



Ocala

City Council

Minutes

110 SE Watula Avenue
Ocala, FL 34471

www.ocalafl.gov

Tuesday, June 17, 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 Jay A. Musleh
Council President Kristen M. Dreyer

Excused: Council Member Barry Mansfield

2a. New Employees

- Rebecca Bleschke, Customer Service Office
- Jazmine Early, Customer Service Office
- Clay Surdam, Electric
- Walter Norris, Electric

3. Public Notice

- **Public Notice for the June 17, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting was posted on May 16, 2025**

4. Proclamations and Awards

4a. Presentation of the Mayor's Citizen Recognition Award to Larry and Darnitha Johnson

Mayor Marciano presented the Mayor's Citizen Recognition Award to Larry and Darnitha Johnson in appreciation for their community efforts against gun and domestic violence.

4b. Presentation of the Faith and Family Proclamation to Louine Ek

Mayor Marciano presented a proclamation for Faith and Family Month. The City proclaims the month of June 2025, as Faith and Family Month. Ms. Ek thanked the Mayor for the proclamation. Dave Armstrong spoke on the importance of faith and family.

4c. Service Award - Elissa Hughes-King - Ocala Police Department - 15 Years of Service

Mayor Marciano and City Manager Pete Lee presented a service award to Elissa Hughes King in appreciation of her 15 years of service to the City of Ocala.

4d. Service Award - Detective Mathew Steckman - Ocala Police Department - 20 Years of

Service

Mayor Marciano and City Manager Pete Lee presented a service award to Detective Mathew Steckman in appreciation of his 20 years of service to the City of Ocala.

5. Presentations

5a. 2025 Citizens Academy Graduation

Public Information Officer Greg Davis discussed the 2025 Citizens Academy program and introduced the new Public Relations Specialist Misti Barrett.

Public Relations Specialist Misti Barrett shared her wonderful experience coordinating the 2025 Citizens Academy and recognized this year's graduates.

5b. Introduction of Ben Strasser and Candice Falk from InSite Real Estate Investment Properties, LLC

City Manager Pete Lee introduced Ben Strasser and Candice Falk from InSite Real Estate Investment Properties, LLC. The real estate company is proposing to develop 110-acres of land located at the Ocala Airport. The City is excited about the applicant's conceptual plan.

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, Musleh, and Dreyer

EXCUSED: Mansfield

6a. Approve the donation of surplus computer equipment to the College of Central Florida with a valuation of \$4,890

Presentation By: Christopher Ramos

6b. Approve the award of development opportunity, and an Affordable Housing Agreement, to Habitat for Humanity of Marion County, Inc., to construct and sell an affordable housing unit on surplus property in West Ocala identified as Parcel 2856-003-003

Presentation By: James Haynes

6c. Approve the award of development opportunity, and an Affordable Housing Agreement, to Habitat for Humanity of Marion County, Inc., to construct and sell an affordable housing unit on surplus property in West Ocala identified as Parcel 2497-005-005

Presentation By: James Haynes

- 6d.** Approve the City of Ocala’s Community Development Block Grant 2025 Annual Action Plan for submission to the Department of Housing and Urban Development
Presentation By: James Haynes
- 6e.** Approve a one-year agreement with Lutheran Services Florida, Inc. Health Systems for an Ocala Police Department chaplain position in the amount of \$99,694
Presentation By: Michael Balken
- 6f.** Adopt Budget Resolution 2025-159 amending the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget to accept and appropriate Chaplain Program grant funds from Lutheran Services Florida Health Systems for a full-time Police Chaplain in the amount of \$99,694
Presentation By: Michael Balken
- 6g.** Adopt Budget Resolution 2025-160 amending the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget to accept and appropriate additional grant funds from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement for online sting operations in the amount of \$4,585
Presentation By: Michael Balken
- 6h.** Adopt Budget Resolution 2025-161 amending the Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget to accept and appropriate a community donation for K-9-related expenses totaling \$1,000
Presentation By: Michael Balken
- 6i.** Approve the appointment of Bradford Harper to the Downtown Ocala CRA Advisory Committee for an expired term ending March 1, 2029
Presentation By: Roberto Ellis
- 6j.** Approve City Council minutes from June 3, 2025
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 - July 1, 2025)

- 8a.** Introduce Ordinance 2025-32 to amend the boundaries of the Ridge at Heath Brook Community Development District generally located southeast of SW Highway 200 (College Road) and west of I-75 by adding approximately 29.142 acres to increase the size of the Community Development District to approximately 104.938 acres (Case No. CDD25-0001) (Quasi-Judicial)

Introduced By: Jay A. Musleh

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

NOTE: Items 9c and 9d will be considered at 5:00 pm or shortly thereafter.

The City Clerk filed proof of publication for Ordinances 2025-25 through 2025-30 (Legal Ad June 6, 2025 - Notice ID AaSK2zn0y6Gh2qwutcl1). The City Clerk read the ordinance titles into the record.

- 9a.** Open a public hearing to review and receive comments concerning SunTran’s proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2022 Section 5339(a) Bus and Bus Facilities grant funding from the Federal Transit Administration in the amount of \$289,188

Presentation By: Tom Duncan

Council President Dreyer opened the public hearing at 4:26 pm.

Transit Administrator Tom Duncan discussed SunTran’s proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2022. The City will combine the remaining grant fundings (\$289,188) from the SunTran budget with the surplus grant funds (\$300,000) received from the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust Fund, to purchase a standby generator for the electric vehicle fleet. Currently, no action is required by City Council.

No public comment.

- 9b.** Adopt Ordinance 2025-25, repealing Sec. 70-371., Code of Ordinances, City of Ocala, Florida, requiring fluoridation of the municipal potable water supply

Presentation By: Sean Lanier

Introduced By: Ire J. Bethea Sr

City Engineer & Director of Water Resources Sean Lanier discussed the adoption of Ordinance 2025-25. The City is requesting to repeal Section 70-371, to comply with the state statute, Senate Bill 700, which prohibits the fluoridation of public water supply; staff recommends approval.

Jason Colchiski, 4434 NE 29th Street, spoke in support of prohibiting the fluoridation of public water supply.

Council Member Musleh spoke in opposition of amending the ordinance to remove fluoridation.

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

RESULT: ADOPTED

MOVER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

SECONDER: James P. Hilty Sr

AYE: Bethea Sr, Hilty Sr, and Dreyer

NAY: Musleh

ABSENT: Mansfield

- 9e.** Adopt Ordinance 2025-28 to rezone from B-2, Community Business, to B-4, General Business for property located at 2206 SW 10th Road (Parcel 23536-000-00), approximately 0.53 acres. (Case ZON25-0005) (Quasi-Judicial)

Presentation By: Endira Madraveren

Introduced By: Jay A. Musleh

Chief Planning Official Endira Madraveren discussed the adoption of Ordinance 2025-28. The applicant requested to rezone the subject property located at 2206 SW 10th Road, from B-2 (Community Business) to B-4 (General Business). She provided a brief overview of the property's 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.

RESULT: ADOPTED

MOVER: Jay A. Musleh

SECONDER: James P. Hilty Sr

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

ABSENT: Mansfield

- 9f.** Request to postpone to the July 1, 2025 City Council meeting - Adopt Resolution 2025-29 to abrogate a portion of NE 47th Court between Block I, Lot 2 and Block F, Lot 17 of Glynnwood Unit 1 as recorded in Plat Book G, Page 91, of the public records of Marion County, Florida (Parcels 2735-0006-017 & 2735-009-002) (Case ABR23-45418) (Quasi-Judicial)

Presentation By: Jeff Shrum

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

RESULT: POSTPONED

MOVER: Jay A. Musleh

SECONDER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

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

ABSENT: Mansfield

- 9g.** Request to postpone to the July 1, 2025 City Council meeting - Adopt Ordinance 2025-29 to change the Future Land Use designation on approximately 0.78 acres for property located in the 1900 block of NE 49th Avenue (Parcels 2735-006-017 and 2735-009-002) from Neighborhood to Low Intensity (Case LUC23-45427) (Quasi-Judicial)

Presentation By: Jeff Shrum

Introduced By: Ire J. Bethea Sr

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

RESULT: POSTPONED

MOVER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

SECONDER: Jay A. Musleh

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

ABSENT: Mansfield

- 9h.** Request to postpone to the July 1, 2025 City Council meeting - Adopt Ordinance 2025-30 to rezone approximately 6.83 acres for property located at the southwestern corner of the intersection at NE 49th Avenue and E Silver Springs Boulevard (Parcel 2735-000-002, 2735-009-001, 2735-009-002, 2735-006-017, and a portion of parcel 27028-004-03) from PD, Planned Development, R-1, Single-Family Residential, & B-2, Community Business, to PD, Planned Development (Case PD23-45431) (Quasi-Judicial)

Presentation By: Jeff Shrum

Introduced By: James P. Hilty Sr

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

RESULT: POSTPONED

MOVER: James P. Hilty Sr

SECONDER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

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

ABSENT: Mansfield

- 9i.** Request to postpone to the July 1, 2025 City Council meeting - Adopt Ordinance 2025-31 to rezone approximately 0.59 acres for property located at the southwestern corner of the intersection at NE 49th Avenue and E Silver Springs Boulevard (a portion of 2735-000-002) from PD, Planned Development, to B-2, Community Business (Case ZON23-45419) (Quasi-Judicial)

Presentation By: Jeff Shrum

Introduced By: Barry Mansfield

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

RESULT: POSTPONED

MOVER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

SECONDER: James P. Hilty Sr

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

ABSENT: Mansfield

- 9j.** Request to postpone to the July 1, 2025 City Council meeting - Adopt Resolution 2025-30 to approve a resolution for a Planned Development Plan and Standards Book for property located at the southwestern corner of the intersection at NE 49th Avenue and E Silver Springs Boulevard (Parcel 2735-000-002, 2735-009-001, 2735-009-002, 2735-006-017, and a portion of parcel 27028-004-03), approximately 6.83 acres (Case No. PD23-45431) (Quasi-Judicial)

Presentation By: Jeff Shrum

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

RESULT: POSTPONED

MOVER: James P. Hilty Sr

SECONDER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

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

ABSENT: Mansfield

10. General Business

NOTE: Item 10a will be considered at 5:00 pm or shortly thereafter.

- 10b.** Approve first amendment to contract with Polydyne, Inc. for liquid polymer supply and delivery services at Water Treatment Plant No. 1, Water Reclamation Facility No. 2, and Water Reclamation Facility No. 3 with an estimated aggregate expenditure of \$250,000

Presentation By: Sean Lanier

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, Musleh, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Mansfield

- 10c.** Approve award of a two-year contract to Sherman Mechanical Contractors for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning repairs and installations as needed with an estimated aggregate expenditure of \$150,000

Presentation By: Gary Crews

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, Musleh, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Mansfield

- 10d.** Approve the purchase of inventory items for Ocala Electric Utility from multiple vendors in the amount of \$260,724

Presentation By: Chad Lynch

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

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

SECONDER: Jay A. Musleh

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

ABSENT: Mansfield

- 10e.** Approve Amendment 2 to Traffic Signal Maintenance and Compensation Agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation for reimbursement to the City of Ocala in

the amount of \$524,949

Presentation By: Darren Park

Director of Public Works Darren Park confirmed the agreement represents one year of maintenance. He noted maintenance will fluctuate annually based on City needs.

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, Musleh, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Mansfield

10f. Approve proposed Policy Statement for Roll-Off Compactor Solid Waste Collection Services

Ralph Demeo, Attorney, Guilday Law Firm, 10010 Survey Farms, Tallahassee, FL, stated he is representing Florida Express Waste & Recycling. He requested Council consider amending the ordinances to waive the annual permit requirement.

Council Member Hilty expressed concern the City is taking business from private haulers.

City Manager Lee spoke on the purpose of the proposed policy. He assured Council the City is not impacting private haulers. The impetus of this policy update was the purchase of roll-off compactors to ensure adequate coverage of Downtown trash collection; it is the City's responsibility by ordinance to handle trash collection within the City Limits including apartment complexes. He discussed the conflicts that arose when an apartment complex used a roll-off compactor contrary to the approved-upon site plan design that included dumpsters.

Council Member Hilty stated the proposed policy impedes growth of private companies. He requested the City grant a 10-year permit deferral for private companies.

Mr. Lee responded he is not in favor of waiving the permit fees for private companies; the annual permits inform the City of who is collecting waste for the property owner, as well as allow the City a mechanism for dispute resolution. He advised Council the property owner has the right to change private haulers.

City Attorney Sexton spoke on the importance of requiring annual permits for private companies. He explained the permit is issued in the name of the property owner.

Mr. Demeo favors waiving the permit fee for 10 years. He suggested an alternative of 10-year permits rather than requiring annual renewals.

Mayor Marciano favors Council Member Hilty's recommendation.

Council Members Bethea and Musleh support the City's proposed policy. Pro Tem Bethea commented he would be in support of removing the \$20 fee associated with the permit and extending the length of the permit's term.

President Dreyer spoke in support of removing the permit fee.

City Council agreed to amend the fee schedule to remove the permit fee.

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

RESULT: APPROVED

MOVER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

SECONDER: Jay A. Musleh

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

ABSENT: Mansfield

- 9c.** Adopt Ordinance 2025-26 concerning Chapter 70 of the Code of Ordinances to amend Sections/Subsections 70-301(d)(4), 70-321(b), 70-391, 70-411(a), 70-413, 70-414, 70-417(b) and (c), and adding Sections/Subsections 70-301(d)(5), 70-418 and 70-419

Presentation By: Sean Lanier

Introduced By: James P. Hilty Sr

City Engineer & Director of Water Resources Sean Lanier discussed the adoption of Ordinance 2025-26. On January 16, 2024, staff engaged Raftelis consultants to perform a new rate study and review miscellaneous charges.

Murray Hamilton, Project Manager, Raftelis, discussed the utility rate and system development study. The objective of the rate and fee study focused on equity and ensuring there is an appropriate balance for the various customers and users of the City's water and wastewater system while balancing the budget within the five-year forecast. Raftelis assisted staff in updating the existing fee levels as well as modernizing the current fee schedule. They developed a cost accounting workbook and assisted City staff to compile the labor materials and supply costs for various services not currently associated with a fee schedule, such as wastewater compliance monitoring for large industrial customers. He reviewed changes to some miscellaneous charges, which are primarily driven by new development and the rising costs of service and materials.

No public comment.

There being no further 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, Musleh, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Mansfield

- 9d.** Open a public hearing to consider the adoption of Ordinance 2025-27, adjusting the water and sewer impact fees under Chapter 70, Article V, Division 2, Section 70-502, Code of Ordinances, City of Ocala, Florida

Presentation By: Sean Lanier

Introduced By: Barry Mansfield

Council President Dreyer opened the public hearing.

City Engineer & Director of Water Resources Sean Lanier discussed the adoption of Ordinance 2025-27. The existing impact fees have been in effect since May 1, 2021, and the City engaged Raftelis consultants to evaluate the existing impact fees.

Murray Hamilton, Project Manager, Raftelis, discussed the proposed impact fees. He provided a brief overview of the following: objectives, impact fee criteria, cost methodology/fee calculation, and proposed development/impact fees. He stated the proposed impact fees are based on the current assets as well as the capacity additions to be funded over the next five-year period including the expansion and construction of Water Treatment Plant No. 2. He noted there is a maximum increase of 50% under Florida Statutes, and highlighted that Ocala is in the middle of the peer group in terms of fees.

No public comment.

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

RESULT: ADOPTED

MOVER: Ire J. Bethea Sr

SECONDER: James P. Hilty Sr

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

ABSENT: Mansfield

- 10a.** Adopt Resolution 2025-31 concerning a new sewage rate schedule pursuant to section 70-301, City Code, a new water rate schedule pursuant to section 70-416, City Code, and new reclaimed water service fees and connection fees pursuant to section 70-358, City Code, effective October 1, 2025

Presentation By: Sean Lanier

Murray Hamilton, Project Manager, Raftelis, discussed the proposed rate schedule. The results of the rate study looked at the fact that the utility system has been significantly impacted by rate of inflation on operating expenses as well as capital requirements. He noted commercial customers are currently paying 17% less than the system average and suggests a five-year plan to correct that cost of service over time. The proposed action in

front of City Council is to consider implementing the proposed commercial realignment to overall cost of service, and the proposed water and wastewater rates through Fiscal Year 2029, which would include 5% annual rate adjustments over the next four-years.

He requested Council consider adopting an annual index provision of no less than 4% beginning in Fiscal year 2030, based on the water and sewer maintenance service index. The increase for an average residential customer would be between \$4 and \$5 per month.

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, Musleh, and Dreyer

ABSENT: Mansfield

11. Internal Auditor's Report

12. City Manager's Report

- **Commercial and residential comprehensive fees**

City Manager Pete Lee reported the draft commercial/residential comprehensive fees will be presented at the next meeting.

- **Police Department recognition**

City Manager Pete Lee recognized the Police Department for successfully managing peaceful protests throughout the City.

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, June 2, 2025 to June 15, 2025: 40 significant crimes, 246 arrests, 120 FIRs, and 1,344 traffic stops.

- **Department Highlights**

The Police Department lead a successful Internet Crimes against Children Operation, which resulted in the arrest of twenty pedophiles. Furthermore, the department hosted a Hoops & Badges Basketball Tournament on June 13, 2025, and nineteen participants recently graduated from the Summer Youth Academy. He clarified the Spring/Fall mentorship programs available to the youth.

14. Ocala Fire Rescue Department Report

- **Unit Responses**

Fire Chief Clint Welborn reported on unit responses for a two-week period, June 3, 2025 to June 16, 2025. The two busiest units: Fire Rescue Four (164-unit responses) and Fire

Engine Four (118-unit responses).

- **Service calls update**

Fire Chief Clint Welborn reported on call type spotlights for a two-week period, June 3, 2025 to June 16, 2025: motor vehicle accidents 69, structure fires 3, and community paramedicine/core 41, and 978 calls for service (11,544 calls-to-date).

- **Department Highlights**

Fire Chief Clint Welborn provided a brief update on the Mentorship Program. Furthermore, he invited the public to attend the PTSD Awareness Walk on Friday, June 27, 2025.

15. City Attorney's Report

16. Public Comments

- **Sharma Robinson, 621 SW 7th Street, unit 301, expressed concern regarding Suntran's operations in the City**

Sharma Robinson, 621 SW 7th Street, unit 301, expressed concern regarding Suntran's operations in the City. She claimed the hired drivers are biased towards people of color. She requested Council act immediately to address the matter for the public.

17. Informational Items and Calendaring Items

- Thursday, June 19, 2025 - Juneteenth Day Holiday - City Offices closed
- Monday, June 23, 2025 - 3:00pm - TPO meeting - Marion County Public Library
- Tuesday, July 1, 2025 - 4:00pm - City Council meeting - Council Chambers
- Friday, July 4, 2025 - Independence Day Holiday - City Offices closed
- Tuesday, July 15, 2025 - 3:45pm - CRA Board meeting - Council Chambers
- Tuesday, July 15, 2025 - 4:00pm - City Council meeting - Council Chambers
- Tuesday, August 5, 2025 - 4:00pm - City Council meeting - Council Chambers
- Tuesday, August 12, 2025 - 12:00pm - City Council Workshop Re: FY 2025-26 Budget - Council Chambers
- Tuesday, August 19, 2025 - 3:45pm - CRA Board meeting - Council Chambers
- Tuesday, August 19, 2025 - 4:00pm - City Council meeting - Council Chambers

17a. Moved to 10f.

17b. Informational item regarding the emergency payment of the price difference for offloading and field service for transformer unit in the amount of \$47,000.

17c. Local Mitigation Strategy 2024 Annual Report

18. Comments by Mayor

- **Hoops & Badges Basketball Tournament**

Mayor Marciano shared his wonderful experience attending the Hoops & Badges Basketball Tournament.

- **Successful protests in the City**

Mayor Marciano recognized the Police Department for successfully managing peaceful protests throughout the City.

19. Comments by City Council Members

- **Council Member Hilty requested information regarding fees for public record requests**

Council Member Hilty requested information regarding fees for public record requests.

City Manager Peter Lee clarified the fees associated with large public record requests.

City Clerk Angel Jacobs noted the Police Department Records Department has its own fee schedule for public record requests. The policy for the City Clerk's Office is if the request costs the City more than \$5, the requester will be charged for the time and materials required to handle the request. State statute allows the City to charge 15 cents per page.

City Attorney Sexton confirmed the City is required to provide the records in the format in which they exist. He explained how fees are applied to public record requests.

Ms. Jacobs confirmed the Clerk's Office policy is a combination of state statute and office policy. She would not charge for someone requesting an electronic copy of a 1,500-page Council agenda to be emailed; she would charge if the requester asked for a physical copy of the packet.

- **Council Member Bethea requested Pete Lee, City Manager, investigate the Suntran complaint**

20. Adjournment

- **Adjourned at 5:48 pm**

Minutes

Barry Mansfield
Council President

Angel B. Jacobs
City Clerk