked everyone to keep the two Eustis firefighters in their prayers who are assisting with the cleanup and recovery up north.

8. ADJOURNMENT: 7:09 P.M.

**These minutes reflect the actions taken and portions of the discussion during the meeting. To review the entire discussion concerning any agenda item, go to www.eustis.org and click on the video for the meeting in question. A DVD of the entire meeting or CD of the entire audio recording of the meeting can be obtained from the office of the City Clerk for a fee.*

CHRISTINE HALLORAN
City Clerk

MICHAEL L. HOLLAND
Mayor/Commissioner