

CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL SESSION

321 WALNUT STREET, GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA
TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2026 – 6:00 PM



MINUTES

Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag – **Mike Null, Interim City Manager**

Roll Call

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Matt Johnson, Vice Mayor Ed Gaw, Council Member Glee Glisson, Council Member Cheryl Starnes, Council Member Darren Stutts

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Null, Interim City Manager, Erin West, City Clerk

STAFF MEMBERS ABSENT: L.J. Arnold, III, City Attorney

Mayor to call on members of the audience wishing to address the Council on matters not on the Agenda.

1. Kevin Hurley 10 St. Johns Ave. GCS spoke about his concern about increasing hostility within the community and stated that personal attacks related to political differences were inappropriate.
2. Sue Heath 1370 Heath Rd. GCS apologized to Vice Mayor Gaw for a confrontation at Food Truck Friday. She spoke about restoring civility and focusing on City issues, including electric rates and property taxes, rather than political conflict surrounding community events.

Vice Mayor Gaw spoke about the reported ethics complaint, advising he was notified by the City Attorney, retained legal counsel, and was advised that Food Truck Friday did not appear to constitute an ethics violation. He explained that April's event was canceled based on legal advice and stated that the matter remains under review.

Council Member Glisson questioned if the state could be contacted about the ethics complaint.

City Clerk Erin West advised that ethics complaints are initially confidential, with five business days to notify the subject and up to 30 days to determine whether an investigation will be conducted. If an investigation is initiated, it can take up to 150 days.

Council discussion followed regarding the alleged ethics complaint and social media posts concerning Food Truck Friday. Concerns were raised that social media posts may have incorrectly implied that an ethics complaint had been filed and that the use of the City logo could create confusion regarding the page's affiliation with the City. The importance of clarifying the information, reducing tensions, and maintaining civility within the community was discussed.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

1. Overview of FMPA and City Relationship to FMPA. **Jacob Williams, General Manager and CEO, FMPA**

Interim City Manager Mike Null introduces Jacob Williams with FMPA.

Jacob Williams General Manager and CEO of FMPA provided an overview of its role, ownership structure, and power supply, advising that Green Cove Springs is one of 13 member

cities that owns FMPA assets. FMPA spoke about the City's favorable long-term position as existing plant debt is paid down and discussed the potential for Green Cove Springs to continue its ownership after 2037. The presentation addressed rising electricity demand, particularly from data centers and AI, and the increasing cost of new power generation.

Mike Kelter 630 Myrtle Ave. GCS thanked FMPA for significantly reducing the City's wholesale electricity costs by approximately 30% and showed support for maintaining the City's ownership in FMPA. He advised that the City's high electric rates are primarily related to local budgeting, staffing, and indirect costs rather than FMPA.

Discussion followed with the Council, Mr. Null, Electric Director Andy Yeager, and Mr. Williams concerning the benefits of maintaining the City's membership, including access to lower-cost power and shared generation resources. Mr. Williams advised the City's electricity rates are also influenced by local costs and transfers and encouraged the City to evaluate those factors during its upcoming rate study.

Sue Heath 1320 Heath Rd. GCS thanked FMPA's management and Mr. Page's leadership and asked whether a \$1 million transfer from the Electric Fund to the General Fund should be considered in a rate study and potentially result in higher electric rates for residents.

Mr. Williams advised the City controls its own utility rates and financial decisions. FMPA can provide guidance but does not set rates for member cities.

2. Solid Waste Fund – FY 2026–2027 Rate Analysis and Recommendation **Greg Bauer**

Acting Public Works Director Greg Bauer reviewed the solid waste fund, advising the figures had been updated to include the principal on the garbage truck loan and reflect other adjustments to the projected costs.

Interim City Manager Mike Null advised that the solid waste financial models used an incorrect debt principal amount of \$51,651 instead of the correct \$91,158. The corrected amount affects the utility's projected bottom line under the various rate scenarios, and the updated figures provided to Council are accurate.

Discussion followed with the Council, Mr. Null, and Mr. Bauer concerning the solid waste utility's projected \$450,000 deficit and options to address it, including a recommended 5% rate increase. Council also discussed the potential cost savings and service impacts of once-weekly collection.

Mike Kelter 630 Myrtle Ave. GCS spoke about the history of the City's solid waste collection and suggested exploring franchise fees from commercial waste providers as a potential source of General Fund revenue.

Kevin Bressler 1720 Idlewild Ave. GCS thanked the City's solid waste collection service and supported twice-weekly pickup, even with a \$2–\$3 monthly rate increase.

Linda Hobbs thanked the City's solid waste collection and supported continuing twice-weekly pickup. She spoke about the financial impact of a rate increase but supported at least a 5% increase, or slightly more if needed to adequately fund the service.

Council discussion followed about a proposed 10% solid waste rate increase (approximately \$2.20/month) to address the utility deficit and future capital needs. Council supported maintaining twice-weekly residential collection.

Motion to increase solid waste disposal twice weekly at a rate of 10%

Motion made by Vice Mayor Gaw, Seconded by Council Member Glisson.

Voting Yea: Mayor Johnson, Vice Mayor Gaw, Council Member Glisson, Council Member Starnes, Council Member Stutts

3. City Council discussion regarding Stormwater Utility.
No discussion followed
4. City Council discussion regarding Water, Wastewater and Reclaimed Water Utilities.
No discussion followed

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the City Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

CITY OF GREEN COVE SPRINGS, FLORIDA

Daniel M. Johnson, Mayor

Attest:

Erin West, City Clerk