

CITY OF WESTLAKE



MINUTES

City of Westlake and Seminole Improvement District Joint Workshop

Tuesday, September 02, 2025, at 4:00 PM

The Lodge at Westlake Adventure Park
5490 Kingfisher Blvd.
Westlake, Florida 33470

CITY COUNCIL:

JohnPaul O'Connor, Mayor
Greg Langowski, Vice Mayor
Gary Werner, Council Member – Seat 1
Erik Gleason, Council Member – Seat 2
Charlotte Leonard, Council Member – Seat 3

CITY STAFF:

Ken Cassel, City Manager
Zoie P. Burgess, CMC, City Clerk
Donald J. Doody, Esq., City Attorney
Osniel Leon, AICP, Planning and Zoning
Suzanne Dombrowski, P.E., ENV SP, Engineering

A City Council and Seminole Improvement District Joint Workshop was held on Tuesday, September 2, 2025, at 4:00 PM, at The Lodge at Westlake Adventure Park, 5490 Kingfisher Blvd. Members of the public also attended the meeting through electronic means and accessed as follows:

1. Webex meeting from a computer, tablet or smartphone at the following link:
<https://cityofwestlake.my.webex.com>

Meeting ID: 2864 515 9727

2. United States Toll: +1-650-479-3208

Meeting ID: 2864 515 9727

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor O'Connor called the City Council and Seminole Improvement District Joint Workshop on Tuesday, September 2, 2025, to order at 4:00 PM

ROLL CALL

Present and constituting a quorum:

Councilman Gary Werner
Councilman Erik Gleason
Councilwoman Charlotte Leonard
Vice Mayor Greg Langowski
Mayor JohnPaul O'Connor

District President Scott Massey
District Secretary Leolani Gevers

Also Present:

Ken Cassel, City Manager
Zoie P. Burgess, CMC, City Clerk
Odet Izquierdo, Deputy City Clerk
Donald J. Doody, Esq., City Attorney

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor O'Connor led the Pledge of Allegiance

WORKSHOP AGENDA

A. CITY/SID Vision Update

Mayor O'Connor introduced the item, and City Manager Ken Cassel opened the discussion by emphasizing the importance of maintaining effective communication between the City and Seminole Improvement District (SID), especially as he prepares to depart from his position. He stressed that exceptional communication between the new city manager and district manager would be vital, along with long-range planning, noting that the city would need to look at least a year and a half ahead to coordinate with SID on budgeting matters.

Mr. Cassel reminded everyone that SID predated the city and is an independent government entity, not subservient to the city. He explained that by serving in dual roles, he had been able to consider both perspectives simultaneously and find mutually beneficial solutions. He cautioned that having two different managers would require careful coordination to determine how to accomplish goals that might require partial funding from both entities.

He clarified that SID would not officially become a dependent district until approximately 30 years from now, unless there was a mutual agreement between SID and the city to transition earlier. The city charter clearly defines the responsibilities of both entities to avoid duplication of efforts.

Regarding the park project, Mr. Cassel reported that the city cannot apply for a Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) grant because it does not own the property or have a 30-year lease. Instead, he instructed SID's grant writer to apply for the FRDAP grant. He noted that SID has approximately \$400,000 in matching funds, but the first phase would cost about \$1.1 million, so the city might need to provide additional funding to complete this phase.

Mr. Cassel indicated that the park plans include two traffic circles at the entrances, with flagpoles at each entrance. He mentioned that President Massey had suggested placing a second flagpole at the second traffic circle. The first phase would include both entrances, traffic circles, parking areas, and spaces for food trucks. He reported that the lot would be finished with seeding and mulching by the end of the week, making it operational for basic public use like soccer and other activities.

Mr. Cassel reminded everyone that while often referred to as a city park, it is SID's park within city limits, making it a joint park.

Council asked about park operations once the grass is seeded. Mr. Cassel explained it would likely operate from 7 AM to 7 PM, similar to the fitness park pathway, allowing staff to open and close both facilities simultaneously. He confirmed that fencing would be installed around the water towers in the back corner.

Mayor O'Connor inquired about the timeline for the FRDAP grant. Mr. Cassel stated that the application deadline is the end of September, after which applications would be processed and ranked. Mayor O'Connor also mentioned the possibility of finding additional funding through appropriations or the governor's office, noting that a new legislative session would begin in January.

The council and board discussed whether they were satisfied with the current park plan. Councilman Werner asked about leasing arrangements, and Mr. Cassel explained that having the city lease the property would not be advantageous as it would make the city responsible for everything on the property. He recommended keeping the property under SID ownership and using the city as an additional funding source. When the park is fully developed, SID will retain ownership of the underlying land, with the interlocal agreement between the city and SID determining operational responsibilities and funding.

President Massey described the planned Phase 1, which would include the two entrances, two roundabouts, and parking between them, with approximately 20 food truck spots featuring water and electrical service. The council and board agreed this was a good starting point. SID Engineer Ryan Wheeler confirmed that the \$1.1 million budget should cover this first phase including the entrances, roundabouts, electrical and water utilities.

President Massey suggested that at the upcoming SID board meeting on Monday, they could authorize going out to bid for Phase 1 to determine if the estimated costs were accurate. Mayor O'Connor expressed support for the city matching SID's funding, particularly if grants were secured.

The group discussed the history of the park project, including a previous plan for a public-private partnership that fell through when COVID hit. Mayor O'Connor indicated he would still be receptive to a public-private partnership if an operator could fund the entire project (estimated at \$12-13 million) while benefiting the city.

President Massey explained that Phase 1 would include conduits for future lighting and electrical vehicle spaces, though the actual lighting would come in a later phase. The group agreed that Phase 1 was necessary regardless of what ultimately happens with the park.

Councilman Werner inquired about the timeline for SID to potentially come together with the City of Westlake. President Massey explained that while the sunset date is set for 30 years, he anticipated the transition would

happen sooner, perhaps in 10-15 years, once development slows and SID's role becomes primarily management rather than construction. He explained that at that point, SID would become a dependent district with the City Council sitting as the SID board.

Mayor O'Connor emphasized that both entities serve the same constituents, and the transition would happen when it makes the most sense for the city.

Mr. Cassel announced that SID has contracted with the Palm Beach Sheriff's Office for a 40-hour per-week deputy dedicated to patrolling SID lakes and property for trespassing and other issues.

President Massey reported that SID's new building is expected to be completed and occupied by February, with space being saved for anticipated city needs.

Regarding the city's search for temporary office space, Mr. Cassel reported that the RFP is out, but no one attended the pre-bid meeting. He mentioned they would continue reaching out to potential locations including any open spaces in Publix, and the Grove marketplace plazas. The RFP is for approximately 3,500 square feet with terms of 5 years.

Mayor O'Connor asked about the status of road connection issue but was informed it remains in litigation with an appeal filed and no resolution yet.

There being no further council and board discussion the Mayor O'Connor opened for public comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public Comment – Alicia Torres – 5447 Whipoorwill Circle - Ms. Torres wanted to confirm the next joint SID/City meeting would be December 2nd. She also reported witnessing cars running stop signs in front of Cresswind and the Hammocks, suggesting more law enforcement. Ms. Torres asked about Sunshine Law compliance with two new managers.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor O'Connor adjourned the meeting at 4:55 PM.

Odette Izquierdo, Acting City Clerk

JohnPaul O'Connor, Mayor