



Ocala

City Council

Minutes

110 SE Watula Avenue
Ocala, FL 34471

www.ocalafl.gov

Tuesday, April 15, 2025

4:00 PM

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Present: Pro Tem Ire J. Bethea Sr
Council Member James P. Hilty Sr
Council Member Barry Mansfield
Council Member Jay A. Musleh
Council President Kristen M. Dreyer

Excused: Mayor Ben Marciano

Municipal Officers/Others Present: The meeting was also attended by City Manager Peter Lee, City Attorney William Sexton, Assistant City Manager Ken Whitehead, City Clerk Angel Jacobs, Deputy City Clerk Pamela Omichinski, Fire Chief Clint Welborn, Police Chief Michael Balken, Internal Auditor Randall Bridgeman, Finance Director Peter Brill, City Projects Director Tye Chighizola, Director of Airport Matthew Grow, Planning Director Aubrey Hale, Budget Director Tammi Haslam, Community Development Services Director James Haynes, Director of Parks & Recreation Julie Johnson, HR/Risk Management Director Devan Kikendall, City Engineer & Director of Water Resources Sean Lanier, Chief Financial Officer Janice Mitchell, Director of Public Works Darren Park, Director of Electric Utility Doug Peebles, Director of Ocala Fiber Network Mel Poole, IT Director Christopher Ramos, Strategic & Legislative Affairs Administrator Jeannine Robbins, Procurement & Contracting Officer Daphne Robinson, Growth Management Director Jeff Shrum, Chief of Staff Chris Watt, Ocala Police Dept Representative, IT Representative, The Press and other interested parties.

2a. New Employees

- Hunter Spink, Electric
- Joseph Dweck, Electric

3. Public Notice

- **Public Notice for the April 15, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting was posted on March 21, 2025**

4. Proclamations and Awards

4a. Proclamation calling for a General Election for Tuesday, September 16, 2025

President Dreyer on behalf of Mayor Marciano issued a proclamation calling for a General Election to be held on Tuesday, September 16, 2025. Prescribing a Run-off Election date, setting qualifying dates and stating the offices and vacancies to be filled.

4b. Presentation of the Arbor Day Proclamation to Charlita Whitehead, Economic

Development and Cultural Arts Project Coordinator, and to Amy Casaletto, Recreation and Parks Special Services Division Head

President Dreyer on behalf of Mayor Marciano presented a proclamation for Arbor Day. The City proclaims April 25, 2025, as Arbor Day.

- 4c.** Presentation of the Mayor's Citizen Recognition Award to Joshua Musikantow

RESULT: POSTPONED

- 4d.** Service Award - Jarvis Mulkey - Recreation & Parks Department - 25 Years of Service

City Manager Pete Lee presented a service award to Jarvis Mulkey in appreciation of his 25 years of service to the City of Ocala.

5. Presentations

- 5a.** Presentation of the Active Marion Project by Marion County Hospital District Chief Operating Officer, Debra Velez, and Vice President of Community Health Programs, Jessica Cole

Debra Velez, Marion County Hospital District Chief Operating Officer, presented the Active Marion Project. She provided a brief overview of the organizations mission, programs, and partnerships. Furthermore, she announced the winners of the Step Challenge, and thanked City Council and Mayor Marciano for their support.

6. Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda items are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one roll call vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless members of Council or the public request specific items to be removed for separate discussion and action.

RESULT: APPROVED THE CONSENT AGENDA

MOVER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

SECONDER: Barry Mansfield

AYE: Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer

- 6a.** Approve the award of development opportunity to, and an Affordable Housing Agreement with, the Habitat for Humanity of Marion County Inc. to construct and sell an affordable housing unit on surplus property in West Ocala
- 6b.** Adopt Budget Resolution 2025-144 amending the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget to accept and appropriate program income for the City of Ocala's State Housing Initiative Program grant in the amount of \$19,846
- 6c.** Adopt Resolution 2025-17 appointing Bridgette Delva and Rhanda Mckown to the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee for unexpired three-year terms ending December 31, 2025
- 6d.** Adopt Resolution 2025-18 to approve the City of Ocala's Local Housing Assistance Plan for 2025-2028

- 6e. Adopt Resolution 2025-19 approving Amendment #2 to Public Transportation Grant Agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation to extend the end date of the agreement to June 1, 2026
- 6f. Approve Second Amendment to the Ground Lease between the City of Ocala, Marion County Sheriff's Office, and the Marion County Board of County Commissioners with first lease year revenue of \$18,103
- 6g. Adopt Budget Resolution 2025-145 amending the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget to accept and appropriate a donation from Kimberly's Center for Child Protection to purchase Cellebrite licensing totaling \$8,800
- 6h. Adopt Budget Resolution 2025-146 amending the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget to accept and appropriate funds from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to upgrade equipment at the Ocala Police Department's district offices in the amount of \$32,000
- 6i. Approve Amendment No. 2 to Florida Department of Environmental Protection Grant Agreement No. LPS0025 extending the expiration date for the Foxwood Farms Water Quality Improvement Project
- 6j. Adopt Resolution 2025-20 approving an Off-System Construction and Maintenance Agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation for improvements within City rights-of-way
- 6k. See Item 7
- 6l. Approve minutes from April 1, 2025 City Council meeting

7. Consent Agenda Items Held for Discussion

Should any items be removed from the Consent Agenda for discussion, they will be discussed at this time.

- 6k. Approve First Amendment to the Professional Services Agreement for Design-Build Services for the Downtown Parking Garage No. 2 with SSC Construction Management, LLC, for a reduction in the Guaranteed Maximum Price in the amount of \$61,375

Joseph Henry, Law Firm of Joseph Henry PLLC, Attorney, spoke on behalf of local Downtown businesses experiencing financial hardships, due to the construction surrounding the site preparation for the new parking garage.

Sara Patev, Gathering Café, Owner, discussed how the construction is negatively impacting their local business and clientele. It is difficult and confusing to access parking, as well as the roads are closed inconsistently and without warning. She requested the City consider the increasing signage and transparency regarding the construction project, and providing financial assistance to impacted Downtown businesses.

Ricky Nubuck, T-Mobile, Store Manager, Pine Avenue & Broadway, discussed how the construction has negatively impacted foot traffic. He requested the City provide financial assistance to businesses impacted by the City's construction project.

Dave Richman, Starbucks, spoke on the lack of communication regarding construction operation hours and clean-up. He requested the construction start at 9 am, due to their morning rush from 7 am to 9 am and increase communications regarding road closures.

David Armstrong, Gathering Café, Co-Owner, 306 SW Broadway Street, requested the City provide financial assistance to businesses impacted by the City's construction project. He requested the City repave the roads and parking lot in the area to support pedestrian safety.

City Engineer & Director of Water Resources Sean Lanier discussed the planned construction improvements for the Downtown area. He confirmed to Council President Dreyer that the entire street will be repaved.

City Manager Pete Lee spoke on the City's efforts to post signage for the public and conduct paving during low traffic hours.

Mr. Lanier confirmed the sidewalk will be restored. Furthermore, he clarified road closures and public communications with Council President Dreyer.

Mr. Lee stated the City will issue weekly construction schedules, but cautioned that weather or unforeseen circumstances could cause the schedules to change.

Council Member Mansfield suggested the City hire a flag man to help mitigate traffic in the area.

Council Member Hilty concurred with Council Member Mansfield and thanked Downtown businesses for sharing their concerns with City Council.

There being no further discussion the motion carried by roll call vote.

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: Jay A. Musleh

SECONDER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

AYE: Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer

8. Introduction and First Readings of Ordinances

9. Public Hearings / Second and Final Readings / Adoption of Ordinances

- 9a.** Adopt Ordinance 2025- 22 to rezone two parcels of land containing approximately 1.34 acres, located at 1533 and 1541 NE 14th Street (Parcel 26486-000-00 and 26486-001-00) from RO, Residential Office, to R-3, Multi-Family Residential (Case ZON25-0003) (Quasi-Judicial)

Introduced By: Jay A. Musleh

City Clerk Jacobs read the ordinance title into the record.

Council President Dreyer opened the public hearing.

Chief Planning Official Endira Madraveren discussed the adoption of ordinance 2025-22. The applicant requested to rezone two parcels to R-3 (Multi-Family Residential). She provided a brief overview of the following: properties history, zoning, and staff findings. To note, the Planning & Zoning Commission and staff recommend approval.

No public comment.

There being no further discussion the motion carried by roll call vote.

10. General Business

- 10a.** Approve one one-year renewal of the agreement with C.W. Roberts Contracting, Inc., for Transportation Rehabilitation Improvement Program projects in an amount not to exceed \$3,000,000

There being no discussion the motion carried by roll call vote.

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: James P. Hilty Sr

SECONDER: Barry Mansfield

AYE: Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer

- 10b.** Approve one-year renewal of the agreement with Marion Rock, LLC, for drainage rehabilitation improvement projects in an amount not to exceed \$1,250,000

There being no discussion the motion carried by roll call vote.

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: James P. Hilty Sr

SECONDER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

AYE: Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer

- 10c.** Approve the purchase of Grundfos pumps and consumable parts from FJ Nugent and Associates, Inc., with an estimated annual expenditure of \$460,000

There being no discussion the motion carried by roll call vote.

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: Jay A. Musleh

SECONDER: Barry Mansfield

AYE: Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer

- 10d.** Approve Second Amendment to the Cooperative Purchasing Agreement with In-Depth, Inc., for tank inspection and cleaning of the City's water storage tanks with an increased annual expenditure of \$150,000

There being no discussion the motion carried by roll call vote.

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: Barry Mansfield

SECONDER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

AYE: Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer

- 10e.** Approve award of contract to C.W. Roberts Contracting, Inc. for the State Road 40 traffic signalization project at SW/NW 46th Avenue in the amount of \$1,897,490, plus 10 percent contingency, for a total expenditure not to exceed \$2,087,239

Council President Dreyer questioned the timeline of the project. City Engineer & Director of Water Resources Sean Lanier confirmed the contract is for five months. Furthermore, the City will issue the notice to proceed after the contractor submits bonds.

There being no further discussion the motion carried by roll call vote.

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: Barry Mansfield

SECONDER: Jay A. Musleh

AYE: Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer

- 10f.** Approve additional expenditures under the Agreement for Yard and Wood Waste Disposal Services with D&G Solutions Group, LLC, for an increased aggregate expenditure amount of \$2,248,259

There being no discussion the motion carried by roll call vote.

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: James P. Hilty Sr

SECONDER: Jay A. Musleh

AYE: Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer

- 10g.** Approve an agreement between the City of Ocala and Creative Outdoor Advertising, Inc. for the placement, maintenance, and advertising of transit benches

RESULT: PULLED

- 10h.** Approve utilization of OMNIA Partners' cooperative purchasing agreement with Advance Auto Parts for the purchase of automotive parts and accessories with an aggregate expenditure of \$285,000

There being no discussion the motion carried by roll call vote.

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: James P. Hilty Sr

SECONDER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

AYE: Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer

- 10i.** Approve the annual renewal for the Service and Maintenance Agreement for video

surveillance and access control systems with Morse Communications in an estimated amount of \$112,206

There being no discussion the motion carried by roll call vote.

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: Barry Mansfield

SECONDER: James P. Hilty Sr

AYE: Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer

- 10j.** Approve award of a five-year contract to OTI Fiber, LLC, d/b/a Opticaltel, to provide dark fiber connections for Ocala Fiber Network in the aggregate amount of \$181,440

There being no discussion the motion carried by roll call vote.

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

SECONDER: Barry Mansfield

AYE: Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer

- 10k.** Approve three-year renewal of the agreement for school security officer services with Trinity Catholic High School with receivables in the amount of \$320,436

There being no discussion the motion carried by roll call vote.

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: James P. Hilty Sr

SECONDER: Barry Mansfield

AYE: Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer

- 10l.** Approve utilization of cooperative purchasing agreements with 22nd Century Technologies, Inc., and Ad-Vance Personnel Services, Inc., for the provision of temporary staffing services with an aggregate expenditure amount of \$400,000

There being no discussion the motion carried by roll call vote.

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: James P. Hilty Sr

SECONDER: Barry Mansfield

AYE: Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer

- 10m.** Vote for one applicant to be appointed to the Tree Commission for an unexpired four-year term ending March 1, 2029

Amended motion: Appointed Taylor Sherer to the Tree Commission for an unexpired four-year term ending March 1, 2029 by ballot vote

Council President Dreyer commented Taylor Sherer does not live within the City limits. City Clerk Jacobs noted the Tree Commission does not require a member to live within the City limits.

City Clerk Angel Jacobs announced City Council appoints Taylor Sherer to the Tree Commission for an unexpired four-year term ending March 1, 2029, by ballot vote.

11. Internal Auditor's Report

12. City Manager's Report

- Inspector Of The Year Award

City Manager Pete Lee noted Mike Brown, Chief Building Official, was named as the 2025 Inspector of the Year by the Building Officials Association of Florida.

- Transportation and EMS Impact fees

City Manager Pete Lee reported the second workshop is scheduled for May 6, 2025, and the adoption hearing is scheduled for May 23, 2025. The City will schedule meetings to meet with City Council Members individually to discuss impact fees. He provided a brief overview of the following: past impact fee revenue, proposed fees, and challenges.

Growth Management Director Tye Chighizola clarified the allocations of past impact fee revenue and impact fee credits.

City Engineer & Director of Water Resources Sean Lanier shared his discussions with the County Engineer.

Council Member Musleh expressed concern regarding the lack of information regarding the allocation of impact fee revenue. He suggested scheduling one-on-one meetings to find out where the money is being spent.

Mr. Lee assured City Council the City will find out where the money is being spent.

Council President Dreyer suggested the City draft an agreement describing where the collected revenue will be allocated. The monies from an impact fee should be spent in the area from which they were collected; the impact fees from a project in southwest Ocala shouldn't be spent in Reddick, for example.

Mr. Lee provided a brief overview of the proposed EMS Impact fees. He expressed concern that the proposed fee could cause future lawsuits. Furthermore, the City will present County information at the one-on-one meetings.

Council President Dreyer requested the City share information regarding reimbursement sources received by EMS at the one-on-one meetings. Furthermore, she requested the County's study acknowledge the daytime population for the City's Penny Sales Tax collection.

13. Ocala Police Department Report

- **Overview of Crime and Traffic Stops**

Police Chief Mike Balken reported on the Police Departments efforts for a two-week period, March 31, 2025 to April 13, 2025: 39 significant crimes, 210 arrests, 106 FIRs, and 1,090 traffic stops. Quarterly update for January 1, 2025 to March 31, 2025: 200 significant crimes (-28% compared to year 2024), 1,478 arrests (-11% compared to year 2024), 690 FIRs (+32% compared to year 2024), and 7,075 traffic stops (+29% compared to year 2024). Year-to-date: 1,500 records requests, 9 high risk search warrant activations, and 2 barricaded subject activations.

14. **Ocala Fire Rescue Department Report**

- **Unit Responses**

Fire Chief Clint Welborn reported on unit responses for a two-week period, April 1, 2025 to April 14, 2025. The two busiest units: Fire Rescue Four (170-unit responses) and Fire Engine Four (113-unit responses).

- **Service calls update**

Fire Chief Clint Welborn reported on call type spotlights for a two-week period, April 1, 2025 to April 14, 2025: motor vehicle accidents 82, structure fires 2, and community paramedicine/core 52, and 970 calls for service (7,178 calls-to-date).

- **Department Highlights**

Fire Chief Clint Welborn reported the department responded to two incidents: semi rollover on W. SS Boulevard & SW 27th Avenue (April 2, 2025) and fire behind Easy Street near Walmart (April 7, 2025).

15. **City Attorney's Report**

- **Approve proposed bodily injury settlement in the Exline and Wright claims**

City Attorney Sexton discussed the approval of a bodily injury settlement in the Exline and Wright claims. He requested City Council approve the proposed settlement.

There being no further discussion the motion carried by roll call vote.

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: Jay A. Musleh

SECONDER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

16. **Public Comments**

- **Karen Hartsell, 1536 E Silver Springs Boulevard, expressed concern regarding construction impacts**

Karen Hartsell, 1536 E Silver Springs Boulevard, stated the proposed development project adjacent to her small business has no buffering to mitigate noise. She anticipates

the lack of buffering will negatively impact her business.

Planning Director Aubrey Hale stated the building permit has not yet been approved. He confirmed the existing zoning does not require buffering between two zoning districts. The City will request the applicant install a fence as part of the landscape design.

Mr. Hale noted site inspectors were sent out to ensure tree protections are in place. Furthermore, the City will work with the developer before issuing a building permit.

- **Natalie Rector, 1508 SE Fort King Street, spoke in support of local government**

17. Informational Items and Calendaring Items

- Tuesday, April 29, 2025 - 12:00pm - City Council Workshop Re: Water Rate Study - Council Chambers
- Tuesday, May 6, 2025 - 3:30pm - Audit Committee meeting- Council Chambers
- Tuesday, May 6, 2025 - 4:00pm - City Council meeting - Council Chambers
- Tuesday, May 13, 2025 - 12:00pm - City Council Workshop Re: Solid Waste/Sanitation - Council Chambers
- Tuesday, May 20, 2025 - 3:45pm - CRA Board meeting - Council Chambers
- Tuesday, May 20, 2025 - 4:00pm - City Council meeting - Council Chambers
- Monday, May 26, 2025 - Memorial Day Holiday - City Offices closed
- Tuesday, May 27, 2025 - 3:00pm - TPO Meeting - Marion County Commission Auditorium

18. Comments by Mayor

19. Comments by City Council Members

20. Adjournment

Adjourned at 5:32 pm

Minutes

Kristen M. Dreyer
Council President

Angel B. Jacobs
City Clerk