



**TAVARES CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
June 19, 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
Jillian Roberts, Deputy 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.

II. INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Tab 1. Pastor Jon Carey, First Baptist Church of Umatilla Mayor

Pastor Jon Carey, First Baptist Church of Umatilla, provided the invocation and 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

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

IV. PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

Tab 2. Proclamation – Juneteenth

Mr. Drury made the following presentation:

During the June 5, 2024, City Council Meeting, Pastor Michael Watkins asked the Council to issue a proclamation recognizing and celebrating June 19 as Juneteenth Day. Juneteenth is a national holiday. It is celebrated on June 19th and commemorates the day in 1865 when the last enslaved African Americans in Galveston, Texas, were informed of their freedom as a result of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Staff recommended Option 1, for Council to consider the request.

Mayor Grenier asked for comments from the Council.

Council Member Pfister provided Council with President Biden's Juneteenth Proclamation.

Michael Watkins, 805 Summerall Ave, Tavares, noted his dedication to Tavares and noted his desire for the Juneteenth Proclamation from the City of Tavares.

Elliot Kohan, Tavares noted he was a new homeowner and has a vested interest in Tavares. He asked City Council to consider the Juneteenth Proclamation.

May Hazelton, 416 N Ingraham Ave, Tavares, said there is no regulatory reason to not approve the proclamation. She noted the significance of Juneteenth and stated it was a Federal Holiday and cities and county were closed.

Council Member Singer noted his support of proclamation.

MOTION

Troy Singer moved to approve the Juneteenth Proclamation, seconded by Sandy Gamble.

Council Member Price thanked the citizens that spoke in support of the Juneteenth Proclamation. He recognized Michael Watkins as leader and community servant and discussed the importance of Proclamations and said he was not in support.

Council Member Pfister noted the importance and significance of Juneteenth. She stated Juneteenth is Federal Holiday and noted she is not in support of passing the proclamation.

Vice Mayor Gamble stated the proclamation was to recognize the holiday along with the Federal Government. He noted his support.

Mayor Grenier noted his support for the events and knowledge of history. He stated that it was a Federal Holiday and stated he was not in support.

The motion was denied 3-2.

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

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

Attorney Holt stated there were no quasi-judicial matters before the council for consideration.

VI. READING OF ALL ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS INTO THE RECORD

Ms. Roberts read the following ordinances by title only:

RESOLUTION 2024-09

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, TO RECOGNIZE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEES AS FIRST RESPONDERS AS FEDERALLY MANDATED; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

ORDINANCE 2024-07

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE CITY OF TAVARES “TAKING FLIGHT” 2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT, AMENDING THE DENSITY FOR THE COMMERCIAL DOWNTOWN (CD) CATEGORY, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

ORDINANCE 2024-06

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE CITY OF TAVARES LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS CHAPTER 8 ZONING REGULATIONS, TABLE 8-2 PERMITTED AND SPECIAL USES; SUBJECT TO THE RULES, REGULATIONS, AND OBLIGATIONS ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TAVARES COUNCIL; PROVIDING SEVERABILITY AND CONFLICTS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

ORDINANCE 2024-08

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA AMENDING THE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES CHAPTER 11 MISCELLANEOUS OFFENSES SECTION 11-4 NOISES FROM BLOWER, OUTDOOR BLOWER VACUUM, ECT. AND AMENDING THE LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS CHAPTER 12 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS SECTION 12-2 PROHIBITION OF A PUBLIC NUISANCE NOISE AND SECTION 12-3 PRESUMPTIVE PUBLIC NUISANCE NOISE; SUBJECT TO THE RULES, REGULATIONS AND OBLIGATION ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TAVARES COUNCIL; PROVIDING 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 none.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS

Tab 3. Resolution 2024-09 – Public Works as First Responders Resolution

Mr. Dillon gave the following presentation:

In 2003, former President George W. Bush issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5(HSPD-5), Management of Domestic Incidents. This directive, in response to the evolving nature of security threats, emphasizes the critical role of public works in emergency and disaster response. It specifically calls for the inclusion of public works in all planning and response efforts at the federal level. In alignment with the directive, the City Staff of Tavares is actively

seeking the Council's approval to officially designate the Department of Public Works employees as first responders. This designation would reflect their essential role in ensuring the city's preparedness and resilience in the face of various crises.

Staff recommended Option 1, for Council to move to adopt Resolution 2024-09 and recognize the City of Tavares Department of Public Works employees as first responders.

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

MOTION

Troy Singer moved to approve Resolution 2024-09, seconded by Sandy Gamble. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

IX. ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING

Attorney Holt stated Tab 4: Ordinance 2024-07 is under first reading and will transmit to the State and noted that it was legislative in nature and not quasi-judicial.

First Reading

Tab 4. Ordinance 2024-07(Transmittal) – Amending the City of Tavares “Taking Flight” 2040 – Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Element, Amending the Density for the Commercial Downtown (CD) Category

Mr. Antonio gave the following presentation:

The future Land Use Commercial Downtown (CD) category is intended to support a wide range of uses with increased densities and intensities to complement the downtown's role as a focus for tourism, professional offices, retail, dining, civic, and cultural activities. This category is also intended to accommodate townhomes and multifamily dwellings. Furthermore, the City encourages compact mixed-use developments with increased density and intensity that promote pedestrian and economic activity per the Land Use Element, Objective 1-3 Downtown Tavares, Policy 1-4.4 of the “Taking Flight” 2024 Comprehensive Plan.

The City of Tavares is experiencing an influx of growth, as many communities in Florida are experiencing. However, there is limited investment interest within the Commercial Downtown (CD) category. Investment in an infill project can present some challenges for investors, including assembly of fragmented property, potential environmental cleanup, limited financing options, demolition cost, higher construction costs for commercial and multi-story buildings, and density requirements.

As a result, other compatible cities have demonstrated higher densities in their downtown core areas (see attached table). The City of Tavares has the opportunity to consider an increased bonus density within the Commercial Downtown category. Ordinance 2024-07 proposes an increase in density for the Commercial Downtown category from the adopted 25 dwelling units per acre to a more progressive 40 dwelling units per acre. Please note, the proposed 40 dwelling units per acre density is considered a density bonus. Any CD category outside the downtown Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) shall have a density of not to exceed 25 dwelling units per acre.

Staff recommends Option 1, that the City Council moves to approve the transmittal to the State for review of Ordinance 2024-07 – Amending the City of Tavares “Taking Flight” 2040 – Comprehensive Plan, Future Land Use Element, by amending the density for the Commercial Downtown (CD) category from not to exceed 25 DU/AC to not to exceed 40 DU/AC.

Vice-Mayor Gamble asked for clarification on the height of the buildings. Mr. Drury stated buildings would be taller than 3 stories high.

Council Member Singer noted his support and preference for higher density in the downtown area and asked why this was not addressed when the Comprehensive Plan was previously approved. Mr. Fabre stated density was being addressed with growth.

Mr. Drury stated there had been an acceleration in growth and development that needed to be addressed.

Mr. Tweedie noted his support as an economic tool with an increase in residential properties that would grow and stimulate the economic growth.

Council Member Price noted his support for increased density.

MOTION

Troy Singer moved to submit the transmittal, seconded by Sandy Gamble.

Mayor Grenier noted Mr. Cagan passed along the name as Tavares Heritage Square.

The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Second Reading

Tab 5. Ordinance 2024-06 – An Ordinance amending the Land Development Regulations, Table 8-2 Permitted and Special Uses, to allow Backyard Chickens as an accessory use in single-family zoning and to allow for a single-family residence in an existing “lot-of-record” of “RMF-3” zoning district

Mr. Fabre gave the following presentation:

On March 20, 2024, City Council directed staff to update the Land Development Regulations to allow for backyard chickens as an accessory use in residential zoning districts. Per the City Council direction, the proposed ordinance mirrors Lake County's Chicken Code.

Furthermore, an update to allow for a single-family residence (SFR) in an existing "lot-of-record" on "RMF-3" zoning district was also included. As of now, there are existing areas in the city "mainly, but not limited to, east of Summerall Ave and south of Wells Avenue) where there are existing SFRs on "RMF-3" zoning district. As a result, existing SFRs have a status of "non-conforming". This action will allow SFRs to be legally conforming and eligible to be constructed, extended or rebuilt in conformance with the "RMF-2" zoning development standards.

Staff recommends Option 1, that the City Council moves to approve Ordinance 2024-06, an ordinance amending the Land Development Regulations, Table 8-2 Permitted and Special Uses, to allow backyard chickens as an accessory use in single-family zoning and to allow for a single-family residence in an existing "lot-of-record" on "RMF-3" zoning district.

Council Member Price asked if chickens would be allowed in any residential property. Mr. Fabre stated the property must meet setback requirements.

Council Member Singer asked if roosters were permitted. Mr. Fabre stated roosters were not permitted and would be enforced by Code Enforcement.

Council Member Pfister stated chickens belong in the county and asked if Code Enforcement could enforce rules pertaining to chickens and roosters if the Code Enforcement Officer cannot see the chickens and roosters. Mr. Drury stated that the Code Enforcement could not walk on private property looking for violations and the Code Enforcement Officer would need to be on public property and witness the violation.

MOTION

Troy Singer moved to deny Ordinance 2024-06, seconded by Lori Pfister.

Gary Santoro, Royal Harbor, Tavares, Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Board, noted the reason the Planning and Zoning Board recommended approval was because City Council asked staff to bring it to Council and stated the Planning and Zoning Board could not find a viable reason to deny recommending approval.

Mayor Grenier stated he was not in support of this Ordinance.

Discussion was held pertaining to the noise of roosters, Code Enforcement, smell and following the law.

The motion carried 4-1.

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

X. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Tab 6. Ordinance 2024-08 – Amending the City of Tavares Code of Ordinance Chapter 11 and the Land Development Regulations Chapter 12 to include criteria for noise levels in new residential dwelling units in a Commercial or Industrial zoned district (Live Local Projects) and to adjust the hours of nuisance noise equipment operations.

Mr. Fabre gave the following presentation:

The state of Florida has enacted the Live Local Act, allowing developers the right to build or construct residential subdivisions and multifamily apartments in commercial and industrial zoned districts. The City of Tavares is seeking to ensure the residents right to quiet and peaceful enjoyment and to protect the quality of life, by amending the Land Development Regulations Chapter 12, Section 12-2 Prohibition of a Public Nuisance Noise. This amendment will include criteria for internal noise levels in new residential dwelling units, in a commercial or industrial zoned district.

Additionally, the City is also amending the Code of Ordinances Chapter 11 Section 11-4 Noise from blower, outdoor vacuum, etc. This is to adjust the hours of operation for blowers, outdoor vacuum or similar tool or machines from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM. This also includes an amendment to the Land Development E Chapter 12 Section 12-3 Presumptive Public Nuisance Noise. This amendment will adjust the City's street cleaning equipment from 5:00 AM to 7:00 AM.

Staff recommends Option 1, that the City Council moves to approve Ordinance 2024-08 – Amending the City of Tavares Code of Ordinances Chapter 11 and the Land Development Regulations Chapter 12.

Council Member Pfister asked if the City could raise the acceptable decibel level for increased buffering. Mr. Fabre noted the decibel level was per National standards.

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to approve Ordinance 2024-08, seconded by Walter Price.

Mr. Drury noted the Ordinance protects quality of life to sound proof residents from noises between restricted hours.

The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 7. Board Appointments – Library Board

Mayor Grenier made the following presentation:

There are two expiring seats and two existing vacancies on the Tavares Library Board. The City received the following requests for reappointment for terms expiring June 2026 (2-year terms). No new applications have been received.

Request for Reappointment

- Erika Buigas
- Michael Watkins

The City advertised the open positions in the Daily Commercial and the City website. If the above appointments are made, there will be two vacancies remaining on the Tavares Library Board, and the City will continue to advertise these positions.

Staff recommends Option 1, for the Mayor to make appointments to the Tavares Library Board, and the Council to approve the appointments.

Mayor Grenier said he would like to reappoint Erika Buigas and Michael Watkins to the Library Board for 2-year terms ending in June 2026.

MOTION

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

Tab 8. Citizen's Police Academy

Chief Coursey provided a presentation with the following highlights:

- Start on September 3, 2024.
- The program will be held on Tuesday's for 10 weeks.
- To give overview of what the Tavares Police Department does.
- Brings awareness in the rolls
- 12 Applicants from City of Tavares
- Ride along program
- CSI evidence, investigations, Road Patrol, Marine Unit, K-9, accreditation, professional standards

Mayor Grenier said the program sounds exciting and asked Council for questions. There were none.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

XII. OLD BUSINESS

Tab 9. City Administrator Pay Adjustment

Mayor Grenier gave the following presentation:

At the May 15th meeting, Council asked for a discussion to be had at a future meeting (before the budget is developed) to discuss a pay adjustment for the City Administrator to be placed in the FY 2025 budget.

Staff recommends Option 1, for Council to discuss a pay adjustment for the City Administrator.

Council Member Singer asked what the pay increase for employees would be. Mr. Drury stated 8% was currently proposed in the FY25 budget. Council Member Singer said Mr. Drury had done a great job over the past 17 years without an Assistant City Manager and had not had a pay increase in the previous few years. He said Mr. Drury deserved a pay increase of 8%.

Council Member Price stated he has seen what a great job Mr. Drury does and would prefer to wait until budget discussions and should align with employees pay raise.

Vice-Mayor Gamble said his suggestion was to give a partial raise with a bonus and to review Mr. Drury's contract.

Council Member Pfister stated Mr. Drury was deserving of a raise and did not think the percentage needs to align with employees raise.

Mr. Drury noted that in the last three years that he did not receive a raise would have been 2.6% per year.

Mayor Grenier stated Mr. Drury had been the City Administrator for 17 years and noted what had been accomplished in that time and how much the City has changed. He said he supported a higher raise than 8% plus a bonus.

Mayor Grenier asked for comments from the public.

Gary Santoro, Royal Harbor, Tavares, noted he was in support of an 8% raise for Mr. Drury.

Michael Watkins, 805 Summerall Ave, Tavares, said Mr. Drury always listened and was a great leader for all citizens of Tavares.

Mayor Grenier closed public comment.

Council Member Pfister asked what percent would be recommended for employees. Mr. Drury stated an 8% raise was included in the budget for consideration.

Discussion was held and there was a consensus for a 10% raise to be placed in the budget for consideration.

MOTION

Troy Singer moved to approve a City Administrator 10% raise for FY 2025, seconded by Lori Pfister.

Mayor Grenier asked for clarification.

Council Member Pfister said she is in support for a 10% raise.

Vice-Mayor Gamble state his is not in support of a 10% raise.

The motion carried 4-1.

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

XIII. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

XIV. REPORTS

Tab 7. City Administrator Report

Mr. Drury thanked Council and said he looked forward to working with each member over the next budget year.

Mr. Dillon thanked Council for joining America In Blooms farewell celebration and thanked Council for their support.

Tab 8. City Council Member Reports

Council Member Pfister asked Pastor Watkins for an invitation to the Juneteenth Celebration. Pastor Watkins stated it will be from 1pm-4pm on Saturday at Ingraham Park.

Council Member Singer noted he attended the Lake 100 roundtable discussion and positive comments were made pertaining to Tavares Economic Development Department and Community Development Department.

Vice-Mayor Gamble commented about various projects within Tavares.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business and Mayor Grenier adjourned the meeting at 5:40 PM.

Respectfully,

Jillian Roberts
Deputy City Clerk