



Ocala

City Council

Minutes

110 SE Watula Avenue
Ocala, FL 34471

www.ocalafl.gov

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

4:00 PM

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Ben Marciano
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

3. Public Notice

Public Notice for the November 18, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting was posted on October 7, 2025

4. Proclamations and Awards

Presentation of the Mayor's Citizen Recognition Award to Matt Wilkerson

Mayor Marciano presented the Mayor's Citizen Recognition Award to Matt Wilkerson in appreciation of his community support efforts.

4b. Presentation of the Annual Red Kettle Campaign Proclamation to Salvation Army Majors Jason and Melissa Smith

Mayor Marciano presented a proclamation for Annual Red Kettle Campaign Day. The City proclaims November 18, 2025, as Annual Red Kettle Campaign Day.

5. Presentations

5a. Update from Ocala Mainstreet

Jessica Fieldhouse, Ocala Mainstreet, 516 NE Sanchez Avenue, discussed the state of Downtown. She provided a brief overview of the following: organizations mission, community support efforts, revitalization of Downtown, tax revenue generation, challenges/opportunities, and strategic recommendations. Furthermore, she recognized City employee, Adam Signs, who is a Lead Event Exhibit Coordinator Volunteer with Ocala Mainstreet, who was awarded the 2025 Volunteer of the Year Award.

President Dreyer recognized the organization for increasing trolley ridership this past year.

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.** One-year agreement with North Florida Container & Truck Repair, LLC, for dumpster painting and repair services in an amount not to exceed \$72,703

Presentation By: Darren Park

- 6b.** Two-year agreement with Solo Cats Services, LLC, for grounds maintenance services on rights-of-way and medians along State Road 40 East with an expenditure of \$52,752

Presentation By: Darren Park

- 6c.** Heath Preserve Phase 3 Amendment to Developer's Agreement

Presentation By: Aubrey Hale

- 6d.** Utilization of grant funds from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and a TIPS Cooperative Agreement for the purchase of two drones from Skydio, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$49,877

Presentation By: Clint Welborn

- 6e.** Budget Resolution 2026-113 to amend the Fiscal Year 2025-26 budget to accept and appropriate funds from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement for the purchase of two drones in the amount of \$49,877

Presentation By: Clint Welborn

- 6f.** Workers' compensation settlement in the matter of Patricia Mraz versus the City of Ocala, Florida, with a proposed settlement amount of \$96,250

Presentation By: William E Sexton

- 6g.** November 4, 2025 City Council meeting minutes

Presentation By: Angel Jacobs

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.

8. Introduction and First Readings of Ordinances

(Second and Final Reading - December 2, 2025)

- 8a.** Ordinance 2026-1 to amend the code of ordinances for permitted uses in the M-1, Light Industrial, zoning district to include churches/places of worship located on major and minor arterial roadways subject to supplemental regulations (COD25-0003)

Introduced By: Ire J. Bethea Sr

- 8b.** Ordinance 2026-2 to change the future land use designation on approximately 10.36 acres (Parcel 21454-000-00) located at 2500 NW 31st Avenue from Medium Intensity/Special District to Employment Center (Case LUC25-0005) (Quasi-Judicial)

Introduced By: James P. Hilty Sr

- 8c.** Ordinance 2026-3 to rezone approximately 10.36 acres (Parcel 21454-000-00) located at 2500 NW 31st Avenue from R-1, Single-Family Residential and R-2, Two-Family Residential to M-1, Light Industrial (Case ZON25-0012) (Quasi-Judicial)

Introduced By: Jay A. Musleh

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

- 9a.** The sale of beer, wine and liquor for off-premises consumption for Virwa, Inc., doing business as, Spot on Liquors located at 1500 W Silver Springs Blvd Unit 1 (Parcel 28520-000-00)(Quasi-Judicial)

Presentation By: Endira Madraveren

Council President Dreyer opened the public hearing.

Chief Planning Official Endira Madraveren discussed an application submitted by Virwa, Inc., for the property located at 1500 W Silver Springs Blvd, Unit 1. The applicant is requesting an alcohol permit to allow the sale of beer/wine/liquor for off-premises consumption. She provided a brief overview of the following: property's history, public opposition, and staff findings. To note, staff recommends approval, and a similar alcohol permit was previously denied by City Council.

Dr. Barbara Brooks, 1636 SW 31st Avenue, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. She requested City Council deny the permit request.

John Bernard Jr., Resident, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. He requested City Council deny the permit request.

Mr. Gains Sr., Resident, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. He requested City Council deny the permit request.

Shatara Taylor, 725 SW 3rd Street, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. She suggested increasing beneficial resources to support the community.

Eugene Green, 1322 W Silver Springs Boulevard, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. He requested City Council deny the permit request.

Mr. Conrad, Resident, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. He requested City Council deny the permit request.

Shatoca Scott, Resident, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. She expressed concern allowing a liquor store to operate near a school.

Willie Roberts, 1231 SW 8th Street, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. He

suggested increasing beneficial resources to support the community.

Mr. Taylor, 6th Terrace, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit.

Brenda Hill, 2859 NE 2nd Street, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit.

LaTasha Long, 629 SW 10th Avenue, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. She expressed concern regarding the following: increased crime/drug use, motor vehicle accidents, and pedestrian safety.

Latrice Sweet, 1237 SW 6th Street, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit.

Quincy Roger Jr., 1231 SW 6th Street, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. He expressed concern regarding increased crime.

Antonio Oats, Resident, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. He explained how liquor stores negatively impact the youth.

FL Brown, Resident, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. He expressed concern regarding increased crime.

Charles Nelson, 8044 SW 19th Avenue, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit.

Jason Tolbert, 201 NE 37th Court, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. He explained how alcohol use negatively impacts the homeless population in the City.

James Taolen, Applicants Attorney, addressed comments he considered discriminatory by the public. Furthermore, he advised City Council that denying the applicant's request for an alcohol permit is considered a violation of the applicant's rights under the Florida Constitution and United States Constitution. To note, no evidence has been presented to support denial, pursuant to Ordinance 633-J.

Martin Newman, 306 SW Martin Luther King Avenue, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. He expressed concern regarding traffic impacts.

Maria Rosa, 4477 SW 172 Place Road, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. She requested City Council take into consideration the community.

Abur, Resident, spoke in opposition of the alcohol permit. He explained how liquor stores negatively impact the residents in the community and increase crime.

Zarian Pera, 2645 NE 25th Street, shared his experience operating a family-owned liquor store business in the community. He explained how large grocery corporations are taking out small local businesses.

Council Member Bethea encouraged his fellow City Council Members to consider denying the application. He expressed concern that the proposed liquor store will

negatively impact local schools and churches in the community.

Council Member Musleh questioned City Council's ability to properly deny the application without legal consequences.

Council Members Hilty and Mansfield spoke in favor of denying the application, due to the proposed location.

Mayor Marciano spoke in favor of denying the application to support building a healthier, safer community, for the residents of Ocala.

President Dreyer cited section 6-33(c), to deny the application.

City Council agreed to withdraw the first motion to proceed with a motion to deny, pursuant to section 6-33(c) (1) and (2).

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

RESULT: DENIED

MOVER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

SECONDER: James P. Hilty Sr

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

10. General Business

- 10a.** Cooperative purchasing agreement to Geograph Technologies, LLC, for the acquisition of CrescentLink fiber network design software and related services with an aggregate expenditure of \$106,200

Presentation By: Kenneth Jamerson

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

- 10b.** One-year renewal of contract with SHI for Palo Alto Firewall hardware and software with an estimated expenditure amount of \$166,655

Presentation By: Joshua Sasso

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

- 10c.** One-year renewal of the contract with PCN-Strategies for Getac in-car video and body camera computer aided hardware and software with an estimated expenditure amount of \$229,280

Presentation By: Joshua Sasso

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

- 10d.** Reallocation of over-collected Power Cost Adjustment funds to mitigate the impact of un-anticipated increase in the bulk power cost expenditures incurred during Fiscal Year 2025, in the amount of \$3,701,630

Presentation By: Doug Peebles

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

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

SECONDER: James P. Hilty Sr

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

- 10e.** Budget Resolution 2026-114 to amend the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget to offset unanticipated bulk power expense by transferring the power cost adjustment over-collection to the Electric Utility Reserve in the amount of \$3,701,630

Presentation By: Doug Peebles

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

RESULT: ADOPTED

MOVER: Jay A. Musleh

SECONDER: Barry Mansfield

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

- 10f.** Piggyback agreement with USSI, LLC for inflow abatement and related services with an estimated aggregate expenditure of \$190,000

Presentation By: Sean Lanier

City Engineer & Director of Water Resources Sean Lanier Council clarified the unit price contract and scope of services with Council President Dreyer.

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

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

- SECONDER:** James P. Hilty Sr
- AYE:** Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer
- 10g.** Third amendment to the Agreement for Legal Services with Allen, Norton & Blue, P.A., extending the contract for an additional three year term in an amount not to exceed \$150,000

Presentation By: Todd Swanson

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

- RESULT:** APPROVED
- MOVER:** Jay A. Musleh
- SECONDER:** James P. Hilty Sr
- AYE:** Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, Mansfield, Musleh, and Dreyer
- 10h.** Renewal of five-year Lytx DriveCam hardware lease and product subscription in an amount not to exceed \$1,010,160

Presentation By: Todd Swanson

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
- 10i.** Interlocal Agreement for the Collection and Expenditure of Impact Fees (Emergency Medical Services)

Presentation By: William E. Sexton

City Manager Pete Lee assured Council President Dreyer that the collection and expenditure of impact fees will greatly benefit the City by increasing response times for emergency services.

Council President Dreyer suggested the City monitor response times and actively manage the allocation of collected revenue.

City Attorney Sexton confirmed the agreement requires the submission of quarterly reports.

Fire Chief Clint Welborn confirmed the department receives quarterly reports with average response time data.

Council President Dreyer requested the City report the quarterly response time data to 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

11. Internal Auditor's Report

- Fort King Tennis Center audit request

Council Member Hilty requested the City audit the Fort King Tennis Center, due to the public's negative reaction to the imposed management fee.

City Manager Pete Lee confirmed Council Member Hilty's request for investigation.

Internal Auditor Randall Bridgeman confirmed the City will perform a three-year audit of the Fort King Tennis Center.

Council Member Musleh stated the City will not be able to audit the vendors' financial position, as the tennis court revenues belong to the vendor.

Mr. Lee stated the City will review the contract for vendor compliance.

Mr. Bridgeman stated the City will conduct an operational audit.

Council Member Hilty noted the vendor has not reached the 196 memberships requirement for the City to earn revenue. Furthermore, the public has expressed concern regarding the vendors' business practices, such as cash only transactions.

12. City Manager's Report

- Road Improvements at the intersection of 7th Avenue and 32nd Street

City Manager Pete Lee reported the City will be installing a signal light at the intersection of 7th Avenue and 32nd Street. Furthermore, the City will be temporarily prohibiting left-hand turns at the intersection until . He confirmed the subject property has changed ownership with no development plan in place at this time The City is meeting with the County to discuss transportation impact fees.

- Fire suppression system benchmark

Assistant City Manager Ken Whitehead discussed a benchmark of the fire suppression system for parking garage #2. The City confirmed they are presenting a cost-effective change order for Council to consider for the fire suppression system.

- Light Up schedule

City Manager Pete Lee presented the Light Up schedule to City Council.

Council Member Dreyer asked about road closures for the Christmas Parade. Mr. Lee confirmed FDOT has not finalized the road closure plan yet.

- **Road Improvements at the intersection of 5th Street and South Magnolia**

City Manager Pete Lee assured City Council that the City will re-evaluate the signal light at the intersection of 5th Street and South Magnolia.

13. **Ocala Police Department Report**

- **Overview of Crime and Traffic Stops**

Police Chief Mike Balken reported on crime data for the period, October 27, 2025 to November 9, 2025: 6,900 total incidents, quadrant breakdown (dispatched versus proactive), 288 crimes, 202 arrests, 755 traffic stops, and 142 crashes.

- **Department Highlights**

Police Chief Mike Balken reported the department responded to two incidents in October and November regarding the possession of a firearm by a convicted felon and juvenile. Furthermore, the department successfully managed calls for emergency services for a power outage last Friday.

14. **Ocala Fire Rescue Department Report**

- **Unit Responses**

Fire Chief Clint Welborn reported on unit responses for a two-week period, November 4, 2025 to November 17, 2025. The two busiest units: Fire Rescue Four (2184-unit responses) and Fire Engine Four (135-unit responses).

- **Service calls update**

Fire Chief Clint Welborn reported on call type spotlights for a three-week period, November 4, 2025 to November 17, 2025: motor vehicle accidents 93, structure fires 1, and community paramedicine/core 53, and calls for service 1,012 (22,104 calls-to-date).

- **Department Highlights**

Fire Chief Clint Welborn reported the department hosted a successful community visit at Madison Street Academy. Furthermore, the department successfully responded to a structure fire on November 13, 2025. Upcoming Fallen Firefighter Memorials: Florida Fallen Firefighter Memorial 17th Annual Concert (November 20, 2025) and Florida Fallen Firefighter Memorial Services & Prayer Breakfast (November 21, 2025).

15. **City Attorney's Report**

16. **Public Comments**

- **Leda Perez, 3200 SE 17th Avenue, requested permission to display yard signs in the City Limits to promote the YMCA's 30th Anniversary Annual Turkey Trot**

Leda Perez, 3200 SE 17th Avenue, requested permission to display yard signs in the City Limits to promote the YMCA's 30th Anniversary Annual Turkey Trot.

Planning Director Aubrey Hale clarified signage regulations with City Council.

- **Jason Tolbert, 201 NE 37th Court, Ocala, FL, expressed concern regarding the Methadone Clinic's business operations and requested OPD utilize non-biting drug dogs**

Jason Tolbert, 201 NE 37th Court, Ocala, FL, explained how methadone clinics increase the drug/alcohol usage rather than combat the issue. Furthermore, he requested OPD utilize non-biting drug dogs to patrol parking lots to combat illegal drug/alcohol usage.

- **FL Brown, 706 SW Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, Ocala, FL, requested the City reconnect the light pole at the subject property**

FL Brown, 706 SW Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, Ocala, FL, requested assistance with reconnecting the light pole at the subject property. He expressed concern at the costs he has been quoted.

City Manager Pete Lee confirmed the City will review request..

17. Informational Items and Calendaring Items

- Thursday, November 27 and Friday, November 28, 2025 - Thanksgiving Holiday - City Offices closed
- Tuesday, December 2, 2025 - 3:30pm - CRA Board meeting - Council Chambers
- Tuesday, December 2, 2025 - 4:00pm - City Council meeting - Council Chambers
- Tuesday, December 16, 2025 - 4:00pm - City Council meeting - Council Chambers
- Wednesday, December 24 and Thursday, December 25, 2025 - Christmas Eve & Christmas Day Holidays - City Offices closed
- Thursday, January 1, 2026 - New Year's Day Holiday - City Offices closed
- Tuesday, January 6, 2026 - City Council meeting - Council Chambers

17a. Fully Executed Contracts Under \$50,000

18. Comments by Mayor

- **Legislation and regulation of Kratom**

Mayor Marciano expressed concern regarding the proposed legislation for the legalization of kratom.

City Manager Pete Lee stated he will follow-up on the status of the proposed legislation and report back to City Council.

19. Comments by City Council Members

- **Council Member Mansfield commented on the regulation of fiber optic companies in the City**

Council Member Mansfield requested the City regulate fiber optic companies in the City. He expressed concern regarding numerous fiber optic companies installing fiber in a single area, requiring residents' yards to be dug up multiple times.

City Manager Pete Lee stated the City will send a letter to the Florida legislatures regarding the matter.

Council Member Hilty concurs with fellow Council Member Mansfield.

- **Council Member Hilty invited City Council to attend the Salvation Army's event on Monday, December 1, 2025**
- **Council President Dreyer requested City staff address the golf carts located on the north side of State Road 40**

Council President Dreyer requested City staff address the golf carts located on the north side of State Road 40.

City Manager Pete Lee confirmed the City will be meeting with the local DOT to discuss the three crossing points and design.

- **Council Member Bethea requested City staff consider expanding golf cart zones west of State Road 441**

Council Member Bethea requested City staff consider expanding golf cart zones west of State Road 441

City Manager Pete Lee stated the City will follow-up with DOT and perform independent studies to the west. Furthermore, the City will schedule a workshop to further discuss the matter.

20. Adjournment

Adjourned at 6:25 pm

Minutes

Kristen M. Dreyer
Council President

Angel B. Jacobs
City Clerk