



# MINUTES

## City Commission Meeting

6:00 PM – Thursday, November 02, 2023 – City Hall

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**INVOCATION: ELDER ELIJAH PERRY, CHURCH OF GOD BY FAITH**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: VICE MAYOR EMILY LEE**

**CALL TO ORDER: 6:03 P.M.**

### **ACKNOWLEDGE OF QUORUM AND PROPER NOTICE**

**PRESENT:** Vice Mayor Emily Lee, Commissioner Gary Ashcraft, Commissioner Nan Cobb, Commissioner Willie Hawkins and Mayor Michael Holland

### **1. AGENDA UPDATE**

Tom Carrino, City Manager, asked to allow Chief Capri to present a Citizen's Life Safety Award to Stacey Hatcher first under presentations. He introduced the newest member of the Eustis team - Marissa Cella, Communications Specialist.

### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

2.1 Approval of Minutes:  
October 12, 2023 - Special Commission Meeting  
October 19, 2023 - Regular Commission Meeting

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

Voting Yea: Vice Mayor Lee, Commissioner Ashcraft, Commissioner Cobb, Commissioner Hawkins, Mayor Holland

### **3. PRESENTATIONS**

#### Presentation of Citizen's Life Safety Award – Stacey Hatcher

Chief Craig Capri presented the Citizen's Life Safety Award to Ms. Stacey Hatcher for her efforts in assisting the victim of a hit and run accident when she was returning her school bus at the end of her run. He reported on the victim's recovery from the accident.

#### 3.1 Organizational and Event Support Grant to LifeStream Open Door

Mr. Carrino commented on the City's revised organizational grant process. He welcomed representatives from the LifeStream Behavioral Center's Open Door program.

Debbie Flaherty, Director of Open Door, provided a report on the number of people assisted through Open Door in the past year. She provided an overview of the various services the center provides to their clients and the makeup of their client population. She expressed thanks to the Commission for its assistance.

Mayor Holland expressed thanks to Ms. Flaherty, the local churches and others that assist the local homeless population.

Commissioner Hawkins commented on the local need and asked to have \$500 of his discretionary funds donated to Open Door.

### 3.2 Eustis Junior Panthers and Corey Rolle Field

Mayor Holland introduced Coach Johnnie Saunders, Coach Monica and Kyla Lucas, program coordinator for the Eustis Junior Panthers.

Coach Saunders stated he has been director of the program since 1998. He congratulated the cheerleaders for being the 2023 cheerleading champions.

Ms. Lucas expressed thanks to the Commission and community for their support. She reviewed a letter sent to the City Commission with specific requests for the City: 1) Financial assistance in the amount of \$10,000; and 2) Field Management. She asked Coach Saunders to explain the financial request. He explained the need for the \$10,000 and how it would be utilized in particular to jumpstart the cheerleading program.

Ms. Lucas then cited the request for assistance with the field management at Corey Rolle Field with lining the field during home games and helping to organize the postseason play.

Ms. Lucas reviewed the third request for use of the Eustis Community Center twice annually for the Homecoming Banquet and End-of-year Awards Banquet. She stated the fourth request is for field enhancements to include the installation of overhead coverings on both the home and visiting sides of the field. Coach Saunders explained on the need for the shade to protect the spectators due to the heat.

Ms. Lucas cited the fifth request for transforming the existing racquetball structure into a concession and storage facility. The sixth request was for sideline fencing with Coach Saunders explaining that they need the fencing on both sides of the field to buffer the officials, coaches and players from the parents and other spectators.

Ms. Lucas explained the last request is for some additional security measures to control the flow of substances being allowed from vehicles onto the field during events. Coach Saunders explained the need to prevent illegal substances from being brought around the young people.

Mayor Holland asked the City Manager to work on scheduling a workshop to discuss the program and what can be done to assist them.

The Commission discussed asking Coach Saunders and Craig Dolan, Director of Parks and Recreation, to meet and work out a plan for the program.

Coach Saunders expressed appreciation and stated the City has good approachable people to work with. He commented on the needs to enhance the field and cited how the field benefits the community.

The Commission commented on how the City has unfinished business in that area such as the covering for Carver Park. Coach Saunders was directed to contact the City Manager to get the meetings scheduled.

## **4. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD**

Gessner Harris commented on W.I.N. 1 Ministries using a City facility. She expressed concerned with the second largest City building being unavailable. She noted the Woman's Club building only can handle 100 attendees. She cited a number of organizations and events that utilize the Senior Center. She cited the possibility of allowing the church to use the Woman's Club instead of the Senior Center and questioned whether or not other vacant buildings were considered.

Gail Isaac-Thomas requested that the minutes from the previous meeting be corrected to indicate that the permanent signage she was requesting is for Corey Rolle Memorial Field.

Sarah Pelfry apologized for not being at the previous meeting due to illness. She indicated that some of the information provided by George Asbate was false and misleading. She reviewed her family's history in the City. She expressed concern regarding Mr. Asbate's motives noting that he offered his own space to her tenant after she first approached the City. She explained they have had to turn away other prospective tenants due to the GI land use. She asked if the Commission would consider reconsidering their request and changing the land use to MCI (which was her original request) which would be open to light industry and freight.

Mr. Carrino explained the process for reconsideration would involve placing the issue on the agenda for discussion as to whether or not the Commission is open to reconsideration. He stated someone that voted against it would have to bring it up and it would take a majority of the Commission to allow it to be placed back on the agenda for reconsideration. Otherwise, the item may be brought back after nine months.

Ms. Pelfrey indicated that she and Mr. Trask and Mr. Allman are open to meeting with the City to discuss the situation.

## **5. CONSENT AGENDA**

### 5.1 Resolution Number 23-94: Approval of Purchase for Police Vehicles in excessive of \$50,000

Motion made by Commissioner Cobb, Seconded by Commissioner Ashcraft, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion passed on the following vote:

Voting Yea: Vice Mayor Lee, Commissioner Ashcraft, Commissioner Cobb, Commissioner Hawkins, Mayor Holland

## **6. ORDINANCES, PUBLIC HEARINGS & QUASI-JUDICIAL HEARINGS**

### 6.1 Resolution Number 23-95: Consideration of Site Plan with Waivers for Tommy's Express Carwash, Located at 15923 and 15939 US Highway 441 (Alternate Key Numbers 2534826 and 3801121)

Sasha Garcia, City Attorney, announced Resolution Number 23-95: A Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Eustis, Florida; approving a site plan with waivers (to Section 115-9.3.2(a)(2) landscape buffer requirements along streets and to Section 115-9.3.2(a)(3) suburban adjacencies for nonresidential parcels) for a commercial carwash on approximately 1.29 acres located on the northwest corner of U.S. Highway 441 and Kurt Street (Alternate Key Numbers 2534826 and 3801121) - 15923 and 15939 U.S. Highway 441.

Jeff Richardson, Development Services Deputy Director, reviewed the site plan for Tommy's Express Carwash and explained the requested waivers for 15923 and 15939 US Highway 441. He stated the waivers are to the landscape buffers and to the adjacency to the adjoining commercial parcel. He reviewed the details of the location and proposed ingress/egress. He stated a perimeter buffer is being provided on two of the sides and a partial on the third side due to the roadway between the two commercial parcels. He explained the one waiver is to reduce the required 15-foot buffer to a five to ten-foot buffer to allow for traffic circulation. He noted there is an existing stem wall that drops to a curb which results in the property being above the roadway. He explained the second waiver request is to install a pvc fence for security and screening instead of a buffer.

Mr. Richardson provided a view of the traffic circulation and elevations from Hwy. 441, the back, Kurt Street and from the internal exit. He provided a rendering with the landscaping. He confirmed the required legal notices and signage was done and stated staff's recommendation for approval. He indicated it is substantially consistent with the Land Development Regulations.

The Commission asked about the traffic flow with Mr. Richardson indicating that their engineer did not provide the plan he presented but that he did that as an example. He explained how the traffic is expected to circulate.

The Commission confirmed that both buildings are being torn down.

Attorney Garcia opened the public hearing at 6:46 p.m.

Debra Best, representing the storage facility, expressed support for the fence and indicated it will assist them with the moving of their larger trucks.

There being no further public comment, the hearing was closed at 6:47 p.m.

Motion made by Commissioner Hawkins, Seconded by Commissioner Ashcraft, to approve Resolution Number 23-95. The motion passed on the following vote:

Voting Yea: Vice Mayor Lee, Commissioner Ashcraft, Commissioner Cobb, Commissioner Hawkins, Mayor Holland

#### 6.2 Resolution Number 23-100: Commercial Lease Agreement with W.I.N.1 Ministries, Inc. for 301 W. Ward Ave

Attorney Garcia announced Resolution Number 23-100: A Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Eustis, Florida; authorizing the City Manager to execute a commercial lease agreement with W.I.N. 1 Ministries, Inc. for City-owned property at 301 West Ward Avenue.

Mr. Carrino reviewed the proposed lease and stated that the City obtained \$18,000 in rental revenue and \$33,000 from programs in the previous year from the facility. He noted that the City employee gym and an office is also in the building. He commented on the previous request by W.I.N. 1 Ministries to first purchase the building and then to lease the building. He indicated that the Commission at the October 19th meeting directed staff to work on a lease with the Ministry.

Mr. Carrino reviewed the main provisions of the lease as follows: 1) \$4,000 per month which is under market value but more than what the City typically obtains from rental revenue; 2) City employee gym would remain; 3) Proposed to be a two-year lease to begin January 1, 2024 and running through December 31, 2025. He stated that W.I.N. 1 Ministry would maintain the grounds. He indicated that there is a provision that says they may not assign or sublet the building without written permission from the City; however, they may rent rooms for events. He stated that mirrors the verbiage in the City's lease with the Chamber. He added that the parking would remain public although available to the ministry for use. The City would continue to maintain the parking lot.

Mr. Carrino provided a brief history about W.I.N. 1 Ministry and provided an overview of their programs and their involvement with the Police Department's chaplain program.

The Commission asked what rental rates they would charge compared to the City's rates with Mr. Carrino indicated they have not discussed that.

The Commission confirmed that the building would still be available for early voting. They also confirmed that the Ministry would be responsible for their own utilities.

The Commission then asked where the lease revenue should be allocated with Mr. Carrino recommending that the funds go to the Economic Development Fund (68 Fund). He explained that the funds from the other leases go there and are used for Gateway Grants.

Commissioner Hawkins commented on the facilities previously being managed by Parks and utilizing the funds for recreation programs. Mr. Carrino indicated that could be done through the 68 Fund.

Mr. Carrino indicated it is up to the Commission where the revenue is budgeted. He explained that either way there will need to be a budget amendment to recognize the revenue and allocate the expenditures.

The Commission asked to see the expenditures for the facility and further discussed how the funds should be utilized.

Further discussion was held regarding whether or not the Ministry would be willing to rent out the facility.

Attorney Garcia confirmed that use of the facility for early voting is not in the lease agreement with Mayor Holland indicating he would be fine with a verbal commitment.

The public hearing was opened at 6:59 p.m.

Pastor Renee Hill expressed thanks to the City Commission. She cited all of their activities within the community including their food distribution program. She assured the Commission that they are willing to rent the facility for private events as long as the church is not using the facility. She indicated that their rates will be comparable to the City's.

Pastor Benny Hill commented on their intent to help the community and emphasized their desires to be "meaningful, engaged and relevant" as they work to serve the community's needs.

Discussion was held regarding the rental provision within the lease with Mr. Carrino explaining they can't sub-lease the facility to someone like a restaurant but they can rent out rooms for events.

Motion made by Commissioner Ashcraft, Seconded by Commissioner Cobb, to approve Resolution Number 23-100. The motion passed on the following vote:

Voting Yea: Vice Mayor Lee, Commissioner Ashcraft, Commissioner Cobb, Commissioner Hawkins, Mayor Holland

### **6.3 FIRST READING**

Ordinance Numbers 23-27, 23-28, and 23-29: Explanation of Ordinances for annexation of parcels with Alternate Key Numbers 1212685, 3948085, 3948086, 3948087, 3948088, and 3948089

Ordinance Number 23-27: Voluntary Annexation

Ordinance Number 23-28: Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Ordinance Number 23-29: Design District Assignment

Attorney Garcia announced that, due to the action taken at the Local Planning Agency the next three items would not be heard - Ordinances 23-27, 23-28 and 23-29.

## **7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS**

### **7.1 City Commission**

Commissioner Hawkins thanked everyone that participated in the Panther Pride in the Park event and announced they raised \$29,000 and netted between \$21,000 and \$22,000. He commented on the amount of help the City has given for various things and cited the negativity directed at the City through social media particularly by people that have asked for assistance.

Commissioner Hawkins then announced there would be a 100th birthday party for Mrs. Broomfield. He indicated he had been approached to purchase a table at the event for \$350.

**CONSENSUS:** It was a consensus of the Commission for the City to purchase a table for the event.

Commissioner Hawkins noted his request to have \$500 of his discretionary funds donated to Open Door. He then asked to have the remainder of his funds go for the Senior Citizen breakfasts.

Commissioner Ashcraft congratulated Commissioner Hawkins on the Panther Pride event. He thanked the Commission for allowing him to go to the Florida Redevelopment Conference. He expressed support for continuing to do the housing rehabilitation program every year.

Commissioner Cobb reported she was approached by a resident about putting a small playground for smaller children in the small park off Clay Boulevard. She recommended removing the broken fencing. She asked about the progress on resolving the issue with the parcel IDs for the property on SR 44 with Mr. Carrino indicating he would check with Public Works.

Commissioner Cobb then asked about putting the Lakeview Avenue traffic study on the next meeting agenda. She then asked for her discretionary funds to be donated to the Eustis Junior Panther project. She expressed thanks to the City for their help, support and outpouring of love during her mom's Celebration of Life.

Vice Mayor Lee commented on the warm feelings from her mother's Celebration of Life. She reported on the America in Bloom roundtable discussion she attended. She explained they are in the process of forming a committee and indicated that the public will be encouraged to participate. She commented on how well it will beautify the City. She then cited the Sheriff's Gala.

Commissioner Cobb commented on the Greenwood SC America in Bloom topiary program and emphasized that it has helped bring economic development to the town.

Vice Mayor Lee recommended having a future presentation regarding the program.

### **7.2 City Manager**

Mr. Carrino stated they are moving forward with strategic planning and the master plan process. He announced that the strategic planning consultant would be holding a staff level meeting on Monday, November 6th. He then stated that the master plan consultant would be back in town in two weeks. He stated the consultant would like to hold a workshop with the Commission prior to the November 16th Commission meeting. He asked if they could be available at 4:30 p.m. on the 16th for that workshop. He then asked to schedule a shade meeting regarding collective bargaining at 5:30 p.m. on December 14th. He noted there is only one meeting in December and it would be the second Thursday, December 14th. He asked if

they wanted to schedule a workshop on the Eustis Panthers program on a nonCommission meeting night.

The Commission recommended that Coach Saunders and Craig Dolan meet prior to a meeting with the Commission.

Mr. Carrino indicated staff would get that scheduled and then approach the Commission about scheduling a workshop. He then announced that he would be out of town some time in November and December and asked to appoint Bill Howe as Acting City Manager during those absences.

**CONSENSUS:** It was a consensus of the Commission for Bill Howe to serve as Acting City Manager during the City Manager's upcoming absences.

### **7.3 City Attorney - None**

### **7.4 Mayor**

Mayor Holland acknowledged the presence of Theo Bob. He congratulated Commissioner Hawkins on the Panther Pride in the Park. He commented on the Sheriff's Gala and noted the funds will go to the Sheriff's Department's Children's Charities. He congratulated the Eustis Junior Panthers on their great season and stated the cheerleaders represented the City well. He also congratulated the EHS Panthers on beating Mount Dora and winning the district championship. He commented on how the Eustis Junior Panther program benefits the high school program.

Mayor Holland asked the Commission for funds to support the local students who travel to Tallahassee as part of the state legislative session essay contest. He explained all of the activities that the students get to participate in. He asked the Commission to provide \$1,000 to help them go to Tallahassee.

**CONSENSUS:** It was a consensus of the Commission to donate \$1,000 to the students to go to Tallahassee.

Mayor Holland noted that Light Up Eustis is only three weeks away. He explained that the City gets a lower rate on the rental of the decorations by allowing them to put them up as they are able.

Mayor Holland commented on how hard the Commissioners work to represent the community. He asked the public to not attack the Commission on social media. He emphasized that the Commission tries to help any organization that approaches them to the best of their ability. He asked that, if they have a problem, to contact the Commissioners individually and express their concerns.

## **8. ADJOURNMENT: 7:26 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](http://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.*

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CHRISTINE HALLORAN  
City Clerk

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MICHAEL L. HOLLAND  
Mayor/Commissioner