



MINUTES

City Commission Meeting

6:00 PM – Thursday, October 19, 2023 – City Hall

Prior to the beginning of the meeting, Mayor Holland asked Fire Chief Mike Swanson to introduce his special guest.

Mike Swanson, Fire Chief, announced that Fire Lieutenant Sean Kelleher was promoted to Deputy Chief as of October 2, 2023. The Commission congratulated Deputy Chief Kelleher on his achievement.

INVOCATION: PASTOR RENEE HILL, W.I.N. 1 MINISTRIES

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: COMMISSIONER WILLIE HAWKINS

CALL TO ORDER: 6:22 P.M.

ACKNOWLEDGE OF QUORUM AND PROPER NOTICE

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

1. AGENDA UPDATE: NONE

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2.1 Approval of Minutes

July 25, 2023 City Commission Budget Workshop
September 21, 2023 City Commission Meeting
October 5, 2023 City 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: Commissioner Hawkins, Vice Mayor Lee, Commissioner Ashcraft, Commissioner Cobb, Mayor Holland

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 United Way Montessori School Presentation: Bezos Academy

Vice Mayor Lee introduced Jessica Davis, CEO of United Way of Lake and Sumter. She noted that the Commission had previously received information on the project. She explained that they must find a facility and then the Bezos staff will come and look over the City and determine the appropriateness for their school. She commented on her efforts to improve the educational opportunities within the City. She explained the purpose of the program is designed to address the educational needs of children within an area of the City with a high concentration of low income families. She stated that the only requirement from any interested entity, such as the City, would be to provide a rent-free 4,000 square foot building for 40 students with a ten-year commitment. She cited the possibility of expanding the number of students in the future. She explained the process and asked the Commission to state their support for the project. She provided census information regarding the City's median income and the number of children living below the poverty line. She noted that both of the elementary

schools are Title 1 schools under federal guidelines. She also provided the number of children at each school under the poverty line.

Jessica Davis provided an overview of the purpose of the United Way and its programs. She cited the root causes of poverty, the need for affordable and accessible child care and rising costs in child care and other expenses. She then explained the Bezos Academy stating they offer free, fulltime, year-round tuition and offer late evening hours. She commented on the need for children to have good quality pre-school for educational success. She confirmed that the target age group is three and four-year-olds. She added that, in Eustis, the percentage of three and four-year-olds enrolled in school is only 39%.

Vice Mayor Lee expressed the hope that someone in the community might assist with the building. She commented on the possibility that, if this program can help educate the children, then maybe they can get another partner to help educate the parents such as with getting their GED.

CONSENSUS: It was a consensus of the Commission for Vice Mayor Lee to continue working with United Way on the program.

3.2 Report from Lake Community Action Agency on the Housing Rehabilitation Program

Tim Bridges, LCAA Director of Program Operations, explained the joint program with the City for weatherization of low income homes. He commented on a recent issue with one of the homes. He reported on the progress stating that a total of nine homes were weatherized. He confirmed that they as well as the City Manager and Commissioner Hawkins had conducted after the fact inspections. He provided a report showing the costs for each of the homes improved under the program. He emphasized they also utilize local contractors. He noted they are still looking at some additional weatherization for the Anderson and Woods homes.

Mr. Bridges reported that the City of Leesburg CRA has also initiated a program using \$700,000 for the rehab of 25 homes. He stated in conjunction with Habitat for Humanity they could possibly complete up to \$50,000 per home for that program. He explained that if a property is approved for the City's program and they are currently on their waiting list for the weatherization program, then they pull them off of their waiting list and do all of the improvements for both the City's program and their weatherization program at one time.

Vice Mayor Lee asked about education and classes for the families on how to care for their homes with Mr. Bridges explaining the contractors are educating the clients as the work is done and showing them how to care for the home.

Vice Mayor Lee asked if someone goes back to insure the homes are being cared for correctly with Mr. Bridges responding that all of their homes are inspected by the Department of Commerce on an annual basis.

Vice Mayor Lee asked about the "fee for service" with Mr. Bridges explaining that is the oversight fee paid to a company for overseeing the construction on each home.

Further discussion was held regarding how long it takes to complete each home and what is included in the "fee for service".

Tom Carrino, City Manager, explained that the contract with LCAA stipulates that the City pays LCAA \$1,000 for pre-inspection and paperwork and \$3,000 to manage each project. He indicated there is \$100,000 available in the CRA budget for the project.

Mr. Carrino stated that Mr. Anderson's home needs another \$4,000 in work with Mr. Bridges noting their intent to complete another \$9,000 in weatherization to the home. He then

explained why Mr. Anderson's home needs additional work and how they are utilizing the City's funding to do roofing which could not be done under the Department of Energy guidelines.

Discussion was held regarding roofing issues and costs.

Mr. Carrino confirmed that the \$7,390 in the report for Mr. Anderson's home was for the roof. He indicated that he had approved reimbursement for that cost. He pointed out that not all of the improvements that will be done to Mr. Anderson's home are reflected in the report. He then commented on issues with Mr. Woods home which resulted in the improvements for his home being put on hold. He indicated they are now asking to do a second phase of improvements for Mr. Woods to do his air conditioning.

Commissioner Ashcraft asked about the two homes that were denied due to structural damage with Mr. Bridges explaining the extensiveness of the issues. He indicated they referred them to the SHIP program as the homes basically need to be rebuilt.

Mr. Anderson commented on the damage to his home and noted that his roof was over 30 years old which results in him not having insurance. He expressed his pleasure in the improvements to his home and his appreciation for the assistance.

CONSENSUS: It was a consensus of the Commission to allow the additional expenditures of the \$4,400 and \$11,000.

Mr. Carrino stated there is approximately \$100,000 remaining in the CRA budget for the program. He indicated that the City had suspended applications for the program to see how much funding would be available. He asked whether or not they should resume accepting applications.

Discussion was held regarding LCAA's waiting list and how they are coordinating the funding between their program and the City's to maximize the assistance to the property owners.

CONSENSUS: It was a consensus of the Commission to re-open the application period and accept five additional qualified applicants.

4. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

Gayle Isaac Thomas addressed the Commission regarding various safety issues. She presented copies of a written letter to the Commission and City Clerk. She commented on a shooting on Friday, Oct. 13th near her home. She asked the Commission for the following items: 1) Cameras on light poles; 2) Crosswalks at Bates Ave. and Kensington, Palmetto and Bates Ave. and at Corey Rolle Memorial Field; and 3) Permanent signage to provide traffic calming. She also expressed concern for additional lighting in the East Town area. She acknowledged that more lighting has been implemented. She commented on the lack of sufficient lighting provided by the LED bulbs. She emphasized the need for improved security along Bates Avenue as well as the need for traffic calming to allow people to back out of their driveways onto the road.

Ms. Isaac Thomas then commented on a dip in the road at Bates Avenue and Cardinal as well as on Palmetto off of Getford Road. She cited the number of times the holes have been patched. She added that some of the America in Bloom project needs to be done in the East Town area as well.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

5.1 Resolution Number 23-93: Florida Dept of Transportation (FDOT) Local Funding Agreement for State Road-19 – Ministerial Changes

5.2 Resolution Number 23-96: Axon Renewal of Existing Contract

5.3 Resolution Number 23-97: Police Department Replacement Vehicle in excess of \$50,000.00

5.4 Resolution Number 23-99: Approval of Police Benevolent Association (PBA) Memorandum of Agreement

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

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

6. ORDINANCES, PUBLIC HEARINGS & QUASI-JUDICIAL HEARINGS

6.1 FIRST READING

Ordinance Number 23-25: Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map Amendment - Pelfrey Storage, LLC 2023-CPLUS-07 General Industrial (GI) to General Commercial (GC)

Sasha Garcia, City Attorney, read Ordinance Number 23-25 by title only on first reading: An Ordinance of the City Commission of the City of Eustis, Lake County, Florida, amending the City of Eustis Comprehensive Plan pursuant to 163.3187(1) F.S.; changing the future land use designation of 1.0 acres of real property located at 115 W. Woodward Avenue (Alternate Key Number 1190231) from General Industrial (GI) to General Commercial (GC).

Jeff Richardson, Deputy Development Services Director, provided an overview of the proposed change to the future land use designation from General Industrial to General Commercial. He explained the existing property is a storage facility. He stated the proposed change would expand the marketability of the site to potential tenants. He added that it may also eliminate some potential conflicting uses that may not be compatible with the Residential Transitional uses immediately to the south. He reviewed staff's analysis of the request and confirmed all required notices were completed. He stated staff's recommendation for approval.

The Commission asked how the change would affect someone on adjoining property that wanted to continue with an industrial use with Mr. Richardson indicating it would not affect the remaining General Industrial uses in that area. He confirmed the remaining space is storage.

The Commission questioned if the owner is renting out spaces for commercial use with Mr. Richardson stating not that is reflected by any business tax receipts.

The Commission asked how much property in Eustis is designated light industrial with Mr. Richardson citing the area off of Atwater and Kurt, the area in question, and most of the property along the railroad. He estimated the total acreage as approximately 38 acres. If approved, the change would reduce the industrial use area by 1.2 acres.

Mr. Carrino explained that the only potential impact to neighboring properties would be if a use goes in that has a distance requirement from other uses. As an example, he noted that retail alcohol establishments have to be a certain distance from churches and schools. He added that the City's code exempts schools or churches located in multi-tenant buildings from the distance requirement.

Discussion was held regarding whether or not the use is a school and how that is determined.

Attorney Garcia opened the public hearing at 7:29 p.m.

George Asbate stated there are multiple buildings within the General Commercial. He commented on possible conflicts that could arise. He added that it would constitute spot zoning which is frowned upon.

Mr. Carrino agreed that, while it would not be illegal, it is not best practice.

Mr. Asbate stated that Press Forward has informed the property owner they will not be going back in there as they do not have funding at this time. He indicated they have identified a possible alternate facility for them as they need 8,000 to 9,000 square feet. He expressed concern that the City would be setting a precedent. He noted there are existing adjoining properties with outside storage that would become noncompliant.

There being no further public comment, the hearing was closed at 7:33 p.m.

Following the motion and second, discussion was held regarding the amount of light industrial acreage within the City with Mr. Carrino indicating the subject property is not designated light industrial but General Industrial which could be heavy industrial.

Concern was expressed regarding the lack of information available for the Commission to make a decision on and the lack of industrial property within the City.

Motion made by Commissioner Hawkins, Seconded by Vice Mayor Lee, to approve Ordinance Number 23-25 on first reading. The motion failed on the following vote:

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

6.2 FIRST READING

Ordinance Number 23-26: Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map Amendment 2023CPLUS-06 Trask Construction Co. Change of Future Land Use Map from General Industrial (GI) to General Commercial (GC) For Property at 510 Morin Street (Alternate Key Number 1190207)

Attorney Garcia read Ordinance Number 23-26 by title on first reading: An Ordinance of the City Commission of the City of Eustis, Lake County, Florida, amending the City of Eustis Comprehensive Plan pursuant to 163.3187(1) F.S.; changing the future land use designation of 0.2 acres of real property located at 510 Morin Street (Alternate Key Number 1190207) from General Industrial (GI) to General Commercial (GC).

Mr. Richardson provided an overview of the proposed change in future land use designation from General Industrial to General Commercial. He indicated the request was made by Sarah Pelfry on behalf of Trask Construction. He reviewed staff's analysis of the request. He indicated the area already has a mix of uses and stated the change would expand the marketability for future tenants. He confirmed the required legal notices were completed and stated staff's recommendation for approval.

Attorney Garcia opened the public hearing at 7:40 p.m. There being no public comment, the hearing was closed at 7:40 p.m.

Mayor Holland explained that to just let the ordinance die would allow for it to be brought back. He advised that it would be better to actually vote on the ordinance so that it is not brought back.

Motion made by Commissioner Cobb, Seconded by Commissioner Hawkins, to approve Ordinance Number 23-26 on first reading. The motion failed on the following vote:

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

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 W.I.N. 1 Ministries Interest in Leasing the Eustis Service Center

Mr. Carrino presented a request from W.I.N. 1 Ministries to lease the Service Center at 301 West Ward Avenue. He reviewed the rental revenue for the facility and stated the facility is approximately 8,700 sq.ft. and includes the City employee gym.

Mr. Carrino explained that the original request was for them to purchase the building with an appraisal in July showing an estimated value of \$960,000. He indicated that was cost prohibitive for W.I.N. 1; therefore, they are now requesting to lease the building for \$4,000 per month. He stated that, while that is less than market value, it would be more than the current rental revenue the City receives for the building which would be net positive for the City.

Mr. Carrino stated the City employee gym could remain as it has external access so it would not be disruptive. He proposed a two year lease to allow them to build momentum and still allow the City to have flexibility. He also proposed that the parking would be theirs to use but it would remain public. He indicated the City would continue to maintain the parking lot with WIN 1 maintaining the landscaping. He cited a number of their programs and activities within the City and noted they also oversee the Police Department's chaplain program.

Pastors Renee Hill and Benny Hill provided an overview of their church's programs and activities and stated their desire to relocate back to the City of Eustis. She provided statistics regarding their food distribution program and cited their annual Thanksgiving dinner open to City employees and all City residents. She reviewed their future plans for opening a school and enumerated a number of their ministries.

Pastor Benny Hill emphasized their desire to be part of the city and to see the city grow and progress.

The following individuals expressed support for the ministry, appreciation to the City and spoke about how the ministry has assisted them: 1) Markques Menefee; 2) Kimberly Garry; and 3) Dr. Cenchrea Rose Lindo.

Gayle Isaac Thomas noted that the elections have been held at the Service Center and questioned whether they would still be there. She expressed support for the ministry moving back to Eustis.

Mayor Holland explained the plan is for it to stay there and the City would ask W.I.N. 1 to work with the Supervisor of Elections.

The Commission asked about insurance with Mr. Carrino indicating the City would continue to carry insurance on the building but would most likely require the ministry to carry its own liability insurance.

CONSENSUS: It was a consensus of the Commission for staff to proceed with developing a lease and bringing it back to the Commission for approval.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS

8.1 City Commission

Commissioner Hawkins reminded everyone about the upcoming Panther Pride in the Park and noted that approximately 250 people have already purchased tickets.

Commissioner Ashcraft complimented the HR staff on the employee health fair.

Commissioner Cobb reported the Northshore cleanup was cancelled for November 4th and would be rescheduled toward the first of the year. She asked about the new awnings for City Hall.

Mr. Carrino responded that the new awnings have been received and would be installed in the near future.

Commissioner Cobb asked about the coverings for the bleachers at Corey Rolle Field with Mr. Carrino stating that staff met with Coach Johnny Saunders that day regarding his needs for the field.

Craig Dolan, Parks and Recreation Director, explained they are still looking at the bleachers and size for the shade structures.

Commissioner Hawkins cited bleachers at the high school's old softball field and indicated he would contact the school about getting them.

Commissioner Cobb reminded everyone about the Westmutter Dog Show. She expressed concern about the recent increase in snipe signs and the need to contact people to let them know they are not allowed. She then reported she met with Nancy Dodd from Duke Energy regarding additional lighting for the East Town area. She explained that the issue is funding but that is being worked on. She also noted that area will be part of America in Bloom. She indicated that Sharp's Park will be responsible for their own beautification.

Vice Mayor Lee asked about the progress on the Cemetery with Mayor Holland indicating they are waiting for Rick Gierok to return from leave. It was noted he would return the second week in November. Vice Mayor Lee thanked the Commission for listening to the United Way presentation and expressed support for their program.

8.2 Mayor

Mayor Holland expressed condolences to Commissioner Cobb on the loss of her mother. He commented on progress within the City and how the City is trying to move forward. He asked that everyone keep the people of Israel in their prayers. He commented on a trip he took to Ormond Beach and cited the facility they have for their sports programs. He recommended that the City look at other cities' facilities. He also commented on looking for grants to improve the City's facilities.

8.3 City Manager

Mr. Carrino reported on issues the City is having with its Facebook account. He indicated staff is trying to work with Facebook/Meta tech support on the problem. He then reported that staff is doing traffic counts on Lakeview and would be analyzing the data and sending it out. Other locations being counted include Estes Road, the Oaks at Summer Glen and Grand Island Reserve.

8.4 City Attorney - None

9. ADJOURNMENT: 8:15 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