



**TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES  
TOWN COUNCIL COMMUNITY OPEN DISCUSSION WORKSHOP  
MEETING MINUTES**

**TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 155 F. Road, Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470  
Tuesday, May 7, 2024**

**TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mayor Danowski called the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.

**ROLL CALL:**

Mayor Laura Danowski, Vice Mayor Robert Shorr, Councilmember Margaret Herzog, Councilmember Phillis Maniglia, Councilmember Marianne Miles, Town Manager Francine Ramaglia, Town Attorney Glen Torcivia (via zoom), Town Attorney Tanya Earley, Director of Public Works Richard Gallant, Project Coordinator Jeff Kurtz, Town's Financial Consultant Chris Wallace (of Munilytics) and Town Clerk Valerie Oakes were present.

**OPEN DISCUSSION:**

Robert Snowball addressed the Council to express his appreciation for their continued support of the paving project. He presented a map with color-coded signatures showing resident support for paving on 161st Terrace, noting that 67% of property owners had signed in favor. He pointed out that a few abstained, three said no, and one property owner refused to engage. He explained that many of the unmarked properties are nurseries, where owners are less concerned about road appearance, but outreach is ongoing. He then raised concern about property owners using the A-Road maintenance easement for ingress and egress, stating that several properties north of Okeechobee on A-Road have makeshift driveways and even gates with chains. He referred to a

resident who had sent him photos and offered to forward them to the appropriate staff. He concluded by thanking the Council again.

**MOTION: VICE MAYOR HERZOG/COUNCILMEMBER SHORR MOVED TO RECEIVE AND FILE THE DOCUMENT PLACED ON RECORD. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (5-0).**

Virginia Standish raised concerns during the May 7<sup>th</sup> meeting about the town's approach to failing infrastructure beneath roads, especially regarding culverts damaged by Florida Power & Light (FPL). She questioned whether the town had conducted proper inspections and shared that it was unclear whether FPL was ever provided with surveys indicating culvert locations. She also inquired if the town maintains a complete inventory of culverts. Staff responded that current efforts are underway through surveying firms (Ingenuity and Keshavarz) to identify both public and private culverts, but a complete record does not yet exist. Virginia Standish expressed frustration with vendors working in the town without proper oversight, alleging a pattern of damages going unaccounted for. She specifically recounted an incident where FPL contractors damaged a culvert near her property after assuring her it would be protected. She emphasized that no contractor should be allowed to perform work in town unless they can prove accountability and coordination with landowners. Richard Gallant, Director of Public Works, explained the Sunshine 811 system and why the town had previously not been a member, making it ineligible for FPL or others to be notified of town infrastructure. He noted that he is actively working to register the town with 811, ensuring future protection and accountability. Mr. Gallant also clarified that although FPL must follow standard call-in procedures, the town has had difficulty getting them to repair the damage and suggested the Council may need to consider billing FPL for repairs. Town Manager Ramaglia concluded that the issue would be addressed during her report on the evening agenda, and the Council should consider how to proceed formally with FPL.

Cassie Suchy commended the law enforcement efforts for improved traffic enforcement along Okeechobee Boulevard but raised safety concerns about migrants waiting for pickups near intersections, causing visibility issues and traffic hazards. She suggested installing delineator pylons at intersections—similar to those at Folsom Road—to prevent vehicles from pulling over near the junctions. She also addressed the issue of the town's Human Resource (HR) manual and employee accountability, asking whether evaluations were currently being done and expressing frustration over personal attacks and degrading comments allegedly made by town employees and officials about her. Ms. Suchy noted that these comments have reached other residents and that she is now collecting sworn statements from individuals who have heard such remarks, suggesting the possibility of legal action if the behavior continues. She clarified her intentions are to support—not harm—the town and expressed frustration about her public records requests remaining unfulfilled for years. She emphasized that she does not want confrontations between staff and residents and stated that the current environment discourages resident involvement. Mayor Kane clarified that the town does have an existing HR manual, adopted from the former district and revised by the Council. The current version is under attorney review for updates. She

confirmed that the manual includes employee evaluations, which are actively being conducted. Town Manager Ramaglia clarified that the Town of Loxahatchee Groves operates under a Council-Manager form of government, where the Town Manager is responsible for addressing employee issues as stated in the Town Charter. She explained that the town conducts regular employee evaluations, using a comprehensive evaluation form that has been revised several times. New employees, such as Mr. Gallant (Public Works Superintendent), are asked to complete self-evaluations upon hiring to help establish a baseline of their skills and professional development goals. Both field and office staff undergo evaluations, and probationary employees are assessed on a shorter evaluation cycle, which may be extended if performance concerns arise. Ms. Ramaglia emphasized that all procedures are outlined in the town's employee manual, reflecting the town's traditional governance model with structured rules for both permitting and staffing. She encouraged residents to report any concerns about employee behavior directly to her, noting that concerns can be addressed outside the regular evaluation cycle. She also noted that when employees say "no" to requests, it is often due to regulations or limitations—not an intent to be uncooperative. Cassie Suchy stated that she does not want there to be confrontations between residents and town staff. She acknowledged that while some residents, like Mr. Snowball mentioned, may prefer privacy or appear standoffish, they are generally good people with their own concerns. She emphasized that the residents she speaks with share a common goal and do not seek conflict with town employees. She concluded by noting that the fear of negative experiences, like those she has faced, may discourage others from getting involved in town matters.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:28 P.M.

### **TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES, FLORIDA**

#### **ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Town Clerk

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Mayor Anita Kane, Seat 3

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Vice Mayor Margaret Herzog, Seat 5

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Councilmember Phillis Maniglia, Seat 1

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Councilmember Laura Danowski, Seat 2

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Councilmember Robert Shorr, Seat 4