



Ocala

City Council

Minutes

110 SE Watula Avenue
Ocala, FL 34471

www.ocalafl.gov

Tuesday, February 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

a. New Employees

- Charles Johnston, Engineering
- Michael Romaine, Engineering
- Jerome Merritt, Public Works
- Bryan Gomez, Water Resources
- Rennard Jackson, Water Resources
- Lawrence Jansen, Water Resources
- Draven Ruiz, Water Resources

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, 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, 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.

3. Public Notice

- **Public Notice for the February 18, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting was posted on January 10, 2025**

4. Proclamations and Awards

4a. Presentation of the Mayor's Citizen Recognition Award to April McDonald

Mayor Marciano presented the Mayor's Citizen Recognition Award to April McDonald.

Ms. McDonald thanked everyone for their support.

- 4b.** Presentation of the Ocala Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution Month Proclamation to Regent, Ocala Chapter Renée Coventry, and to fellow Daughters of the Ocala Chapter, NSDAR

Mayor Marciano presented a proclamation for the Ocala Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution Month. The City proclaims the month of February 2025, as the Ocala Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution Month. Ms. Coventry invited everyone to the American Revolutionary War Experience to be hosted at Christ the King Anglican Church on March 17, 2025 from 9 am to 4 pm.

- 4c.** Presentation of the Engineers Week Proclamation to Alan Garri on behalf of Florida Engineering Society

Mayor Marciano presented a proclamation for Engineers Week. The City proclaims February 16, 2025 to February 22, 2025, as Engineers Week. Mr. Garri thanked the Mayor for the proclamation and invited families with elementary and middle school aged kids to attend Engineer's Day, a free event on March 15, 2025 at the Discovery Science Center.

- 4d.** Service Award - Captain Charles Eades - Ocala Police Department - 30 Years of Service

Mayor Marciano and City Manager Pete Lee presented a service award to Captain Charles Eades in appreciation of his 30 years of service to the City of Ocala.

5. Presentations

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: James P. Hilty Sr

SECONDER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

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

- 6a.** Approve the award of development opportunity to, and an Affordable Housing Agreement with, the Ocala Housing Authority to construct and rent an affordable housing unit on surplus property (Parcel ID: 2195-131-000) located in West Ocala.
- 6b.** Approve the award of a two-year contract to Commercial Buildings Management LLC, d/b/a Liberty Maintenance Service, LLC, for the provision of janitorial services for City Hall and the Citizen Service Center in the amount of \$81,219
- 6c.** Approve additional expenditures on the contract with Wrike, Inc., for the deployment of additional cloud-based project management and collaboration services for an increased

aggregate expenditure of \$55,825

- 6d. Approve one-year renewal with Dell Technologies for software and hardware maintenance and support in an estimated expenditure of \$90,779
- 6e. Approve the release of a perpetual ingress and egress easement granted by J.A. and Lillian Perry
- 6f. Adopt Budget Resolution 2025-131 amending the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget to accept and appropriate additional funds from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement for online sting operations in the amount of \$20,538
- 6g. Adopt Budget Resolution 2025-132 amending the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget to transfer funds from the West Ocala Community Redevelopment Area fund reserves to the West Ocala Redevelopment Area grants account in support of affordable housing initiatives being implemented in the West Ocala CRA subarea totaling \$50,000
- 6h. Approve reappointment of Dr. Barbara Brooks and Luzonia Waters to new four-year terms ending March 1, 2029, to the Brownfields Advisory Committee
- 6i. Approve reappointment of Dr. Barbara Brooks and Elgin Carelock to new four-year terms expiring on March 1, 2029, to the West Ocala Redevelopment Advisory Committee
- 6j. Approve reappointment of Karl Kunz and Greg Blair to new four-year terms ending March 1, 2029, on the East Ocala Redevelopment Advisory Committee
- 6k. Approve reappointment of Ted Schatt to a new four-year term ending on March 1, 2029, to the Downtown Ocala Redevelopment Subarea Advisory Committee
- 6l. Approve reappointment of Floyd Hershberger and Clark Yandle to new four-year terms ending March 1, 2029, to the North Magnolia Redevelopment Advisory Committee
- 6m. Approve reappointment of Brent Malever to the Board of Adjustment for a four-year term ending March 1, 2029
- 6n. Approve reappointment of Anthony Ortiz and Charlie Varney to the General Employees Retirement Plan System Board of Trustees for three-year terms ending March 1, 2028
- 6o. Approve reappointment of Rick Hugli to the Ocala Historic Preservation Advisory Board for a three-year term ending March 1, 2028
- 6p. Approve reappointment of Darrell O’Kain and appointment of Camellia Loojune to the Municipal Code Enforcement Board for three-year terms ending March 1, 2028
- 6q. Approve reappointment of Tucker Branson and Kevin Lopez to the Planning & Zoning Commission for three-year terms ending March 1, 2028
- 6r. Approve reappointment of Phil Howell to the Ocala Tree Commission for a four-year term ending March 1, 2029
- 6s. Approve reappointment of Glen Fiorello to the Firefighters’ Retirement System Board of Trustees for a two-year term ending October 4, 2026
- 6t. Approve minutes from January 21, 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.

8. Introduction and First Readings of Ordinances

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

- 9a.** Open a public hearing to review the Transit Development Plan annual progress report
Council President Dreyer opened the public hearing.

Transit Administrator Tom Duncan discussed the Transit Development Plan annual progress report. He provided a brief overview of the adopted TDP 2022 Goals, Florida statute requirements, TDP annual review, key/on-time performance, financials, emissions, projects, and community outreach.

No public comment.

RESULT: OPENED A PUBLIC HEARING

- 9b.** Adopt Ordinance 2025-16 to rezone from M-1, Light Industrial, O-1, Office, MH, Mobile Home Park, and RO, Residential Office, to INST, Institutional, for properties located at 2211 Northeast 14th Street and 1409 Northeast 22nd Avenue (Parcel 26394-000-00 and 26392-000-00), approximately 5.57 acres (Case ZON24-0007) (Quasi-Judicial)

Introduced By: Jay A. Musleh

Council President Dreyer opened the public hearing.

City Clerk Angel Jacobs read the Ordinance titles into the record.

Senior Planner Endira Madraveren discussed the adoption of Ordinance 2025-16. The applicant requested to rezone two parcels to INST (Institutional). She provided a brief overview of the property's history, zoning, and staff findings. The Planning & Zoning Commission and staff recommend approval.

Austin Dailey, Applicants Attorney, 40 SE 11th Avenue, stated the zoning change will allow the applicant to expand their use on the subject properties.

No public comment.

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

RESULT: ADOPTED

MOVER: Jay A. Musleh

SECONDER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

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

- 9c.** Adopt Ordinance 2025-17 to rezone approximately 16.43 acres for property located

approximately 40 feet north of the intersection of NE 28th Street and NE 23rd Avenue (Parcel 24278-000-01) from RO, Residential Office, R-1, Single-Family Residential, and R-2, Two-Family Residential, to PD, Planned Development (Case PD24-45765) (Quasi-Judicial)

Introduced By: Ire J. Bethea Sr

Council President Dreyer opened the public hearing for items 9(c) and 9(d).

Senior Planner Emily Johnson discussed the adoption of Ordinance 2025-17 and Resolution 2025-14. The applicant requested to rezone the subject property to PD (Plan Development), to develop a subdivision. She provided a brief overview of the property's history, zoning, proposed use, and staff findings. To note, the Planning & Zoning Commission and staff recommend approval.

David Tilman, Tilman & Associates Engineering, 1720 SE 16th Avenue, stated the amenities are under construction within the Phase I and II property, and the proposed Phase II development will have full access to these amenities.

Council President Dreyer expressed concern over potential confusion over trash removal due to the Emerson Pointe subdivision being both in and out of the City limits.

No public comment.

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

RESULT: ADOPTED

MOVER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

SECONDER: Barry Mansfield

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

- 9d.** Adopt Resolution 2025-14 for a PD Plan and Standards Book for property located approximately 40 feet north of the intersection of NE 28th Street and NE 23rd Avenue (Parcel 24278-000-01, approximately 16.43 acres (Case No. PD24-45765) (Quasi-Judicial)

There being no further 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

10. General Business

- 10a.** Approve the purchase of an Altec AT48M bucket truck utilizing a Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Agreement in the amount of \$215,006

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

- 10b.** Adopt Budget Resolution 2025-133 amending the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget to appropriate funds for the purchase of an Altec AT48M bucket truck in the amount of \$215,006

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

RESULT: ADOPTED

MOVER: James P. Hilty Sr

SECONDER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

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

- 10c.** Approve a two-year renewal of the contract with Airgas USA, LLC, for the provision of liquid carbon dioxide supply and delivery services in the amount of \$284,000

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

- 10d.** Approve award of a contract for the rehabilitation of the Carter Residence, located at 2516 NW Second St., to Newson Construction & Consulting, LLC, for a total project cost not to exceed \$110,150

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

- 10e.** Approve a one-year renewal for underground and aerial fiber optic cable installation services on an as-needed basis from Service and Technology Network Solutions, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$2,300,000

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
- 10f.** Approve a one-year renewal of the agreement with Crystal Communications, Inc., for Alcatel-Lucent network equipment and software for network upgrades in an amount not to exceed \$190,000
- 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
- 10g.** Approve the award of a three-year contract to Thorn Run Partners for federal lobbying and advocacy services with an aggregate expenditure amount of \$216,000
- 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
- 10h.** Approve a Developer's Agreement with B I Realty, LLC and RaceTrac, Inc. facilitating a roadway realignment of SW 40th Avenue, infrastructure improvements, and relocation of a city lift station located generally at 4040 W Silver Springs Boulevard, along with the property located directly to the south (Parcel 22866-000-02 and 22866-000-03)
- Rob Batsel, Attorney, 1531 SE 36th Avenue, stated he is representing the applicant and is available to answer any questions.
- Council Member Hilty questioned why the City is paying 50% of some of the costs involved with this project, such as the lift station relocation. City Manager Pete Lee noted he was involved in negotiations at the beginning of the project, seven or eight years ago, and had not been involved with recent negotiations, but the spirit of the agreement is similar. He noted it has been part of the TPO plan. The City will verify if the project is eligible for impact fee reimbursement.
- Council Member Hilty stated the applicant should be held responsible for expenses associated with the relocation of the lift station.
- Planning Director Aubrey Hale explained the City's fifty percent share regarding the road configuration project. The applicant is not locking in any concurrency at this time; however, they must perform a traffic study.
- Mr. Lee noted the City initiated the road configuration project.
- Mr. Batsel clarified the agreed upon shared relocation expense.

There being no further 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

11. Internal Auditor's Report

12. City Manager's Report

- **Lineman Competition**

City Manager Pete Lee encouraged the public to attend the Lineman Competition.

- **Airport Master Plan workshop scheduled for February 19, 2025, at 5:30 PM**

- **Public Sanitation meeting postponed**

Council Member Hilty questioned why the Sanitation Workshop had been called off.

City Manager Lee explained City staff had a meeting with members of the Sanitation community including Waste Management, GFL, and Waste Pro, where they discussed the future. He stated his opinion remains that the City is responsible for trash pickup within the City except in cases where it is not viable, such as at Publix or the Hospital. The City is still waiting for contract information from a couple of companies. Mr. Lee would prefer to have all the information available to Council at the time of the meeting; once obtained, the Workshop will be rescheduled.

13. Ocala Police Department Report

- **Overview of Crime and Traffic Stops**

Police Chief Mike Balken reported the department indicted three individuals for a 2024 murder in Northeast Ocala. The Police Department's efforts for the month of February: 251 arrests, down 5 from last year. 132 Field Incident Reports, 1129 traffic stops.

Council President Dreyer requested a definition of "Field Interrogation Report". Chief Balken explained it is a short report completed by officers during traffic stops or someone that appears suspicious who an officer may have come into contact with. As well, it could be a subject that does not quite meet Probable Cause, but has aroused an officer's suspicion.

14. Ocala Fire Rescue Department Report

- **Unit Responses**

Fire Chief Clint Welborn presented the unit responses data for a two-week period. The two busiest units: Fire Rescue Four (174-unit responses) and Fire Engine Four (94-unit responses).

- **Service calls update**

Fire Chief Clint Welborn reported on call type spotlights: motor vehicle accidents 59, structure fires 2, and community paramedicine/core 77, and 978 calls for service (3,290 calls-to-date). Vehicle accidents have decreased in the City.

15. City Attorney's Report

16. Public Comments

- **Steven Janoski, 1900 NE 50th Avenue, expressed concern regarding halfway houses**

Mr. Janoski expressed concern regarding unsafe halfway house operations in residential communities. He requested City Council take action to protect the residential communities.

City Manager Pete Lee stated the City is evaluating Community Facility uses in the community, and working with Code Enforcement, OPD, and Growth Management. He noted it is a complicated issue and they want to approach it correctly.

Staff will bring back to Council definitions to clarify what is allowed in each use. He noted staff will work to target communities like Glenwood with more of this type of activity. He stated a free City registry for short term rentals, VRBO and AirBnbs would allow staff to better monitor the situation.

17. Informational Items and Calendaring Items

- Wednesday, February 19, 2025 - 5:00pm - 7:00pm - Ocala International Airport Master Plan Update Public Meeting - Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place
- Tuesday, February 25, 2025 - 3:00pm - TPO meeting - Marion County Commissioners Auditorium
- Tuesday, February 25, 2025 - 5:00pm - 7:00pm - TPO 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan Community Workshop - Mary Sue Rich Community Center at Reed Place
- Saturday, March 1, 2025 - 9:00am - Florida Lineman Competition - World Equestrian Center
- Tuesday, March 4, 2025 - 4:00pm - City Council Meeting - Council Chambers
- Wednesday, March 12, 2025 - 9:00am - Joint Meeting MCPS, Municipalities & MCBCC - Southeastern Livestock Pavilion Auditorium
- Thursday, March 13, 2025 - 9:00am - Joint City/County Workshop to discuss the Gap Analysis TDC - McPherson Governmental Campus Auditorium
- Tuesday, March 18, 2025 - 3:45pm - CRA Board meeting - Council Chambers
- Tuesday, March 18, 2025 - 4:00pm - City Council meeting - Council Chambers
- Tuesday, March 25, 2025 - 3:00pm - TPO meeting

17a. Informational Item regarding the Mutual Aid Agreement for Operational Assistance

between the Ocala Police Department and the Gainesville Police Department

17b. Executed Contracts Under \$50,000

18. Comments by Mayor

- **Step Challenge update**

Mayor Marciano reported City Council Members are doing a great job with their Step Challenge teams.

- **Healthy Ocala**

Mayor Marciano encouraged the public to scan the QR code for Healthy Ocala to access mental health services.

19. Comments by City Council Members

- **Council Member Musleh advised he will not be present at the next meeting**

20. Adjournment

- **Adjourned at 5:17 pm**

Minutes

Kristen M. Dreyer
Council President

Angel B. Jacobs
City Clerk