



**TAVARES CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 7, 2024 – 4:00 PM
TAVARES CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
201 EAST MAIN STREET, TAVARES**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

**Bob Grenier, Mayor
Sandy Gamble, Vice Mayor
Lori Pfister, Council Member
Walter Price, 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 Grenier 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.

Mayor Grenier stated there was no discussion on Ordinances at their first reading. Mr. Drury noted Ordinances 2024-01 and 2024-02 would be discussed at their second reading on February 21, 2024.

II. INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Tab 1. Joseph Richardson, Central Florida Freethought Community; Phil Clark, Utility Director

Joseph Richardson, Central Florida Freethought Community, and Phil Clark, Utilities Director, provided invocations. Mayor Grenier led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

MOTION

Walter Price moved to approve the Agenda, seconded by Troy Singer. 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 Resolutions and Ordinances by title only:

RESOLUTION 2024-01

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, TO VACATE A PORTION OF A 16.00-FOOT WIDE ALLEY RIGHT-OF-WAY LOCATED AT 120 N BLOXHAM AVENUE TAVARES, FL 32778, LYING EAST OF LOTS "A", "B", AND "C" IN BLOCK 52 OF TAVARES IMPROVEMENT COMPANY'S SUBDIVISION AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 4, PAGE 39, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA, SUBJECT TO THE RULES AND REGULATIONS ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TAVARES COUNCIL; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

RESOLUTION 2024-03

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE 2024 FISCAL YEAR ADOPTED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF TAVARES, REPRESENTING THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE ADOPTED BUDGET,

AND PROVIDING FOR A REPEALER, SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

ORDINANCE 2024-01

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA; REZONING APPROXIMATELY 19.46 ACRES OF LAND LOCATED AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE INTERSECTION OF STATE ROAD 19 AND LANE PARK CUTOFF FROM HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL (C-2) TO PLANNED DEVELOPMENT (PD); SUBJECT TO THE RULES, REGULATIONS AND OBLIGATIONS ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TAVARES COUNCIL; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

ORDINANCE 2024-02

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE TAVARES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP 2040, PROVIDING FOR A CHANGE OF FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATION ON APPROXIMATELY 19.46 ACRES OF LAND LOCATED AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE INTERSECTION OF STATE ROAD 19 AND LANE PARK CUTOFF, FROM COMMERCIAL (COM) TO MIXED USE (MU); PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND CONFLICTS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

ORDINANCE 2024-03

PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 163 OF THE FLORIDA STATUTES, AMENDING THE PUBLIC FACILITIES ELEMENT AND CONSERVATION ELEMENT OF THE TAVARES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2040 IN ORDER FOR CONSISTENCY WITH THE CITY'S WORK PLAN AND REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY PLANNING INITIATIVES; BY PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Grenier asked if anyone wished to pull an item from the Consent Agenda for discussion. There were no requests.

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to approve the Consent Agenda [Tab 2. Approval fo the January 17, 2024, City Council Meeting Minutes], seconded by Sandy Gamble. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 2. Approval of the January 17, 2024, City Council Meeting Minutes

Approved on the Consent Agenda.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS

Tab 3. Resolution 2024-01 – St. John Independent Free Methodist Church – Alley Right-of-Way Vacate Located at 120 N. Bloxham Avenue

Mr. Fabre made the following presentation:

This is a request to vacate a platted undeveloped alleyway lying between the property located at 120 N. Bloxham, Tavares, Florida 32778. The current adjacent property owner is petitioning to vacate an existing right-of-way since it is undeveloped and not practical as a future alleyway. City staff reviewed the vacate request and determined no conflicts in the vacation regarding drainage, utilities, health, safety, or welfare of the Public. As a result, this official vacation will remove the city's public interest in this land.

On January 18, 2024, the Planning & Zoning Board voted (6-0) unanimously to recommend approval of Resolution 2024-01 as presented.

Staff recommends that the City Council moves to approve Option 1, approval of Resolution 2024-01 vacation of an undeveloped alleyway located at 120 N. Bloxham, lying east of Lots "A", "B", and "C" in Block 52 of Tavares Improvement Company's Subdivision, as recorded in Plat Book 4, Page 39.

Mayor Grenier asked for comments from the Council.

Council Member Singer asked if the alleyway was named. Mr. Fabre said no.

Council Member Price asked if the same person owned the property west and east of the alleyway. Mr. Fabre said yes.

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to approve Resolution 2024-01, seconded by Troy Singer. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 4. Resolution 2024-03 – First Budget Amendment FY2024

Ms. Houghton made the following presentation:

The attached resolution represents increases and/or decreases to the Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2024. Appropriation increases represent capital projects, ARPA expenditures, and prior year/project encumbrance rollovers. In addition, the Resolution also reflects transfers between individual accounts within adopted budgets for all departments.

This resolution represents the FIRST AMENDMENT to the Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.

Staff recommends Option 1, for the Council to approve Resolution 2024-03, amending the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 City of Tavares Annual Operating Budget

Mayor Grenier asked for comments from the Council. There were none.

MOTION

Troy Singer moved to approve [Resolution 2024-03], seconded by Sandy Gamble. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

IX. ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING

First Reading

Tab 5. Ordinance 2024-01 – Idamere Crossing – Rezoning of Approximately 19.46 Acres Located at the Southeast Corner of SR19 & Lane Park Cutoff

No Discussion at First Reading.

Tab 6. Ordinance 2024-02 – Idamere Crossing – Small Scale FLUM Amendment of Approximately 19.46 Acres Located at the Southeast Corner of SR19 & Lane Park Cutoff

No Discussion at First Reading.

Second Reading

X. TRANSMITTAL HEARING

Tab 7. Ordinance 2024-03 – Comprehensive Plan 2040 (Transmittal and First Reading) Text Amendment of the Public Facilities Element and Conservation Element Pursuant to the City’s 10-Year Water Supply Facilities Work Plan and Regional Water Supply Planning Initiatives

Mr. Fabre made the following presentation:

Local governments within a regional water supply planning area are required to develop a Water Supply Facilities Work Plan (“Work Plan”) in order to ensure that adequate water supplies will be available to meet future demands for a minimum 10-year planning period, pursuant to F.S. Section 163.3177(6)(c)3. In addition to the Water Supply Facilities Work Plan requirements, local governments are required to revise their Comprehensive Plan for consistency with the Work Plan and regional water supply planning initiatives.

The purpose of this Water Supply Facilities Work Plan is to identify and plan for water supply sources and associated facilities to serve City of Tavares (City) potable water customers for the 2023 through 2032 planning period. The Work Plan has been prepared in accordance with Chapter 163 F.S., which requires local governments to adopt a Work Plan and supporting comprehensive plan policies within 18 months of the approval of a regional water supply plan. The Central Springs/East Coast (CSEC) Regional Water Supply Plan was approved by the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) on February 8, 2022.

On January 18, 2024, the Planning & Zoning Board voted unanimously (6-0) to recommend approval of Ordinance 2024-03 as presented.

Staff recommends (Option 1) that the City Council moves to approve the transmittal to the State for review of Ordinance 2024-03 - Comprehensive Plan 2040 Text Amendment to the Public Facilities Element and Conservation Element pursuant to the City's 10-Year Water Supply Facilities Work Plan and Regional Water Supply Planning Initiatives.

Mayor Grenier asked for comments from the Council. There were none.

MOTION

Sandy Gamble moved to approve Ordinance 2024-03, seconded by Walter Price. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

XI. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Tab 8. Broad Budget Priorities

Mr. Drury made the following presentation:

As provided for in the prior City Council meeting, an opportunity is provided at this Council meeting for the City Council to develop its FY 2025 (October 1, 2024 - September 30, 2025) Broad Budget Goals which the City Administrator will use as guiding principles and a starting point to build the annual City Budget over the next several months. The budget will then be presented back to the City Council this summer. Thereafter, the Council will continue to refine it through July and August and finalize it and adopt it in September with public commentary and input along the way. Attached are:

- 1) The prior year's City Council adopted Broad Budget Goals*
- 2) List of the current projects and initiatives underway*
- 3) List of Draft FY 25 Council goals from some of the City Council members*

A discussion was held, and the following Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Broad Budget Priorities were approved by consensus of the Council.

Mayor Grenier

1. Plan the new Tavares frontier along SR19/561/448 corridor well with no sprawl and be mindful of economics, residential development, land conservation, and a possible convention center.
2. Continue to make sure the Tavares History Museum and Tavares Library have the resources needed to maintain a high level of service to patrons and guests.
3. Continue to seek purchasing the home of Major Alexander St. Clair-Abrams, the founder of Tavares and Lake County, if funding such as grants or by others is found, with long-term maintenance and staffing to be discussed at a later date.
4. Keep streets/alleyways/stormwater improvements going, and at a high level of service.
5. Provide for the resources the Police and Fire Departments need to ensure they maintain their high level of service.

Vice Mayor Gamble

1. Deliver a Budget, identifying a Roll Back Rate dollar amount and how it correlates to provided services, then allow council to make additions as necessary for a final budget.
2. Maintain level of service.
3. Continue and finish Capitol Projects.
4. Sidewalk replacement and new where needed.
5. Agendize and Adopt new Impact Fees for residential housing.
6. Finalize the deal of Stover Complex to Lake County School Board if not completed at the time of Budget.

Mr. Drury said the sale should be completed prior to adoption of the budget.

7. Continue to lower debt and not go further into debt.

Council Member Pfister

1. Continued improvements and renovation of Regional Park East Campus (YMCA).
2. Restructure impact fees for residential housing.
3. Create incentives for economic development.
4. Continue efforts for cart crossing at hospital.
5. Downtown lighting improvements for safety.
6. Improvements and explore possible commercial participation at Pontoon Promenade.
7. Lobby local lawmakers to legislate the closing of game rooms.
8. Increase our family oriented small events / activities.
9. Assure that employee pay and benefits are competitive to attract and retain the best.

Council Member Price

1. Try to get to the rollback rate and if not continue to lower mileage rate.
2. Accelerate city debt repayment, although current interest rates might postpone this.
3. Continue to pursue grants.
4. Provide same level of service to residents.
5. Increase reserves.
6. Accomplish the West Main St gateway.
7. Convert existing public works facilities to surface parking.

A discussion was held regarding a parking garage. Mr. Drury noted the goals of the Council included not taking out loans and creating parking at the Public Works site. To accomplish both goals, parking could be implemented in phases, with phase one as surface parking. Council could discuss a phase two parking garage should parking be full and there was a need.

8. Keep repaving roads.

Council Member Singer

1. Continue lowering the millage rate.
2. Maintain recommended reserve levels.
3. Continue investing in road repaving and infrastructure.
4. Continue to go after grants.
5. Be sure ALL departments are properly staffed, and every employee is fairly compensated.
6. Look for ways to clean the retention pond on corner of Gateway Drive and North Duncan Drive (HYW 19).

Mr. Drury said he would meet with the Department Directors to incorporate the collective goals of the Council into their work and budget plans. Mr. Drury stated he would come back to the Council with a balanced budget during the summer for the Council's deliberation with public input.

Vance Jochim, 12619 Milwaukee Avenue, Lake County, said he would like the Council to go to a rollback rate. He said he would like economic indicators, measurable performance benchmarks, and rebuilding the Tavares Nature Park included in the budget.

Tab 9. Medical Marijuana Dispensaries Consideration of Current City Ordinance

Mr. Fabre made the following presentation:

At the last Council meeting, requested by Council Member Lori Pfister, the City Council voted to discuss the current Medical Marijuana Dispensaries ordinance. On December 20, 2017, the Tavares City Council adopted Ordinance 2017-21 which restricts Medical Marijuana Dispensaries to only being

located in the Commercial Downtown (CD), General Commercial (C-1), and Highway Commercial (C-2) zoning districts.

On August 20, 2014, the City of Tavares passed Ordinance 2014-12, which added to the City regulations a definition of medical marijuana dispensary and amended Chapter 8 Table 8-2, Permitted and Special Uses, allowing medical marijuana dispensaries in a C-2 (Highway Commercial District). On June 23, 2017, the Florida Legislature passed Senate Bill 8A amending F.S. 381-986, requiring that local government agencies either ban medical marijuana dispensaries within their boundaries or allow dispensaries to operate within the same zoning districts that would allow pharmacies (see attachment for copy of SB 8A, pg. 31). As of this date, City regulations are consistent with State law as they pertain to permitted locations of medical marijuana dispensaries.

Staff recommends the City Council advise staff on how to proceed with the current ordinance on the establishment and placement of Medical Marijuana Dispensaries.

Council Member Price asked if there were any medical marijuana dispensaries in Tavares. Mr. Fabre said no.

A brief discussion was held to clarify allowable dispensary locations, and no action was taken.

XII. NEW BUSINESS

XIII. OLD BUSINESS

Council Member Pfister discussed the need for additional lighting at the downtown roundabout by the Freedom Flag. Mr. Dillon said a contractor was adding eight additional lights to an existing four. Mr. Drury noted that the Council approved a study identifying where the lighting was needed.

XIV. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

Don Kehr, 16833 Deer Island Road, Lake County, discussed population growth in Florida. He said land is finite and money was lost with each residential project. He said the City of Tavares had enough housing.

Vance Jochim, 12619 Milwaukee Avenue, Lake County, discussed the Tavares Nature Park and suggested the city set guidelines to maintain the park, add benches along the trail, add a trail map, and include engagement activities such as organized walks and events.

XV. REPORTS

Tab 10. City Administrator Report

Mr. Drury noted the next Council meeting would be held on February 21, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.

Tab 11. City Council Member Reports

Council Member Singer said he attended the Arbor Day event and commended Mr. Dillon and his team. He said the event was an economic driver for the City and commended Mr. Tweedie and his staff.

Council Member Singer said he enjoyed the African American heritage festival and commended Pastor Watkins for his efforts.

Council Member Singer said he attended a BETTER meeting at the Civic Center. He said the facility was refurbished and painted and looked nice. He commended the Public Works and Community Services Departments.

Vice Mayor Gamble said he attended a BETTER meeting and noted that he would not be available to attend an upcoming MPO Executive Board meeting due to a scheduling conflict.

Vice Mayor Gamble asked for an update on Babe Ruth sign-ups. Mr. Aldrich said the teams were formed. Pete Sherrard, Deputy Director of Recreation, noted over 200 players were participating in the Babe Ruth City League.

Each Council member wished those present a happy Valentine's Day.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business, and Mayor Grenier adjourned the meeting at 4:51 p.m.

Respectfully,

Susie Novack, MMC, FCRM
City Clerk