



Ocala

City Council

Minutes

110 SE Watula Avenue
Ocala, FL 34471

www.ocalafl.gov

Tuesday, March 4, 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 President Kristen M. Dreyer

Excused: Council Member Jay A. Musleh

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, Fire Chief Clint Welborn, Police Chief Michael Balken, Internal Auditor Randall Bridgeman, Finance Director Peter Brill, City Projects Director Tye Chighizola, Sanitation Division Head Dwayne Drake, 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

- Matthew Alborn, Electric Engineering
- Gino Della Libera, Electric Engineering
- Crystal Richardson, Electric Engineering
- Felix Clint Smith, Electric Engineering
- Brian Smith, Ocala Fiber Network

3. Public Notice

- **Public Notice for the March 4, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting was posted on February 12, 2025**

4. Proclamations and Awards

- 4a.** Presentation of the Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Commendation to Transitions Life Center Executive Director Sabrina Hughes, Board President James Darren Ritch, and to Vice President and Founder Linda Paglia

Mayor Marciano presented a proclamation for Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. The City proclaims the month of March 2025, as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. Mr. Ritch thanked the Mayor for the proclamation and introduced Council Member Hilty as a member of their board, as well as Linda Paglia and her son, Anthony.

4b. Presentation of the Flood Awareness Week Proclamation to City Engineering Director Sean Lanier and to the Public Works Stormwater and Stormwater Engineering Staff

Mayor Marciano presented a proclamation for Flood Awareness Week. The City proclaims March 3, 2025 to March 9, 2025, as Flood Awareness Week. Mr. Lanier discussed bringing awareness to flooding and flooding issues, and invited everyone to visit the City of Ocala's website for find information on what to do to prepare for the upcoming hurricane season. He also recognized Stormwater Operations for their storm preparation and role in flood prevention.

5. Presentations

5a. Public Information Officer, Gregory Davis - Communications Update

Public Information Officer Gregory presented a quarterly communications update. He provided a brief overview of earned media, social media platforms, top performing posts, and event coverage. Social Media has been cut down, the content of "Who? What? And Why?" is the goal of social media posts to be more strategic to promote more engagement. To note, the annual OTrak Chalk Walk Facebook post is considered a top performing reaction post, with over 794 Facebook likes.

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.

Rodney Long, 1712 NE Waldo Road, Gainesville, FL, spoke in support of item 6(d).

Loretta Whitfield Jenkins, wife of Whitfield Jenkins, spoke in support of naming the street after Mr. Jenkins and thanked Council for the consideration, as it is deserving.

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

RESULT: APPROVED THE CONSENT AGENDA

MOVER: James P. Hilty Sr

SECONDER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

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

EXCUSED: Musleh

- 6a. Approve an amendment to the Ocala Fiber Network consulting agreement with Uptown Services, LLC for additional implementation and support services totaling \$89,000
- 6b. Adopt Budget Resolution 2025-134 amending the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget to accept and appropriate funds from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement for the School Security Assessment Grant Program in the amount of \$3,956
- 6c. Approve the appointment of Dennis P. McFatten to the West Ocala Redevelopment Advisory Committee for an unexpired term ending March 1, 2028
- 6d. Honorary street name designation of “Whitfield Jenkins Road” for NW 24th Road from NW 20th Street to NW 21st Avenue
- 6e. Approve minutes from February 18, 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

(Second and Final Reading - March 18, 2025)

- 8a. Introduce Ordinance 2025-18 to change the Future Land Use designation on approximately 12.81 acres for property located at 3001 NE 21st Street (Parcel 24264-001-04) and the parcel directly to the east (Parcel 24264-000-00) from Employment Center to Public (Case LUC25-0002) (Quasi-Judicial)

Introduced By: Barry Mansfield

- 8b. Introduce Ordinance 2025-19 to rezone approximately 12.81 acres for the property located at 3001 NE 21st Street (Parcel 24262-001-04) and the parcel directly to the east (Parcel 24264-000-00) from M-1, Light Industrial, to G-U, Governmental Use (Case ZON25-0002) (Quasi-Judicial)

Introduced By: James P. Hilty Sr

- 8c. Introduce Ordinance 2025-20 to change the Future Land Use designation on approximately 12.42 acres for property located in the 1800 block of SW 15th Avenue (Parcel 23656-017-00 and 23656-017-16) from Employment to Public (Case LUC25-0001) (Quasi-Judicial)

Introduced By: Ire J. Bethea Sr

- 8d. Introduce Ordinance 2025-21 to rezone approximately 12.42 acres for property located in the 1800 block of SW 15th Avenue (Parcel 23656-017-00 and 23656-017-16) from M-1, Light Industrial (City) to G-U, Governmental Use (City) (Case ZON25-0001) (Quasi-Judicial)

Introduced By: James P. Hilty Sr

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

10. General Business

- 10a.** Approve agreement with Platform Group, LLC for design-build services for the Ocala Skate Park Expansion Project in the amount of \$884,561, plus a 10 percent contingency amount of \$88,457, for a total expenditure of \$973,018

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, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Musleh

- 10b.** Adopt Budget Resolution 2025-135, amending the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget to transfer funds from the General Fund Reserve for Projects account to increase available funding for the Ocala Skate Park expansion project in the amount of \$473,018

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, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Musleh

- 10c.** Approve Amendment No.1 to modify the Consumer Price Index language of the five-year agreement with A.C.M.S., Inc. d/b/a Heart of Florida Environmental for the disposal of City wastewater treatment plant biosolids

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, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Musleh

- 10d.** Approve additional expenditures under the agreement with Art Walker Construction, Inc. for lime sludge hauling services at Water Treatment Plant No. 1 with an increased aggregate expenditure amount of \$416,700

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, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Musleh

- 10e.** Approve Interlocal Agreement with Marion County for the SW 40th/49th Avenue Improvements Project in the amount of \$2,195,281 plus a 10 percent contingency amount of \$219,528 for a total project cost not to exceed \$2,414,809

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, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Musleh

- 10f.** Approve continued use of the State of Florida's alternative source agreement with Motorola Solutions, Inc. for citywide purchases of radio equipment and consumables with an increased estimated aggregate contract value of \$207,782

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, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Musleh

- 10g.** Approve the purchase of flooring and installation services utilizing Omnia Partners' cooperative purchasing agreement with Engineered Floors, LLC with an aggregate expenditure of \$200,000

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, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Musleh

- 10h.** Approve the purchase of inventory items for Ocala Electric Utility from multiple vendors in an amount not to exceed \$1,218,980

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, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Musleh

- 10i.** Approve award of a three-year contract to Solo Cats Services, LLC for stormwater ground maintenance services for the City's southwest section in the amount of \$420,504

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, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Musleh

- 10j.** Approve re-award of the contract for street sweeping services to Shosha Services, LLC with an expenditure of \$296,550

John Sapp, Grandview Landscaping, 4810 NW 27th Avenue, questioned why the City terminated their contract on February 14, 2025.

Procurement & Contracting Officer Daphne Robinson clarified the breach of contract by Grandview Landscaping which led to the City terminating the contract. She noted multiple failures of service over a nine-month term, which are all documented within the packet. She outlined the timeline on how the company had been notified of the decision through email on February 14, 2025, and physical mail sent on February 18, 2025 and delivered to the PO Box on February 20, 2025, noting the physical letter has yet to be picked up from Grandview's PO Box according to USPS records. She confirmed to Council President Dreyer the City complied with the provisions of the contract.

Council Member Mansfield suggested the City issue a final demand notice and commented he feels that the City should have given Grandview Landscaping an opportunity to cure.

There being no further 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, and Dreyer

NAY: Mansfield

ABSENT: Musleh

11. Internal Auditor's Report

- **Audit reporting transparency**

Council Member Hilty explained some local constituents requested better transparency

on the City's audit reports, and he has worked with Auditor Randall Bridgeman to ensure the audit reports are available to the public on the City website. The City remedied the ADA compliance issues regarding audit reports on the website.

Mr. Bridgeman noted another constituent request involved following up on performance on some contracts, such as the hotel, Midtown and other locations where the City has transferred land. His office is developing a report for analytics, which he will present to Council members for their feedback to ensure they are tracking the information Council wants to see.

Council President Dreyer recognized City staff for being transparent with the public.

City Manager Pete Lee stated he thinks the City's website is transparent; it is very simple to find agenda items through the search feature. One of the City's objectives in the year coming is to make it even more intuitive for users.

12. City Manager's Report

- **Parking Garage #2 public meeting date to be determined**

City Manager Pete Lee reported the City is working on scheduling a public meeting to discuss the Parking Garage #2 project. To note, the City will notify the public of planned road closures for the development project.

- **Solid Waste workshop date to be determined**

City Manager Pete Lee reported the City is waiting for the providers to submit requested information before scheduling a Solid Waste workshop.

- **Annual Lineman Competition**

City Manager Pete Lee spoke on the successful Annual Lineman Competition, hosted by the City of Ocala. City Linesmen performed well in the popular competition, with multiple first, second and third place finishes.

13. Ocala Police Department Report

- **Overview of Crime and Traffic Stops**

Police Chief Mike Balken reported the department responded to twenty-six significant incidents during the past two weeks. The Police Departments efforts from February 17, 2025 to March 2, 2025: 238 arrests, 95 FIR, and 1069 traffic stops.

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 Three with 176 unit responses, and Fire Engine One with 110 unit responses.

- **Service calls update**

Fire Chief Clint Welborn reported on call type spotlights: motor vehicle accidents 84, structure fires 3, and community paramedicine/core 49, and 994 calls for service (4,287 calls-to-date).

- **Department Highlights**

Fire Chief Clint Welborn reported employees attended the Orlando Fire Conference and WPHS Career Fair. The Department hired four new firefighters.

Council President Dreyer requested an update on the status of the fire training facility.

City Manager Pete Lee stated the City has hired a consultant to design the fire training facility.

Assistant City Manager Ken Whitehead stated the City plans on moving forward with the fire training facility this year. The plan is to start building the roadway to prevent traffic impacts.

Mr. Welborn noted the department will provide an update on Station Eight at the next City Council meeting.

Mr. Whitehead noted the contractor has agreed to move forward with the Station Eight project on March 20, 2025.

15. City Attorney's Report

- 15a.** Approval of property transfer transaction - including (1) transfer of drainage retention area to B & W Land Holdings, LLC; (2) reservation of drainage easement; and (3) grant of drainage easement - by Special Warranty Deed, Reservation of Drainage Easement, and Grant of Drainage Easement together with authorization for Council President to execute the same

City Attorney Sexton discussed the approval of a property transfer transaction with B & W Land Holdings, LLC. He provided a brief overview of the City's position on the transaction. He requested City Council approve the property transfer.

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, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Musleh

16. Public Comments

- **Lourene Ek, 5907 SW 59th Street, thanked City Council and City employees for their service**

17. Informational Items and Calendaring Items

- 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
- Tuesday, April 1, 2025 - 4:00pm - City Council meeting - Council Chambers
- Thursday, April 10, 2025 - 8:30am to 3:00pm - City Council Annual Strategic Planning Session - Reilly Arts Center
- Tuesday, April 15, 2025 - 3:45pm - CRA Board meeting - Council Chambers
- Tuesday, April 15, 2025 - 4:00pm - City Council meeting - Council Chambers

17a. Power Cost Adjustment Report - January 2025

17b. Informational item regarding the emergency purchase of two 500kW mobile generators from Cummins in the amount of \$594,416

17c. Executed Contracts Under \$50,000

18. Comments by Mayor

- **Acknowledgement of Kut Different Members**

Mayor Marciano recognized Kut Different Members for attending tonight's meeting.

Mayor Marciano commented on the success of the Linesman Competition.

Healthy Ocala

Mayor Marciano reported the City launched the Healthy Ocala website. Website traffic during a two-week period: 874 site visits, 88 behavioral health resources visits, 28 substance abuse resources visits, and 26 family youth resources visits. Furthermore, medical professionals are utilizing the website as a resource.

19. Comments by City Council Members

- **Council Member Mansfield commented on the following: Hillcrest School, parking garage #2, and public complaints**

Council Member Mansfield encouraged Council to visit Hillcrest School. He also requested the City take into consideration the size of trucks when designing Parking Garage #2, and address complaints from the public regarding vendor conduit installations Downtown.

City Engineer & Director of Water Resources Sean Lanier confirmed the parking garage design will accommodate large vehicles. As to the conduit installation issues, he noted there are State and Federal laws that allow the companies to install along the right of way. The City is working on modifying the ROW (Right of Way) permit process to address complaints related to vendor conduit installations, such as establishing an ordinance and requiring subcontractors to be listed. Vendors must submit an MOT Plan for road closures.

Council President Dreyer spoke on the public safety issue of vendors closing roads. She requested the City evaluate the enforcement of permits and liability for vendors.

Council Member Hilty commented on the following: Hillcrest School, successful Lineman Competition, and Parks & Recreations Department

Council Member Hilty recognized Hillcrest School for their community support efforts and City employees for successfully competing in the Lineman Competition. He recognized the Parks & Recreations Department for their community support efforts.

Council President Dreyer recognized City staff for their hard work competing in the Lineman Competition at WEC

Council President Dreyer recognized City staff for their hard work competing in the Lineman Competition at WEC. The City took home several second place prizes, and the public would like the event to continue to be held in Ocala, FL.

Council Member Bethea commented on the following: Lineman Competition, Strawberry Festival, and Ms. Ek's comments

Council Member Bethea shared his wonderful experience attending the Lineman Competition at WEC and Strawberry Festival. Furthermore, he thanked Ms. Ek for her comments at tonight's meeting.

20. Adjournment

Adjourned at 5:16 pm

Minutes

Kristen M. Dreyer
Council President

Angel B. Jacobs
City Clerk