TAVARES CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 4, 2023 – 4:00 PM
TAVARES CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
201 EAST MAIN STREET, TAVARES

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Walter Price, Mayor
Sandy Gamble, Vice Mayor
Bob Grenier, Council Member
Lori Pfister, Council Member
Troy Singer, Council Member

STAFF PRESENT

John Drury, City Administrator
Lindsay Holt, City Attorney
Susie Novack, City Clerk
Antonio Fabre, Interim Community Development Director
Scott Aldrich, Community Services Director
Bob Tweedie, Economic Development Director
Lori Houghton, Finance Director
Richard Keith, Fire Chief
Crissy Bublitz, Human Resources Director
James Dillon, Public Works Director
Mark O'Keefe, Public Communications Director
Sarah Coursey, Police Chief
Phil Clark, Utilities Director

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Price called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. He asked those who wished to speak on an agenda item to complete and submit a Request to Speak form.

II. INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Tab 1. Phil Clark, Utilities Director

Phil Clark, Utilities Directors, provided the invocation and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Price asked if there were any changes to the Agenda. Mr. Drury said Staff had no changes.

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to approve the Agenda, seconded by Bob Grenier. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

IV. PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

V. SWEARING IN BY CITY ATTORNEY AND DISCLOSURE OF EXPARTE COMMUNICATIONS

Attorney Holt stated there were no quasi-judicial matters before the Council.

VI. READING OF ALL ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS INTO THE RECORD

Ms. Novack read the following Ordinances and Resolutions by title only:

RESOLUTION 2023-13

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, GRANTING A VARIANCE TO THE CITY OF TAVARES LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, TABLE 8-3, DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS, FOR A MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF 65' ON AN RMF-3 ZONING DISTRICT FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF MT HOMER ROAD AND EAST BURLEIGH BOULEVARD; SUBJECT TO THE RULES, REGULATIONS AND OBLIGATIONS ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TAVARES COUNCIL; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

RESOLUTION 2023-14

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, APPROVING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW A PARKING LOT LOCATED AT 313 DORA AVENUE; SUBJECT TO THE RULES, REGULATIONS AND OBLIGATIONS ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TAVARES COUNCIL; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

RESOLUTION 2023-21

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, RELATING TO THE STATE REVOLVING FUND LOAN PROGRAM; MAKING FINDINGS; AUTHORIZING SRF LOAN 350981 FOR CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES FOR THE LAKE HERMOSA REGION BOOSTER PUMP STATION AND WATER TREATMENT PLANT EXPANSION PROJECT; AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE THE LOAN; DESIGNATING AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES; PROVIDING ASSURANCE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS, SEVERABILITY, AND EFFECTIVE DATE.

ORDINANCE 2023-11

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 17-54, 17-55, 17-56, AND SECTION 17-75 PROVIDING FOR UPDATES TO WATER, WASTEWATER, RECLAIMED WATER, AND STORMWATER RATE SCHEDULES BASED ON A COMPREHENSIVE RATE STUDY RECOMMENDATION BY RAFTELIS, RATE CONSULTANTS; PROVIDING FOR RATE ADJUSTMENTS THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2028, AND PROVIDING FOR AUTOMATIC RATE INCREASES OF CPI PLUS 1% TO RESUME AS OF OCTOBER 1, 2028; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Price asked if anyone wished to pull an item from the Consent Agenda for discussion.

MOTION

Troy Singer moved to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Sandy Gamble. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 2. Approval of the September 20, 2023, City Council Meeting and Budget Hearing Minutes

Approved on the Consent Agenda.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS

Tab 3. Resolution 2023-13 – Variance – Tavares Manor Apartments

Mr. Fabre provided the following presentation:

On July 20, 2022, the City Council approved the annexation, rezoning (Ord. 2022-06) and future land use map amendment (Ord. 2022-07). Approval of subsequent actions allows the applicant to submit a development plan in accordance with the provisions of the City's Land Development Regulations. At this time, the applicant has submitted a variance request for an increase in height *from the permitted maximum height of 50' to a maximum height of 65' for the proposed Tavares Manor Apartments development.*

The subject property is approximately 19.81 acres located at the northwest corner of Mt. Homer Rd. and East Burleigh Blvd. The applicant is proposing to construct seven (7) four-story buildings instead of the originally envisioned ten (10) three-story buildings. The proposed buildings will consist of forty-eight (48) units each, totaling 336 residential apartments, together with recreational amenities including a clubhouse and swimming pool. The concept plan and building concept elevations are attached for your review and consideration.

This property is in close proximity to a mixture of institutional, multi-family, and commercial uses all exhibiting a mixture of maximum heights. The adjacent AdventHealth Waterman Hospital PD allows for a seven-story structure with a maximum height of 100'. The adjacent two-story (provided height of 48') Pinecrest Chatter School is part of the Avalon Park Tavares PD. The Avalon Park PD allows for mixtures of maximum heights including four-story townhomes and a maximum height of 100' for non-residential. Across the highway on East Burleigh Blvd, is the Lakeview Center PD, which allows a maximum height of 65' which includes an existing five-story hotel (Comfort Inn & Suites). Therefore, it is the staff's opinion that the height variance request is compatible and appropriate for the proposed development.

On September 21, 2023, the Planning & Zoning Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of Resolution 2023-13 as presented.

Staff recommends that the City Council moves to approve Resolution 2023-13, a variance allowing for a maximum height of 65' for the Tavares Manor Apartment development.

<u>Brandon Rosser, Applicant, 4100 W. Kennedy Boulevard, Suite 213, Tampa</u>, provided a PowerPoint presentation and said moving the project from 3-story buildings to 4-story buildings was due to local feedback and area demographics. He noted moving to 4-stories would require elevators in each building, making each unit fully accessible to all residents, which was more appealing with scenic views. Mr. Rosser said going from 10 to 7 buildings would increase green space, allowing for a larger pool, recreation area, pickleball courts, and dog parks.

Mayor Price asked for comments from the Council.

Vice Mayor Gamble inquired about changes to the building footprints. Mr. Rosser said the footprint would be larger for each building. He said there would be additional parking spaces.

Vice Mayor Gamble inquired about the Charter School traffic study. Mr. Fabre said the original traffic study would be updated to reflect any difference from the addition of 36 units. He said the City transportation planner would review the traffic study update letter to ensure no issues.

Vice Mayor Gamble asked if the project would be age-restricted. Mr. Rosser said no and that it was a market-value project with no affordability, section 8, or age restrictions.

Vice Mayor Gamble inquired about Lake County School Board approval for student capacity. Mr. Rosser said prior approval was obtained, and there would be a need to return to the School Board to ensure capacity for the additional units.

Vice Mayor Gamble inquired about the hospital helicopter pad. Mr. Rosser said Advent Health Waterman provided drawings of the flight path, indicating the direction was north of the project.

Council Member Pfister said she was happy with the design as it had more green space. She noted her support in going up rather than out.

Council Member Singer said he was glad to see more green space and asked if more amenities would be added. Mr. Rosser said the amenities may include pickleball courts and dog parks for large and small dogs. He said there may be more outdoor picnic areas. Mr. Rosser said no supporting buildings would be added. Council Member Singer noted his support for more community amenities and 10% more units as the City and Lake County needed more such housing.

Council Member Singer asked Chief Keith if the fire department vehicles could accommodate 4-story buildings. Chief Keith said Captain Willis was included in the planning process. He said 4-story structures would include sprinkler systems and stated the Tavares Fire Department was in support.

Council Member Singer said projects like this help pay for needed infrastructure in growing areas. He noted his support for the project.

Council Member Grenier said he supported the building's additional green space, location, and look. He noted his support for the project.

Mayor Price asked if the units would remain the same size as the original conceptual plan. Mr. Rosser confirmed.

Vice Mayor Gamble asked if the Lake Hermosa booster pump would enhance the project. Mr. Clark confirmed and said the booster pump would be needed.

<u>MOTION</u>

Lori Pfister moved to approve Resolution 2023-13, seconded by Bob Grenier. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 4. Resolution 2023-14 – Special Use Permit – Wheeler's Parking Lot

Mr. Fabre made the following presentation:

> *On June 19, 2019, the City Council approved the rezoning (Ordinance 2019-12) and future land use map amendment (Ordinance 2019-13) for the subject property in order to allow the applicant to submit a commercial development plan in accordance with the provisions of the City's Land Development Regulations. The envisioned commercial development never came to fruition. At this time, the applicant has submitted an application for a Special Use Permit to operate a Parking Lot at 313 Dora Avenue. The subject property is located west of Dora Avenue, north of Old US Hwy-441, and is approximately 1.23 acres in size. The property is owned by Mark & Kathy Wheeler, and is currently vacant with a single-family dwelling unit. The subject property is within the General Commercial (C-1) zoning district, which requires a Special Use Permit from City Council to allow a public parking lot.*
>
> *The property owner is proposing to provide a secured fenced area of the property to allow vehicles, boat trailers and RVs to park for rent or fee. The owner has included a Special Use Plan that has a list of conditions of approval which include installation of the required landscaping after approval of the Special Use Permit. The Special Use Plan is attached for your review and consideration. The property is contiguous to existing commercial (C-1) zoning, and is surrounded by a mixture of commercial, multi-family, and one single family property. It is staff's opinion that the proposed parking lot is an appropriate use of the property.*
>
> *On September 21, 2023, the Planning & Zoning Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of Resolution 2023-14 as presented.*
>
> *Staff recommends that the City Council moves to approve Resolution 2023-14, Special Use Permit for a Parking Lot located at 313 Dora Avenue, subject to the conditions outlined on the Special Use Plan.*

Mr. Fabre said the applicant and his representative was present and available for questions.

Mayor Price asked if the parking area would be paved, grass, or gravel.

Rick Hartenstein, Hartenstein Development and Land Use, LLC, said the lot would be grass parking.

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to approve Resolution 2023-14, seconded by Sandy Gamble.

Council Member Singer said Mr. Wheeler had been a great business leader in the community for decades and noted his support. He thanked Mr. Wheeler for all he had done in the City of Tavares. Mayor Price concurred.

The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

<u>Tab 5. Resolution 2023-21 – Council to Approve Award of SRF Construction Loan 350981 for Lake Hermosa/Avalon Booster Pump Project</u>

Ms. Houghton made the following presentation:

> *Previously, the City Council authorized acceptance of a State Revolving Loan for the design of the Lake Hermosa Booster Pump Project, SRF Loan DW350980. The loan document was executed on July 15, 2021. The disbursable amount of the loan is $247,416.*
>
> *A timeline summary of previously approved amendments for the design loan are as follows:*
>
> - *Amendment One (1) was executed on April 28, 2022 which provided for additional time for project completion.*
> - *Amendment Two (2) was executed on March 23, 2023 which provided for additional time for project completion, and changed the first loan repayment date to February 15, 2025.*
>
> *On February 28, 2023, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection provided notice to the City of Tavares that the City had been included on the funding list with FDEP for an SRF Loan for the Lake Hermosa Booster Pump Project.*
>
> *On April 19, 2023, the City Council discussed the Construction Phase of the Project, and authorized application to the FDEP for an SRF Construction Loan for the Lake Hermosa Booster Pump project, and the Water Treatment Plant Expansion.*
>
> *On June 21, 2023 the City Council adopted Resolution 2023-08, authorizing application to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for a State Revolving Loan for construction activities for the Lake Hermosa Booster Pump project. The anticipated loan funding to be awarded by FDEP for the project was $7,235,190 with $5,799,152 designated for loan repayment, and $1,447,038 designated for loan principal forgiveness for the project.*
>
> *The Florida Department of Environmental Protection has provided a Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Construction Loan Agreement, DW35081, to the City of Tavares for City Council for approval.*

SRF Loan Agreement DW350981 provides for financing for the Lake Hermosa Region Booster Pump Station with construction loan funding in the amount of $7,235,190 with $5,788,152 designated for loan repayment, and $1,447,038 designated for loan principal forgiveness. Details of the loan are as follows:

- *Construction and Demolition - $6,292,900*
- *Contingencies - $629,290*
- *Technical Services After Bid Opening - $313,000*
- *Disbursable Amount: $7,235,190*
- *Principal Forgiveness $1,447,038*
- *Loan Amount: $5,788,152*
- *Capitalized Interest $65,700*
- *Projected Completion is scheduled for October 15, 2025*
- *Monthly Loan Debt Service Account with Monthly Deposits to be established no later than October 15, 2025*
- *First Semiannual Loan Payment in the amount of $167,639 shall be due April 15, 2026*
- *Loan Interest Rate 1.11 per Annum*
- *Loan Term is 20 years*

Staff has reviewed the loan document and recommends approval of Option 1, for Council to approve Resolution No. 2023-21 which authorizes the Mayor to execute State Revolving Loan 350981with FDEP for Lake Hermosa Booster Pump Project Construction Funding.

Mayor Price asked for comments from the Council.

Council Member Singer said the loan interest rate at 1.11% was great and noted his support. Ms. Houghton noted connection fees for development in the area would help leverage the loan service payments.

Vice Mayor Gamble noted the Council previously approved other developments in the area and asked Mr. Clark what would result if the Council did not approve the loan. Mr. Clark said there would be no future hospital expansion or growth in the area.

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to approve Resolution 2023-21, seconded by Bob Grenier. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

IX. ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING

First Reading

Tab 6. Ordinance 2023-11 – Rate Study Ordinance – First Reading

No discussion at First Reading.

<u>Second Reading</u>

X. <u>GENERAL GOVERNMENT</u>

<u>Tab 7. Golden Triangle Regional Park – East Campus Project Update</u>

Mr. Aldrich made the following presentation:

> *In July of this year, the City of Tavares and Lake County entered into an Interlocal Agreement for park improvements at the Golden Triangle Regional Park – East Campus. Funding in the amount of $300,000 was provided by Lake County as an initial contribution to enhance and renovate the park for the benefit of all residents.*
>
> *Staff has been working in conjunction with Lake County and the Golden Triangle YMCA to schedule and complete immediate site improvements that enhance the park.*

Mr. Aldrich commended Stormwater/ROW Manager Jason Spann and ROW Assistant Supervisor Wendell Hunt on their efforts at the site.

> *To date, projects include:*
>
> - *New fencing around the basketball court (complete)*
> - *New fencing around the playground structure (complete)*
> - *New engineered playground mulch installed in the playground (complete)*
> - *Tree cleaning/clearing and pruning (complete)*
> - *Soccer field site improvements (scheduled for mid-October)*
> - *Irrigation improvements and landscaping (scheduled for mid-October)*
> - *Court resurfacing - creating three pickleball courts and two half-court basketball courts (scheduled for mid-October)*
> - *Parking lot sealcoat, paint, and striping (scheduled for early November)*
> - *Park signage (scheduled for early November)*

<u>Andy Weighill, Executive Director of the Golden Triangle YMCA</u>, provided a PowerPoint presentation and said the YMCA had a 75% uptick in new membership since improvements began. He said the City and YMCA had been discussing expanding and enhancing programs and services for the existing residents and members.

Mr. Drury thanked Council Member Pfister and Board of County Commissioner Smith. He said the City, YMCA, and Lake County partnership was considerable, and the project was significant for the community. He said the City looked forward to the County continuing to provide grants to grow the project.

Vice Mayor Gamble asked if fence or netting separated the courts. Mr. Aldrich said the courts included ten-foot-high fencing. He noted windscreens would be installed.

Council Member Singer thanked Mr. Aldrich and his Team. He thanked Lake County for the grant and continued partnership.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Drury said he received a request from Edd Holder to rename the Chris Daniels memorial fountain sign from Polly and Charles E Holder, II to Betha and Edd Holder. He said staff had no issues with the request.

MOTION

Bob Grenier moved to approve the name change request, seconded by Lori Pfister. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

XII. OLD BUSINESS

Council Member Pfister asked Mr. Dillon to provide an update on the America in Bloom Symposium held the previous weekend in Spartanburg, South Carolina.

Mr. Dillon said Staff would bring back a full update at a future meeting. He said the City of Tavares received three awards: The Coolest Downtown, First Place in the 20,000 to 25,000 population category, and Overall Impression. He thanked Council Members Pfister and Singer for attending the America in Bloom Symposium.

Mr. Drury asked Mr. Dillon if the City of Tavares was awarded as the Coolest Downtown in the United States. Mr. Dillon confirmed.

Council Member Grenier and Vice Mayor Gamble said they watched an excellent symposium presentation made by Parks Operation Manager Traci Anderson.

Council Member Pfister said she was proud to participate in the program. She commended Mr. Dillon, Ms. Anderson, and the Public Works Team. Council Member Pfister noted the City's branding was recognized by the conference attendees.

Council Member Singer said the Staff did a fantastic job, and the City was recognized nationally. He thanked Mr. Dillon and Ms. Anderson.

Mayor Price and Vice Mayor Gamble congratulated the City of Tavares and those who contributed to the America in Bloom program.

XIII. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

Vance Jochim 12619 Milwaukee Avenue, Lake County, discussed issues with a Pace Home Financing program that was presented during a recent Board of County Commission meeting.

XIV. REPORTS

Tab 8. City Administrator Report

Mr. Drury noted that the upcoming League of Cities luncheon was canceled as the 2023 Sponsor's Event would be held on the evening of October 13, 2023.

Mr. Tweedie noted the 5th Annual Roctoberfest was scheduled for October 14, 2023, and Boo Fest was scheduled for October 27, 2023. He provided an update on activities planned for the events.

Mr. Dillon said five buildings were erected at the new Public Works Facility in five days.

Chief Keith said the Station 29 Air Quality project was completed. He noted two buildings at the new WaWa location would be used for fire department training during the week. He said there would be no fires during the training event.
.
Ms. Houghton thanked the Council for issuing the Customer Service Week Proclamation at the previous Council meeting. She provided an update on activities for Customer Service Staff and customers.

Mr. Fabre said he was happy to be working for the coolest city in the nation.

Tab 9. City Council Member Reports

Council Member Grenier discussed changes in Tavares since 2006 when Council Member Pfister and Mr. Drury came on board. He said the changes were rewarding, and enthusiasm had not waned through the years. Council Member Grenier said he was proud to look back from 2006 to the present and being called the coolest downtown in America. He said it makes a historian like himself proud and able to gather wonderful stories for future generations.

Council Member Singer said he was looking forward to cool weather and cool downtown activities.

Vice Mayor Gamble said he and Mayor Price attended the Eustis Business Incubator Opening in partnership with the University of Central Florida and Lake County. The program helps and supports new businesses, and Lake County said they anticipate expansion throughout the county. He said he would like to see an incubator site in Tavares.

Vice Mayor Gamble reflected on comments made during recent 9/11 events and asked if the Fire Department and Police Department had the necessary equipment to maintain staff safety. He said Chief Keith indicated the City Administrator and Council provided the needed equipment.

Vice Mayor Gamble said he visited the new Public Works Facility. He said he was thankful to be a part of the joint venture with Lake County, Lake Technical College, and the State of Florida.

Mayor Price said he was looking forward to the upcoming fall events downtown.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business and Mayor Price adjourned the meeting at 5:09 p.m.

Respectfully,

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Susie Novack, MMC, FCRM
City Clerk