



**TAVARES CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 6, 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
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.

II. INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Tab 1. Pastor Michael Watkins, Friendship C.M.E. Church

Vice Mayor Sandy Gamble provided the invocation and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance in Pastor Watkins's absence.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

MOTION

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

IV. PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

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

Attorney Holt stated two quasi-judicial matters were before the Council for consideration: Tab 3. Ordinance 2024-04 – Annexation and Rezoning, and Tab 4. Ordinance 2024-05 – Small Scale FLUM.

Attorney Holt asked the Council to disclose any exparte communications. There were none.

VI. READING OF ALL ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS INTO THE RECORD

Ms. Novack read the following ordinances by title only:

ORDINANCE 2024-04

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BOUNDARIES OF THE CITY OF TAVARES BY ANNEXING APPROXIMATELY 12.24 ACRES OF PROPERTY LOCATED ON THE EAST SIDE OF CAMP ROAD AND APPROXIMATELY 500 FEET NORTH OF LANE PARK ROAD; REZONING THE PROPERTY FROM COUNTY AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL (AR) TO CITY RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY (RSF-A) DISTRICT; SUBJECT TO THE RULES, REGULATIONS AND OBLIGATIONS ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TAVARES COUNCIL; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

ORDINANCE 2024-05

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 12.24 ACRES OF PROPERTY

FROM COUNTY URBAN LOW DENSITY TO CITY LOW DENSITY (LOW) FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT THE EAST SIDE OF CAMP ROAD AND APPROXIMATELY 500 FEET NORTH OF LANE PARK ROAD; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND CONFLICTS; AND 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

Walter Price moved to approve the Consent Agenda [Tab 2. Approval of the February 21, 2024, City Council Meeting Minutes], seconded by Lori Pfister. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 2. Approval of the February 21, 2024, City Council Meeting Minutes

Approved on the Consent Agenda.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS

IX. ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING

First Reading

Second Reading

Tab 3. Ordinance 2024-04 – Annexation and Rezoning of Approximately 12.24 Acres Located on the East Side of Camp Road and Approximately 500 Feet North of Lane Park Road – Velaquez & Escobedo

Mr. Fabre made the following presentation:

The subject property is located on the east side of Camp Road and approximately 500 feet north of the Lane Park Road intersection and consists of approximately 12.24 acres of vacant land. The property is currently zoned as Lake County Agricultural Residential (AR), and the applicant is proposing that the property be annexed and rezoned to Residential Single-Family (RSF-A) District.

The subject property is also situated adjacent to the Leela Reserve Subdivision (Park Square Homes) development. On March 16, 2022, City Council approved a Development Agreement between the Leela Reserve's Developer for needed improvements on the existing Camp Road. Camp Road was constrained on the portion along the subject property. The applicant has agreed to dedicate additional right-of-way. Accordingly, administration fees were waived in

consideration of the offsetting public benefit of the additional ROW dedication (see attachment). At this time, the applicant envisions construction of one (1) single-family residence on the subject property.

This property is in close proximity to a mixture of single-family residences, public facilities and institutional uses. Therefore, the proposed zoning of Residential Single-Family (RSF-A) is compatible with surrounding properties. The annexation of this property has been reviewed per the City's Annexation Policy. The property is contiguous to the City boundary. It also has been determined by City staff that the property may be properly serviced by the City without undue hardship or significant negative fiscal impact on the City. The City of Tavares has municipal water and wastewater utility services available for the subject property.

The City is concurrently processing a future land use map amendment to re-designate the property from Lake County Urban Low Density to City of Tavares Low Density (LOW) on the Future Land Use Map 2040.

On February 15, 2024, the Planning & Zoning Board voted unanimously (6-0) to recommend approval of Ordinance 2024-04 as presented.

Staff recommends Option 1, that the City Council approve Ordinance 2024-04 annexation and rezoning of approximately 12.24 acres of property located on the east side of Camp Road and approximately 500 feet north of Lane Park Road from Lake County Agricultural Residential (AR) to Residential Single-Family (RSF-A) District.

Council Member Pfister asked if the property owner could build one home under the current County zoning. Mr. Fabre confirmed and said it was his understanding that a septic tank was not allowed on the property. Mr. Drury said the property owner would need to annex into the City for access to water and sewer.

Mayor Grenier said he prefers annexations and rezonings to be separate items. He asked if the property owner planned to build only one home. Mr. Fabre confirmed and noted the property was not a developer and the most he could accomplish would be a lot-split. Any other changes to the property would have to go before the City Council for approval.

Council Member Singer inquired about the number of buildable acres. Mr. Fabre said five (5). He noted wetlands constrained the buildable area.

Vice Mayor Gamble asked if the property owner returned to the City with a plan to build more than one home on the five acres, the Council would have the right to deny. Mr. Fabre confirmed.

Council Member Pfister inquired about the City zoning. Council Member Singer said the zoning would need to be changed from a county zoning to a city zoning if it is annexed.

Mr. Drury confirmed that City zoning would be required. Mr. Fabre said the city zoning in the ordinance was RSF-A and was similar to agriculture and noted the property owner wished to have a horse and cow.

Mayor Grenier said that even if the property owner requested a lot split, that would be one home on 2.5 acres each, and he would be in support.

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to approve [Ordinance 2024-04], seconded by Sandy Gamble. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 4. Ordinance 2024-05 – Small Scale FLUM Amendment of Approximately 12-24 Acres Located on the East Side of Camp Road and Approximately 500 Feet North of Lane Park Road – Velaquez & Escobedo

Mr. Fabre made the following presentation:

The subject property is located on the east side of Camp Road and approximately 500 feet north of the Lane Park Road intersection and is approximately 12.24 acres in size. The land is presently vacant and has a land use designation of Lake County Urban Low Density. The property owner is requesting an amendment to the Tavares Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map 2040 to change the designation of said property from Lake County Urban Low Density to City Low Density (LOW).

Ordinance 2024-05 proposes a small-scale amendment to the Future Land Use Map 2040 of the Comprehensive Plan from Lake County Urban Low Density to City Low Density (LOW). The subject property is adjacent to a mixture of single-family residences, public facilities and institutional uses. An application to annex and rezone this property to a Residential Single-Family (RSF-A) District is concurrently under consideration.

The parcel is designated as Lake County Urban Low Density (4 du/ac) on the County's Future Land Use Map. The small-scale Comprehensive Plan Amendment is proposed to designate the site as Low Density (not to exceed 5.6 du/ac). A City Low Density (LOW) designation is compatible with surrounding property and Future Land Use designations.

Land surrounding this property is residential, public facilities and institutional in nature. The property is contiguous to the City boundary.

The property is currently vacant with approximately 6.8 acres of wetlands.

The subject property is located in the City's Utility Service Boundary Area. The City of Tavares has municipal water and wastewater utility service available for

the subject parcel. The City's Concurrency Management System will ensure that Levels of Service (LOS) will not be degraded beyond the adopted levels of service for all regulated public facilities. Adverse impacts on Levels of Service are not implicated.

This amendment request is considered to be in compliance with the City's Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives and Policies with the following findings:

- 1. A Low Density (LOW) Future Land Use designation would serve as the most appropriate land use for the subject property in accordance with Future Land Use policy 1-1.1.*
- 2. Impacts of the proposed development of the subject property shall be monitored through the City's Concurrency Management System (Comp Plan, Chapter 8 & LDR's Chapter 10).*

On February 15, 2024, the Planning & Zoning Board (acting as LPA) voted unanimously (7-0) to recommend approval of Ordinance 2024-05 as presented.

Staff recommends Option 1, that the City Council moves to approve Ordinance 2024-05, a Future Land Use Map amendment from Lake County Urban Low Density to City of Tavares Low Density (LOW) designation for 12.24 Acres located on the east side of Camp Road and approximately 500 feet north of Lane Park Road.

Mayor Grenier asked for comments from the Council.

Vice Mayor Gamble said the Planning and Zoning Board meeting minutes included discussions from area residents concerned with the number of homes that would be allowed on the property. He said he was satisfied their concerns regarding the number of homes on the property were addressed and was in support.

MOTION

Sandy Gamble moved to approve [Ordinance 2024-05], seconded by Troy Singer. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

X. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Tab 5. Seaplane Base Tav Lee Trail Re-Route & Stormwater Project Request for Budget Re-Allocation and Award of Bid for Construction

Mr. Tweedie provided a PowerPoint presentation with the following highlights:

Previously, the City Council approved a project to design and construct a re-route of a segment of the Tav-Lee Trail at the seaplane base. Currently, the trail passes directly across the seaplane ramp and apron, placing people directly in the pathway of moving aircraft, which compromises safety. This project would route people

around the ramp and apron while still providing a pleasant pathway to traverse the Lake Dora waterfront while safely viewing seaplanes coming and going. This will significantly improve safety. Design plans and technical specifications were completed in the third quarter of 2023. They were subsequently put out to bid. Two bids were received from:

- 1. Greenway Bridge, LLC for \$2,126,952*
- 2. Rush Marine, LLC for \$802, 694.00*

The project engineers, Dredging and Marine Consultants have reviewed and evaluated the bids and provided a letter (attached) recommending the award of the bid and construction contract to Rush Marine LLC.

The Council previously approved funding of \$428,533 consisting of:

- \$300,000 from the General Fund*
- \$128,533 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for the storm-water portion of the project.*

An allocation of \$78,493 has been encumbered for project engineering design and construction oversight services, leaving a remaining available project budget of \$350,040. With a qualified low bid of \$802,694 plus an additional 2% minimum recommended contingency of \$16,540 the total project cost will be \$819,234 requiring supplemental funding of \$469,194.

Staff has developed and recommends a 3-part plan for council consideration to secure funding for this top-priority safety project:

- 1. Defer the construction of the marina area parking/stormwater improvement, project to a future budget cycle, and re-allocate the remaining \$229,000 in ARPA funds previously designated for this project. The parking/stormwater project is now fully designed and in the permitting phase, which is expected to take several months to complete. The deadline for encumbering ARPA project funds is the end of the current calendar year, December 31, 2024.*
- 2. Allocate \$137,176 in remaining overall ARPA project contingency funds to this project.*
- 3. Allocate \$103,018 of available Infrastructure Sales Tax Reserves to this project.*

Staff recommends Option 1 as follows: Approve the above captioned 3-part plan to provide the additional funding in the amount of \$469,194 required to meet the overall project budget need, award the qualified low bid in the amount of \$802,694.00 to Rush Marine LLC for the construction of the Tav-Lee Trail Bypass and Storm-water Improvement Project and authorize the City Administrator to execute the construction contract documents.

Mayor Grenier asked how pedestrians would be detoured. Mr. Tweedie said a fenced gate and signage would be installed on both sides of the ramp, stopping foot traffic and redirecting down a fenced walkway around the ramp. Mayor Grenier said the project was a safety need and noted his support.

Council Member Pfister said the Council had previously approved the safety enhancement, and costs had since increased. Mr. Tweedie confirmed and noted post-Covid cost increases.

Council Member Price inquired about the remaining ARPA funds. Mr. Tweedie said an amount was placed in the ARPA spend plan in reserve for contingencies for all projects. He said all projects except the Seaplane Base Tav Lee Trail Re-Route were complete. Council Member Price said he was not in support of the project when it initially came before the Council as his goal was to get as close to the rollback rate as possible in the budget. He noted he was less inclined with the increase in costs.

Council Member Singer said this project was needed for the safety of the citizens and visitors. He asked Mr. Tweedie to provide reasons for the necessity. Mr. Tweedie said the reroute was identified in a 2014 Master Plan initiated by the City through its professional airport planning, design, and engineering consultants who work closely with the City and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). He said the reroute was a feature at the top of the list of safety needs. A discussion was held regarding the need to separate airplanes and pedestrians safely and the inherent dangers of moving aircraft and propellers. Council Member Singer noted ARPA funds available would expire at the end of the year and noted his support to move forward with the project.

Council Member Pfister asked how many aircraft the ramp would hold. Dan Charles, Waterfront Operations Manager, said it depends on the aircraft size, wing height, and if wings fold. He said aircraft are stacked tight on the ramp. A discussion was held on alternate reroute options and designs.

Shailesh Patel, Engineer, Dredging & Marine Consultants, said a raised walkway was discussed with the aviation consultant, and many safety concerns were identified. He said there would also be ADA compliance issues with a raised walkway.

Vice Mayor Gamble said the safety issue should have been identified when the Seaplane Base and Marina was established. Mr. Tweedie said the Tavares Seaplane Base and Marina was established in 2010. He said there was no Master Plan when the Seaplane Base was built, and the area transitioned gradually from a boat ramp to a mixed-use boat/seaplane ramp to an aircraft ramp. The activity level increased over the years for both aircraft and people.

Vice Mayor Gamble noted a concern it would take 180 days to complete the project. Mr. Drury said the project would be implemented in phases, and while there would be impacts to the seaplane base, it would not shut down at any time.

Mr. Drury said the plan would provide a unique opportunity to safely watch seaplanes come and go. He said these visitors feed restaurants and the downtown economy.

MOTION

Sandy Gamble moved to approve Option 1, seconded by Troy Singer. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Council Member Singer commended the Finance Department for identifying funding for the project.

Tab 6. Naming of Sports Fields and Recreational Facilities

Mr. Aldrich made the following presentation:

The naming or renaming of sports fields and recreational facilities is complex and sometimes emotionally intricate. Assigning a name is a powerful and permanent identity for a public place and often requires significant resources in terms of changing names on signs, maps, and literature. In addition, excessive changing of names can be a source of confusion for the public.

As a point of background, at the September 16, 2020 meeting, Council voted to name one of the youth sports fields at the Woodlea Sports Complex in honor of former Tavares Babe Ruth League participant and current Major League Baseball player Brady Singer. That field is now known as the “Brady Singer Field”. Additionally, Council received a request and had discussion at the January 18, 2023 meeting to name the softball field at the Fred Stover Sports Complex in memory of a long-time Tavares Babe Ruth League coach, Robin Ross. At that time, Council voted to deny the request due to the anticipated sale of the Fred Stover Sports Complex and asked staff to develop some naming criteria for such requests for Council to review and implement.

Staff supports consideration of naming requests within the following categories and offers the following criteria for Council discussion:

- *Outstanding Individuals – The City has benefited from the contributions made by many outstanding individuals. This category is designed to acknowledge the sustained contribution that has been made by such individuals to the City and the development of the City’s sports facilities and recreation system. Individuals may be living or deceased. Naming for an outstanding individual that is deceased is encouraged only for those who have been deceased for at least two years (or at the discretion of the City Council). In considering the naming of a sports field or recreational facility after an outstanding individual, emphasis will be measured by those whose significance and good reputation have been recognized for their sustained and lasting contribution within the City, County, State or Nation’s history. The City of Tavares reserves the right to rename any sports field or recreational*

facility if the person for whom it is named turns out to be disreputable or subsequently acts in a disreputable way.

- *Historic Events, People, and Places – The history of a major event, person or place may play an important role in the naming of sports fields or recreational facilities, as communities often wish to preserve and honor the history of an area, its founders, other historical figures, local landmarks, as well as natural features through the naming of sports fields or recreational facilities. When a sports field or recreational facility is associated with or located near events, people, and places of historical, cultural, or social significance, consideration will be given to naming that sports field or recreational facility after such. In considering proposals, the relationship of the event, person, or place to the sports field or recreational facility must be demonstrated through research and documentation.*
- *Major Gifts – The City and our surrounding areas have benefited from the generosity of some of its residents, businesses, and foundations. On occasion, the significance of such donations may warrant consideration of requests from either the donor or another party to acknowledge such a gift by naming a sports field or recreational facility. On such occasions, recognition of this donation by naming a sports field or recreational facility in honor of or at the request of the donor will be considered. Donors seeking naming rights for major donations with respect to an individual will be encouraged to follow the principles that apply to naming a sports field or recreational facility for an outstanding person.*

Other Considerations: The naming or renaming of sports fields and recreational facilities may not be appropriate for each request. Currently, the City of Tavares Donation Program is available for individuals wishing to honor a family member on the wall at the Woodlea Sports Complex. For a \$250 donation to the Tavares Youth Recreation Scholarship Program, individuals or families receive a 4-inch nameplate to be installed at the facility.

Additionally, for deceased individuals that have been deemed to have made a lasting and significant impact on the Tavares Recreation program, a memorial wall is being created at the Woodlea Sports Complex to memorialize those individuals' contributions to the City with a 9-inch by 12-inch marble plaque.

Staff recommends Council adopt the presented naming criteria. (Option 1)

Mayor Grenier asked for comments from the Council.

Council Member Pfister said the presented naming criteria and guidelines were suitable for determining eligibility and felt names should be determined on a case-by-case basis. She noted her preference to honor people before they were deceased. She commended Mr. Aldrich on his efforts.

Mr. Aldrich said any time a request was made, it would be placed on an agenda for Council discussion and determination.

Vice Mayor Gamble said he supported adding the criteria for the honoree to be a Tavares citizen. He said he did not recommend naming fields until the Woodlea Sports Complex project was complete. Vice Mayor Gamble discussed Coach and former Council member Dennis Wilson's efforts in the Tavares sports programs. He discussed Ben Thomas and asked if the City could ask that his plaque remain at Stover Field when the property is transferred.

Council Member Singer said naming a field after an individual was complex and a difficult decision to make. He discussed the potential issues that may arise requiring a field to be renamed and noted his preference for naming a field after someone had been deceased for two years.

Council Member Price said he liked the criteria presented and supported Vice Mayor Gamble's suggestion that the honored person should be a Tavares citizen.

Council Member Price said he liked the criteria presented and supported Vice Mayor Gamble's suggestion that the honored person should be a Tavares citizen.

Mr. Drury said staff would need to build criteria for the public and Council for a request to be placed on an agenda for consideration. He asked the Council to discuss and provide direction to staff. The Council held a brief discussion on criteria.

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to accept the recommended naming criteria with the addition that the name should be in honor of an individual who was a Tavares resident for a considerable amount of time; and living, on a case-by-case basis. Sandy Gamble seconded the motion.

Council Member Singer said he felt a person should be deceased to be considered. He said that was the only reason he would vote against the agenda item.

The motion carried 4-1 as follows:

Bob Grenier:	Yes
Sandy Gamble:	Yes
Lori Pfister:	Yes
Walter Price:	Yes
Troy Singer:	No

XI. NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Grenier asked if staff could take a look at the older Tav Lee trail signs.

XII. OLD BUSINESS

Council Member Singer asked for an update on the Mayor's Youth Council program. Mayor Grenier said he was in the process of meeting with the Tavares High School Principal. Council Member Pfister recommended contacting Liberty Christian Academy or home school programs if Tavares High School did not wish to move forward. She said she would like to keep the program with a high school in Tavares.

XIII. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

XIV. REPORTS

Tab 7. City Administrator Report

Mr. Drury noted the annual free leaf pickup dates were March 11th & 12th and March 18th & 19th. He said the leaf pickup would happen on the residents' regularly scheduled bulk pickup day, and there were no limits on the leaf bag pickup.

Chief Coursey commended Mr. Tweedie and the Economic Development Team on the Planes, Tunes, and Barbeque event. She said the drone show was fantastic.

Mayor Grenier commended Chief Coursey and asked her to discuss a recent news interview with the Tavares Police Department. Chief Coursey said Fox 35 reached out to the Police Department's social media team to commend the department on community outreach. She said the interview highlighted how the department interacted with the citizens positively.

Mr. Tweedie said Planes, Tunes, and Barbeque was a great success. He noted some musical performances were canceled due to weather, and all other features went well. Mr. Tweedie said attendees enjoyed the drone and air shows. He thanked those who participated in the planning, logistics, and pre-event staging for the event. Mr. Tweedie gave special mention to Waterfront Operations Manager Dan Charles, Waterfront Operations Supervisor Diontre Schwier, and Events Coordinator Cheri Moan. He thanked Mr. Drury and the Council for their support.

Mr. Aldrich thanked Vice Mayor Gamble and Council Member Singer for their support and attendance at the opening day of the Babe Ruth season.

Tab 8. City Council Member Reports

Council Member Pfister said she enjoyed the Planes, Tunes, and Barbeque event and noted the attendees loved the drone show. She commended Mr. Tweedie.

Council Member Pfister commended Mr. Aldrich and Deputy Director of Recreation Pete Sherrard for their efforts on the opening day of the Babe Ruth season.

Council Member Pfister commended Mr. Clark on the paving of Woodlea Road.

Council Member Price said he enjoyed the Planes, Tunes, and Barbeque event, including the drone and aerobatic shows. He said he looked forward to next year's event and wished those present a Happy St. Patrick's Day.

Council Member Singer said he enjoyed the Planes, Tunes, and Barbeque event. He commended Ms. Moan on her efforts and said the drone and air shows were terrific.

Council Member Singer commended Mr. Aldrich and Mr. Sherrard on the opening day of the Babe Ruth season and said it was nice to see families and youth enjoy the day.

Council Member Singer wished those present a Happy St. Patrick's Day.

Vice Mayor Gamble said he previously coached the young gentleman who sang the National Anthem on the opening day of the Babe Ruth season. He noted that was the year he coached with Mayor Grenier. Vice Mayor Grenier said he was able to attend the drone show at Planes, Tunes, and Barbeque. Mr. Tweedie noted there were 200 drones in the show. Vice Mayor Gamble said he would support drones over fireworks during the 4th of July celebration.

Vice Mayor Gamble wished those present a Happy St. Patrick's Day.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business, and Mayor Grenier adjourned the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully,

Susie Novack, MMC, FCRM
City Clerk