



**TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES
TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 21, 2022**

Meeting audio available in Town Clerk's Office

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Shorr called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Shorr led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Shorr led a prayer.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Robert Shorr, Vice Mayor Laura Danowski, Councilmembers Phillis Maniglia, Marianne Miles, and Margaret Herzog, Town Manager Francine L. Ramaglia, Town Attorney Elizabeth Lenihan, Esq., Absent: Town Clerk Lakisha Burch.

ADDITIONS, DELETIONS AND MODIFICATIONS

Vice Mayor Danowski asked Town Attorney Lenihan about the brackets on page 4 of agenda item #4 that state submitted pass the deadline and whether it should be associated with the fourth person, or fifth person listed on the page.

Town Attorney Lenihan responded that they are appropriate marked and said that she will discuss them when we get there.

Motion was made by Vice Mayor Danowski seconded by Councilmember Herzog to approve agenda as written; it was voted as follows: Ayes: Mayor Shorr, Vice Mayor Danowski, Councilmembers Herzog, Maniglia, and Miles. Motion passed unanimously

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There were public comments made by the following: Virginia Standish.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes.
 - a. February 1, 2022, Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes
 - b. February 22, 2022, Town Council Special Meeting Minutes
 - c. March 1, 2022, Community Resident Workshop Meeting Minutes
2. Approval of **Resolution No. 2022-28** appointing the Finance Audit and Advisory Committee.
3. Approval of **Resolution No. 2022-29** appointing the Planning and Zoning Board.

Councilmember Maniglia inquired on pre-workshop and pre-agenda meeting minutes.

Town Attorney Lenihan responded we will double check with the Town Clerk; She noted that the Town Clerk would have recordings of those meetings.

Councilmember Herzog commented not enough detail is being given in the minutes.

Motion was made by Vice Mayor Danowski seconded by Councilmember Miles to approve consent agenda; it was voted as follows: Ayes: Mayor Shorr, Vice Mayor Danowski, Councilmembers Herzog, Maniglia, and Miles. Motion passed unanimously

REGULAR AGENDA

4. Town Manager Recruitment Interview and Selection.

Town Attorney Lenihan welcomed the candidates and noted that they are in the conference room. She said that we appreciate their time that it takes to submit qualifications and interview. She shared the ground rules and mentioned that the Town abides by the Equal Opportunity Policy. She noted the interview process to Council before the interviews. She responded to Vice Mayor Danowski regarding her comment on the two applications submitted past the deadline. She inquired if Town Council wanted to make a motion to keep both applications as part of the process or hold it as a hard deadline.

Mayor Shorr commented that is a different deadline; it was not for the application it was a signed letter for the applicant responding to acknowledge that they want to be interviewed, it was not a deadline Council voted on.

Vice Mayor Danowski commented my bad; got you.

Town Attorney Lenihan commented that she would still like to make sure that Council understands what that is; and if asked if they would like the two to continue with the two applications through the interview process this evening.

There was consensus to continue with the two applications received.

Mayor Shorr thanked Town Attorney Lenihan for the clarification.

Interim Town Manager Ramaglia excused herself from the meeting as she is an applicant to be interviewed for the position [6:45 p.m.].

Town Attorney Lenihan noted that Council talked about interviewing applicants in alphabetical order; therefore, this is the order we are proposed to move in. She mentioned that each candidate has the option to come in the main meeting room, as it is a public meeting however the candidates have chosen to sit in the conference room. She advised that the interview process is open to the public and noted that there will be no Council action taken until the interview process has concluded then Council will advise how to move forward with the selection portion. She advised that public comments will not be taken during the interview process but will be part of the selection process. She mentioned that there was not a lot of audience in the room today; she spoke on the decorum process and how the mayor would need to address any outburst and disruptions. She advised that Council has been provided note pages to make notes and the pages will be part of public record.

Mayor Shorr said that he would like to limit the questions to three (3) minutes.

Councilmember Miles commented that she would like to limit the questions to three (3) not four (four). She mentioned that Councilmember Maniglia mentioned two (2) questions.

Councilmember Maniglia commented the less the better.

Councilmember Herzog commented two (2).

Mayor Shorr commented alright, two (2) questions, three (3) minutes.

Town Attorney Lenihan advised that the first candidate Timothy Day did not show and noted that Patrick Jordan will appear by Zoom.

Councilmember Maniglia inquired if Council has to keep score if they do not show.

Town Attorney Lenihan responded they would be disqualified.

Councilmember Herzog inquired what if they come in late.

Town Attorney Lenihan responded that applicants were supposed to be in at 6:00 p.m. She advised Mr. Jordan has not appeared on Zoom and noted that she has not received any correspondence via email from him.

Applicants interviewed were:

- Mark Kutney
- Lynn Ladner
- Francine Ramaglia
- Larry Tibbs
- Chandler Williams

Town Attorney Lenihan asked Council if they want to take a brief recess before for moving on to the next part of the agenda.

Mayor Shorr called for recess at 8:48 p.m.

Council announced their top ranked candidate Francine L. Ramaglia for discussion and selection.

Mayor Shorr reconvened the meeting at 8:52 p.m.

Mayor Shorr asked Town Attorney Lenihan to give Town Council instructions.

Town Attorney Lenihan advised that Council has reached the point of the meeting where they will consider whether to select tonight. She said that Council has options; you can postpone selection and have additional interviews; reject the existing candidate pool and go back out to see if you get different candidates or proceed with the selection.

Councilmember Maniglia inquired if the candidates are still here.

Town Attorney Lenihan responded everyone has left.

Mayor Shorr inquired whether Council needs to pick in order seven (7).

Town Attorney Lenihan responded it depends on which process Council will go with.

Mayor Shorr said okay. He commented that he is ready to make a decision.

Councilmember Maniglia commented me too, thank you.

Mayor Shorr asked Vice Mayor Danowski, Councilmembers Miles and Herzog if they were good.

Town Attorney Lenihan noted that Council decided and talked about before that each Councilmember will announce their top pick; and then if there is a majority Council will move forward with that selection. If there is no majority, then Council would talk to each other about why you selected your top pick and see if anybody wants to change their mind. Then if there is still no majority then we would go to a different ranking system, and she mentioned that she has sheets for that. She noted that Council has their notes; you know who your top pick is at least theoretically, but before you make your final selection, we will call for public comment.

Mayor Shorr inquired what happens if Council picks someone and they do not accept the job.

Town Attorney Lenihan responded what we talked about before is that Council is guiding the process; you pick your top candidate and if they did not accept the position; or if something came back in the background check in the interim and Council decided not to move forward with the position, then we would come back to Council. She mentioned that Council talked about if your second candidate was pretty close, they would just offer it to the second candidate. We can talk about who the top pick is and address who the backup would be; we can do that too.

Councilmember Herzog inquired if the names can be written the names down therefore, we do hear what our neighbors said.

Town Attorney Lenihan responded you can write them down, but if you don't to say they are I would have to say who they are and who it was.

Councilmember Herzog commented that the Town Attorney can do the tally.

Town Attorney Lenihan said she would have to say who voted for who; that is one of the rules; that is one of the requirements

Councilmember Maniglia commented let us just go down the list.

Mayor Shorr inquired if Council needs a motion.

Town Attorney Lenihan responded that each Councilmember would just list their top candidate for now; then if there is a majority then Council would take public comment and then do a motion and vote for your top candidate.

Mayor Shorr commented okay, we will start with Councilmember Maniglia.

Council announced selection as follows:

Councilmember Maniglia said Francine.

Vice Mayor Danowski said Francine Ramaglia.

Mayor Shorr said Francine for me.

Councilmember Miles said Francine.

Councilmember Herzog said Francine.

Mayor Shorr said that we have a majority and inquired about public comment.

There were no public comments.

Motion was made by Councilmember Maniglia seconded by Councilmember Herzog to proceed with Francine Ramaglia to make her the Town Manager for the Town of Loxahatchee Groves.

Vice Mayor Danowski inquired would you have to say that we make her an offer.

Town Attorney Lenihan responded yes.

Councilmember Maniglia responded oh.

Mayor Shorr said that the next step is contract negotiations.

Town Attorney Lenihan responded correct; similar to how we did for the Interim contract. We will work with Ms. Ramaglia to see what she would like to see in the contract; we will reach out to each Councilmember individually to go over those basic points; then hopefully on July 5th we will have a draft contract for Council to consider.

Mayor Shorr asked Councilmember Maniglia if she wanted to change the motion to have Ms. Ramalinga move forward in the process.

Councilmember Maniglia asked Vice Mayor Danowski how to say the motion.

Vice Mayor Danowski said make a motion to offer the position of Town Manager to Francine Ramaglia.

Councilmember Maniglia commented yes; thank you Vice Mayor Danowski.

Motion by Councilmember Maniglia, seconded by Councilmember Herzog to offer the position of Town Manager to Francine Ramaglia it was voted as follows: Ayes: Mayor Shorr, Vice Mayor Danowski, Councilmembers Herzog, Maniglia, and Miles. Motion passed unanimously.

Town Attorney Lenihan asked Council for confirmation on foregoing the background check and references checks and those things since Ms. Ramaglia is already employed.

There was Council consensus on foregoing the background check and references.

Vice Mayor Danowski inquired if Council needs to turn in their sheets.

Town Attorney Lenihan responded yes. She commented that as we enter contract negotiations; she noted that the previous Town Manager Titcomb did a lot of driving around Town and checking up on issues that were reported. She noted one of the questions asked is if Council anticipates a lot of driving around Town; would a car allowance be offered as Mr. Titcomb was paid mileage for his driving but not a car allowance. She noted that part of the question is so that we can build it into the contract and the other part is that typically with those things then it is a mandatory drug testing position; therefore, we are looking forward to see whether we move forward with drug testing if it has not been done but also as we work on building the contract if we are including a car allowance.

Mayor Shorr said that mileage works fine.

Councilmember Maniglia commented yes. She inquired if the mileage is keeping up with the current price of gas.

Mayor Shorr said that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) adjust it.

Interim Town Manager Ramaglia commented that she understands that Council negotiated the contract for her with the attorney, and just so Council knows; asking for mileage is not something that she would be doing; no offense to anyone.

Mayor Shorr advised Interim Town Manager Ramaglia that she is due mileage. He commented that he thinks the process was good; we got a lot of good information in the interviews; different approaches and good candidates.

Councilmember Herzog commented it was amazing how some of them drew a blank; especially, with government light.

Mayor Shorr thanked everyone. He commented he has learned a lot about different approaches and thanked Interim Town Manager Ramaglia.

Interim Town Manager Ramaglia thanked Mayor Shorr.

Mayor Shorr requested Town Attorney Lenihan to provide Council copies of the candidate sheets.

Town Attorney Lenihan responded yes.

TOWN STAFF COMMENTS

Interim Town Manager

- Interim Town Manager asked Amber Schneider if she had any comments; She said great thanks go out to her for all that she has done in this process. Ms. Schneider replied thank you; it is great to be here. She commented she is learning a lot. Town Attorney Lenihan advised Council that Ms. Schneider worked with her to get the packets, letters and postings done for the Town Manager recruitment process.

Councilmember Maniglia thanked Ms. Schneider and welcomed her aboard. Ms. Schneider said thank you.

Councilmember Herzog inquired if Ms. Schneider is a staff member. Ms. Schneider responded she has been on staff since November.

Town Attorney

- Litigation updates
 - Brier Case – has come to a conclusion.
 - Interim Town Manager Ramaglia asked Town Attorney Lenihan about the inquiry on scheduling a date for the 2nd Okeechobee Overlay meeting. Town Attorney Lenihan advised that there will be a meeting July 5th for continuation of the 2nd Public Hearing on the Okeechobee Overlay. She mentioned the conversations between individual Councilmembers; keeping in mind the large number of public comments, and the report that will be received from Treasure Coast Planning Council. She commented thinking about the changes, she and Ms. Ramaglia have been talking about the potential need for a second meeting to continue to conclude the Public Hearing. She inquired if Council wants to do it all in one sweep or whether Council would like to have a backup meeting in a day or two to wrap it up.

There was discussion between Town Council, Town Attorney Lenihan and Interim Town Manager Ramalinga on scheduling the Okeechobee Overlay and the July 5th meeting.

There was consensus on leaving the Okeechobee Overlay item on the July 5th meeting and handling it during the meeting.

Vice Mayor Danowski commented on keeping the individual meetings with CGP Agency the social media contract and explained why.

Councilmember Maniglia commented on the closed-door meetings with Council and vendors; she advised that she wants the Agency to explain to the public why they went over the \$25k budget. Interim Town Manager Ramaglia explained the reasons for meetings with the Agency and other vendors.

Councilmember Herzog commented on the Coastal Waste meeting; she said the vendor did not abide by the agreement. Interim Town Manager Ramaglia responded the vendor did abide by the agreement and explained how.

There was discussion between Town Council and Interim Town Manager Ramaglia on vendors, contracts, internal administrative things to be done and vendors not exceeding budgets.

Public Works Director/Assistant Public Works Director

- Congratulated Council on their process tonight.
- Report - Storm season.
- Cleaning culverts and ditches
- Thanked Council for the new backhoe
 - Councilmember Maniglia inquired when will the rest of the stuff be sent to auction that does not work. Mr. Matos responded we are buying a new rim and explained why. Councilmember Maniglia asked Mr. Matos how much the rim is. Mr. Matos responded a little over \$1200. Councilmember Maniglia make sure to include new rim in the advertisement.
- Congratulated Interim Town Manager Ramaglia
 - Interim Town Manager Ramaglia thanked Mr. Matos and staff for the cleanup of the park at Saturday's event.

Town Clerk

TOWN COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

Marge Herzog (Seat 5)

- Selection process.
 - She thought it was good.

Phillis Maniglia (Seat 1)

- Okeechobee Overlay votes
 - Town Attorney Lenihan advised the only time you can discuss the item is at the public hearing. She mentioned the reason for talking about scheduling the hearing.
- Congratulated Ms. Ramaglia.
 - She wants to know how much the entire process cost the residents.

Marianne Miles (Seat 3)

- Congratulated Ms. Ramaglia. She looks forward to working with her and making a budget that we all can come together to get things done.
- Town Hall positions

- She commented on not bringing anyone else on until we see and work with the budget; even if there are positions to fill in Town Hall. Vice Mayor Danowski asked Councilmember Miles if she is saying the hiring freeze. Councilmember Miles responded yes. Councilmember Maniglia commented that she does not think that Council has the power to do this; she thinks it is the Town Manager. Councilmember Miles said that Council suggested and made a consensus at the last meeting. Councilmember Maniglia asked if Council could hear from the Town Attorney. Town Attorney Lenihan responded she is asking. Interim Town Manager Ramaglia noted that she spoke on this at the last Council meeting; she mentioned that the person hired to fill the position in the Town Clerk's Office is temporary with no commitments until we come through the budget; we would be dying without having her here, but I know we did agree that we would do as discussed at that meeting. She mentioned changing somethings around as to what, who and how we do things. Councilmember Miles said okay, thank you. Interim Town Manager Ramaglia said that she still reserves the right to hire someone temporary if we get stuck that does none of us good but nobody permanent. Mayor Shorr commented that this was until we get our full-time manager and figure out what they think works best for the Town; and moving towards government light and explained the reasoning.
- Budget and line items
 - She requested for a list of salaries of everybody that gets paid in Town Hall and Public Works. Interim Town Manager Ramaglia responded okay, no problem.
- July 5th Agenda

Town Attorney Lenihan responded to Councils prior question. Yes, Council is allowed to vote on a hiring freeze including existing positions that are open.

Vice Mayor Danowski inquired if Council needs to do a consensus on a hiring freeze. Town Attorney Lenihan responded if Council wants to.

There was discussion between Town Council and Interim Town Manager on the hiring freeze and positions.

There was consensus on allowing Interim Town Manager to initiate the freeze but hire temporary people as needed but not permanent.

Interim Town Manager Ramaglia commented that she is comfortable with it temporarily as we are shifting and evolving.

Laura Danowski (Seat 2)

- Doing the right thing is not easy; she is thrilled that Council did the right thing per the Charter, the law and per what is prescribed to us as Council to go out and seek Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for this position and advised why. She is thrilled that Ms. Ramaglia is here, kudos.
- Congratulations to Town Clerk Burch
 - Clerk of the Year

- Thanked Karen Plant
 - advertising on social media
- Congratulations to Councilmember
 - killer batch of chili

Mayor Robert Shorr (Seat 4)

- Congratulated Ms. Ramalinga
 - He commented on her working under two different Town Managers.
- Candidates
- Loxahatchee Groves Family Fun Day

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the workshop was adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

**TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES,
FLORIDA**

ATTEST:

Lakisha Q. Burch, Town Clerk

Mayor Robert Shorr

Vice Mayor Laura Danowski

Councilmember Marge Herzog

Council Member Marianne Miles

Council Member Phillis Maniglia