



**TAVARES CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 20, 2024 – 4:00 PM
TAVARES CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
201 EAST MAIN STREET, TAVARES**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

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

Mr. Drury 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

Pastor Michael Watkins, Friendship C.M.E. Church, provided the invocation and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ELECTION RESULTS

Tab 2. Election Results

Ms. Novack made the following presentation:

The Lake County Canvassing Board completed their certification of the November 5, 2024, Tavares City Council Municipal Election.

Effective August 15, 2024, at 12:00 noon, the following candidates qualified for the office of the Tavares City Council, Seats 1, 3, and 5 as follows:

Seat 1

- *Bob Grenier*
- *Nick Hendrick*
- *Belynda Rinck*

The Lake County Canvassing Board official results reflect that Bob Grenier received 3,746 votes, Nick Hendrick received 1,653 votes, and Belynda Rinck received 3,531 votes for Seat 1.

Seat 3

- *Walter B. Price, Sr.*

Walter Price, Sr. is a qualified incumbent elected without opposition to the Tavares City Council, Seat 3.

Seat 5

- *Lori A. Pfister*

Lori A. Pfister is a qualified incumbent elected without opposition to the Tavares City Council, Seat 5.

IV. SWEARING IN OF NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS

Chief Coursey swore in Bob Grenier to Seat 1, Walter Price to Seat 3, and Lori Pfister to Seat 5, Tavares City Council.

V. CONVENING OF NEW COUNCIL

VI. ELECTION OF MAYOR

Tab 3. Election of Mayor

Mr. Drury made the following presentation:

Section 3.04 of the City Charter states that “The council shall elect from its members, a Mayor and Vice Mayor” and “the City Administrator shall conduct the election of the Mayor”. The Council has traditionally followed Roberts Rules of Order when conducting meetings and elections and therefore, the City Administrator will follow Roberts Rules of Order when conducting this election as follows:

- 1) The City Administrator will open up the floor for nominations of Mayor.*
- 2) Council members will be invited to nominate any council member, including themselves. No second is required for a nomination.*
- 3) Any person who has been nominated may decline such a nomination.*
- 4) Once nominations have been completed, the City Administrator will close nominations.*
- 5) The City Administrator will then offer an opportunity for Council Member who wishes to speak to make comment at this time.*
- 6) The City Administrator will then offer an opportunity for any audience member who wishes to speak to make comment at this time.*
- 7) The City Administrator will request a hand vote (raising of the right arm) for each nominee based on the order in which they were received at the time of nomination until three or more votes are made for a nominee.*

Mr. Drury opened the floor to nominations for Mayor.

Lori Pfister nominated Walter Price for Mayor.

No other nominations were received and Mr. Drury closed floor to nominations.

Mr. Drury asked for comments from the Council. There were none.

Mr. Drury asked for comments from the audience. There were none.

Mr. Drury requested a vote by raising of the right arm.

Walter Price was elected Mayor with a unanimous show of hands 5-0.

VII. ELECTION OF VICE MAYOR

Tab 4. Election of Vice Mayor

Mayor Price made the following presentation:

Section 3.04 of the City Charter states that “The council shall elect from its members, a Mayor and Vice Mayor”. The Mayor shall conduct the election of the Vice-Mayor. The Council has traditionally followed Roberts Rules of Order when

conducting meetings and elections and, therefore, the Mayor will follow Roberts Rules of Order when conducting this election as follows:

- 1) The Mayor will open up the floor for nominations of Vice-Mayor.*
- 2) Council members will be invited to nominate any council member, including themselves. No second is required for a nomination.*
- 3) Any person who has been nominated may decline such a nomination.*
- 4) Once nominations have been completed, the Mayor will close nominations.*
- 5) The Mayor will then offer an opportunity for a Council Member who wishes to speak to make a comment at this time.*
- 6) The Mayor will then offer an opportunity for any audience member who wishes to speak to make a comment at this time.*
- 7) The Mayor will request a hand vote (raising of the right arm) for each nominee based on the order in which they were received at the time of nomination until three or more votes are made for a nominee.*

Mayor Price opened the floor to nominations for Vice Mayor.

Bob Grenier nominated Lori Pfister for Vice Mayor.

Troy Singer nominated Sandy Gamble for Vice Mayor.

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

Mayor Price asked for comments from the audience.

Michael Watkins, 805 Summerall Avenue, Tavares, noted his support for the Vice Mayor position to be rotated to the Mayor position and for Council Member Gamble to be elected Vice Mayor.

Mayor Price closed the floor to nominations.

Mayor Price asked for a vote for Lori Pfister's election of Vice Mayor by raising the right arm.

Lori Pfister was elected Vice Mayor by a show of hands 3-2 as follows:

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

VIII. SUNSHINE LAW/ETHICS UPDATE

Tab 5. Sunshine Law and Ethics Update

Attorney Holt provided an update on the Sunshine Law and Ethics, including the public meetings, public records, gifts, and conflicts of interest. She said she was available for any questions and to help guide the Council members including attorney opinions. She said the Florida Commission on Ethics could also provide opinions.

IX. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Price asked if anyone had changes to the Agenda. Mr. Drury said staff would like to move Tab 16, Board Appointments, to be heard directly after Tab 14, Horizon Teams.

MOTION

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

X. PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

Tab 6. Therapy Dog Program

Lieutenant Schmidbauer Howell presented K9 Nora to the board and provided the details of her training, uses, and benefits to the City of Tavares and the citizens.

Tab 7. Recognition of Tavares Middle School Cross Country Team

Mr. Aldrich and Coach Kevin Von Maxey made a presentation with the following presentation:

The Tavares Patriots Middle School Cross Country team, consisting of Girls & Boys JV, and Girls & Boys Varsity, all recently competed in the 2024 FLYRA Middle School Cross Country State Championships – Public School Division. Both the Girls & Boys Varsity and the Boys JV won the State Championship, setting state records in the process.

As a team, both the Boys & Girls Varsity teams set the state records for the fastest teams in Florida history. In all classifications, no other public, private, charter, or club school has ever run faster at the state meet on both the boys' side and the girls' side.

Individually, with over 430 runners in the Boys & Girls Varsity championship races, Tavares boasted an incredible 12 state medalists. Our Patriots also scored another 6 medalists in the JV/Open races. Laken Hartley won the individual girls' public school state championship and Alice Ilea was runner-up. For the boys, Omar Castillo finished second and Nicholas Alvarez finished third, both breaking the previous school's record.

Coaching for the Tavares Patriot Middle School Cross Country team is the duo of Kevin and April Von Maxey. Both have been dedicated coaches for close to 20

years and have led their teams to numerous district and state championships.

State Roster:

Girls Varsity - State Champions

*Laken Hartley
Alice Ilea
Lindsey Mishler
Jimena Nava-Garcia
Arieyahna Neal
Isabella Neal
Kayla Santos*

Girls JV - 6th in State Champions

*Maddison Burger
Mackenzie Crosby
Kenzie Gamble
Cordelia Garback
Airiana Graf
Lilliana Gutfreind
Meadow Sadlemire
Naomi Seabury
Londynn Small
Chloe Walker
Farren White
Azaria Wilson*

Boys Varsity - State

*Nicholas Alvarez
Omar Castillo
Eric Chen
Emiliano Lozano
Navid Lozano
Seth Manion
Brock Mraz*

Boys JV - State

*Joel Cordero
Matthew Ellababedi
Edward Finley
Alejandro Hernandez
Jonathan Kelley
Dylan Leavitt
Ashton Lynch
Emmitt Maldonado
Jonah Marengo
Ryan McCarthy
Jonah Myers
Jakob Pluth
Benjamin Rios
Carter Severinsen
Jeycob Torres
Angel Vargas
Jeremiah William*

Council Member Gamble said Kevin and April Von Maxey were two of the best coaches and represented the school and city well. He commended the team's parents for supporting their coaches.

Tab 8. GFOA Distinguished Budget Award

Mayor Price made the following presentation:

The "Distinguished Budget Presentation Award" has been awarded to the City of Tavares by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States for the Fiscal Year 2024 Adopted Budget.

The award reflects the commitment of the governing body and staff to meeting

the highest principles of governmental budgeting. To receive the budget award, the budget document had to satisfy nationally recognized guidelines for an effective budget presentation. This award is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting. Its attainment represents a significant achievement for the city.

Mayor Price presented the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award to Ms. Houghton, Brett Jones, and Alex Patton.

Ms. Houghton noted many Finance Department team members could not attend the meeting and thanked them for their efforts. She gave special recognition to Brett Jones and Alex Patton, noting Mr. Patton recently obtained his certification as a Certified Purchasing Officer. Ms. Houghton thanked Mr. Drury and the city departments for their help.

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

Attorney Holt said there were no ex-parte communications before the Council for consideration.

XII. READING OF ALL ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS INTO THE RECORD

Ms. Novack read the following resolutions by title only:

RESOLUTION 2024-22

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 118 INGRAHAM AVENUE TAVARES, FL 32778, LYING BETWEEN LOTS D, E, F, L, M AND N BLOCK 70 OF TAVARES IMPROVEMENT COMPANY 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 2024-25

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, RELATING TO THE STATE REVOLVING FUND LOAN PROGRAM; MAKING FINDINGS; AUTHORIZING AMENDMENT ONE TO THE SRF LOAN DW350981 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.

RESOLUTION 2024-26

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE 2024 FISCAL YEAR ADOPTED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF TAVARES, REPRESENTING THE THIRD AND FINAL AMENDMENT TO THE ADOPTED BUDGET, AND PROVIDING FOR A REPEALER, SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

XIII. CONSENT AGENDA

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

MOTION

Troy Singer moved to approve the Consent Agenda [Tab 9, Approval of the October 16, 2024, City Council Meeting Minutes and Tab 10, Pisgah Grove, (FKA: Eagle Homes at Tavares) – Minor Plat], seconded by Sandy Gamble. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 9. Approval of the October 16, 2024, City Council Meeting Minutes

Approved on the Consent Agenda.

Tab 10. Pisgah Grove (FKA: Eagle Homes at Tavares) – Minor Plat

Approved on the Consent Agenda.

XIV. RESOLUTIONS

Tab 11. Resolution 2024-22 – Ellrodt James D Trustee – Request to Vacate a 16-foot-wide Right-of-Way Alleyway Located at 118 Ingraham Avenue

Mr. Fabre made the following presentation:

This is a request to vacate a platted undeveloped alleyway lying adjacent to the property located at 118 Ingraham Avenue, Tavares, Florida 32778. The current adjacent property owner is petitioning to vacate an existing alleyway since it is undeveloped and not practical as a future right-of-way.

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 October 17, 2024, the Planning & Zoning Advisory Board met and voted unanimously (6-0) to recommend approval of Resolution 2024-22 as presented.

Staff recommends that the City Council moves to approve Option 1, approving Resolution 2024-22 vacation of an undeveloped alleyway located at 118 Ingraham Avenue more particularly described as, lying between Lots D, E, F, L, M and N in Block 70 of Tavares Improvement Company's Subdivision, as recorded in Plat Book 4, Page 39, Public Records of Lake County.

Mayor Price asked for comments from the Council.

Council Member Singer asked if there was any benefit to the City to keep the alleyway. Mr. Fabre said staff determined there was none.

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to approve Resolution 2024-22, seconded by Bob Grenier. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 12. Resolution 2024-25 – Amendment 1 to SRF Loan DW350981 – Lake Hermosa/Avalon Park Construction Loan for Booster Pump Project

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 for design activities was \$327,059.*

*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 **construction** activities 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 an application to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for a State Revolving Loan for construction activities for the Lake Hermosa Booster Pump project.

On October 4, 2023, the City Council adopted Resolution 2023-21 authorizing SRF Loan Agreement DW350981 which provided financing for Lake Hermosa Region Booster Pump Station construction activities in the amount of \$7,235,190 with \$5,788,152 designated for loan repayment and \$1,447,038 designated for principal loan forgiveness. The loan was executed on October 6, 2023.

On June 18, 2024, State Revolving Loan Fund Program approved the low bid from L7 Construction for the Lake Hermosa Booster Pump Construction Project in the amount of \$10,357,000 and authorized the City of Tavares to award the contract.

On July 17, 2024, the City Council authorized awarding the construction contract to L7 Construction in the amount of \$10,357,000 contingent upon receiving additional SRF financing for the project (loan amendment).

On October 21, 2024, the SRF provided Amendment One (1) to the City's State Revolving Fund loan agreement DW350981. The Amendment provides an additional \$4,030,835 for the project. Details of the loan terms with changes are as follows:

- Construction and Demolition - ~~\$6,292,900~~ \$10,357,000*
- Contingencies - ~~\$629,290~~ \$517,850*
- Technical Services After Bid Opening - ~~\$313,000~~ \$391,175*
- Disbursable Amount: ~~\$7,235,190~~ \$11,266,025*
- Principal Forgiveness \$1,447,038*
- Loan Amount: ~~\$5,788,152~~ \$9,818,987*
- Capitalized Interest ~~\$65,700~~ \$112,700*
- Projected Completion is scheduled for ~~October 15, 2025~~, April 15, 2026*
- Monthly Loan Debt Service Account with Monthly Deposits to be established no later than ~~October 15, 2025~~ April 15, 2026*
- First Semiannual Loan Payment in the amount of \$283,854 shall be due ~~April 15, 2026~~ October 15, 2026*
- Loan Interest Rate 1.11 per Annum*
- Loan Term is 20 years*
- Section 10.08 Special Conditions: Certified Copy of the Adopted Resolution, Legal Opinion, and completed Federal Funding Accountability Transparency Act Form*

Staff has reviewed the loan document and recommends approval of Option 1, to approve Resolution No. 2024-25 which authorizes the Mayor to execute State Revolving Loan DW350981 Amendment One (1) with FDEP to increase financing for the Lake Hermosa Booster Pump Project Construction Project.

Mayor Price asked for comments from the Council.

Council Member Gamble asked what funds would be used to repay the loan beginning in 2026. Ms. Houghton said water, wastewater, and stormwater operating.

Council Member Singer asked when the project would move forward. Mr. Clark said the project began a 630-day completion duration beginning mid-October 2024 and would break ground in March 2025.

Mayor Price asked why the cost increased by \$4 million dollars. Ms. Houghton said the economic environment, including a one-year CPI at a 5.6% increase. She noted all construction projects throughout the City were coming in at higher bids than initially anticipated.

MOTION

Troy Singer moved to approve Resolution 2024-25 [Option 1], seconded by Bob Grenier.

Council Member Gamble said the project was not coming out of the General Fund. Ms. Houghton noted the funding would be solely for Utility, including water and wastewater, and impact fees would also help leverage water and wastewater.

Council Member Singer noted the loan interest repayment was 1.11%. Ms. Houghton confirmed. She said the Utility Department worked hard to secure a loan forgiveness portion on an SRF loan, which had only happened one other time in twenty years. SMr. Drury noted that a \$1.4 million grant was also awarded to the project.

The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 13. Resolution 2024-26 – Final Budget Amendment for 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 THIRD AND FINAL AMENDMENT to the Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024.

Staff recommends approval of Option 1, to approve Resolution 2024-26, amending the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 City of Tavares Annual Operating Budget.

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

MOTION

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

XV. ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING

First Reading

Second Reading

XVI. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Tab 14. Horizon Teams

Mr. Drury made the following presentation:

The City Administrator has identified multi-year projects that will be completed sometime in the future (Horizon Teams). He has assigned staff to these Horizon Teams to Shepard these projects through, from inception and budgeting to implementation and completion. Staff researches various aspects of the projects and brings their research to the City Administrator. The Administrator brings that research forward for the full Council's benefit and further discussion and/or action. The City Administrator invites one Council member to join the "Staff Horizon Team" and attend research meetings for those "Horizon Teams" in which the Council member has a particular interest. Below is a listing of those Horizon Teams, their current status (Active or Complete) for this past year (2024), the associated assigned staff and Council member. Note: There are two VACANT opportunities for the Council to consider joining. The Council is provided an opportunity to change representation on those teams listed below.

Mr. Drury provided an update on the current Horizon Team projects. He said the following Horizon Team projects had been completed:

- Public Works Complex (Bob Grenier/J. Dillon) - COMPLETE
- Wooton Wonderland Rebuild (T. Singer/J. Dillon) – COMPLETE
- Fred Stover Fields Transition (S. Gamble/S. Aldrich) – COMPLETE
- Waterfront Park-Naming Horizon Team (L. Pfister/J. Drury) - COMPLETE

A discussion was held and the following horizon teams were approved.

2024-2025 Horizon Teams:

1. Tavares to Mount Dora Rails to Trails (T. Singer/J. Dillon)
2. Central Lake Regional Park E. Campus Partnership (L. Pfister/J. Drury/Aldrich)
3. Central Lake Regional Park W. Campus Partnership (S. Gamble/ J. Drury/S. Aldrich)
4. Preservation of History (Bob Grenier/J. Drury/S. Aldrich/D. Blaise)
5. N/S City Gateways – St Clair and Sinclair (W. Price/J. Dillon)
6. Economic Development (Lori Pfister/B. Tweedie)
7. West Main Street Gateway (S. Gamble/J. Dillon)

8. S.R. 19/561 and 448 Corridors (W. Price/A. Fabre)
9. Old 441 Corridor (T. Singer/A. Fabre)
10. Fairgrounds (L Pfister/J Drury/B Tweedie/P Clark/J Dillon)
11. Sister City Program (B Grenier/J. Drury)
12. Parking Garage (S. Gamble/James Dillion)
13. America In Bloom (T. Singer/James Dillion)

Tab 16. Board Appointments to the Tavares Library Advisory Board, Tavares Police Pension Board, and Tavares Firefighters Pension Board

Mayor Price made the following presentation:

Below are the vacant or expiring seats to the Tavares Library Advisory Board, Tavares Police Pension Board, and Tavares Firefighters Pension Board. The Board openings have been advertised in the Daily Commercial and City website.

Tavares Library Advisory Board: (2 year terms)

There is currently one open seat on the Tavares Library Board for the remainder of a term expiring June 2025. The City has received two new applications for appointment:

- *Lawrence E. Ross submitted a new application.*
- *Revae Hughley submitted a new application*

Tavares Police Pension Board: (2 year terms)

There are currently two open or expiring Council-appointed seats on the Police Pension Board. One seat is for a two-year term from November 2024-2026, and one seat is for the remainder of a term expiring in November 2025. The City has received the following request for reappointment:

- *Arthur VanDerStyf currently holds a Council-appointed position and has requested a reappointment. No new applications were received.*

If Mr. VanDerStyf is reappointed for a two-year term, one Council-appointed seat would remain open for a term expiring November 2025, and staff would continue to advertise the position.

The Police Officers are in the process of electing their representative seat to the Board, which will come back at a later date for ratification by the Council.

Tavares Firefighters Pension Board: (4 year terms)

There is currently one expiring seat on the Tavares Firefighters Pension Board. The

seat is for a four-year term expiring November 2028. The City has received the following request for reappointment:

- *Jim Sweezea currently holds a Council-appointed position and has requested a reappointment. No new applications were received.*

The Firefighters are in the process of electing their representative seat to the Board, which will come back at a later date for ratification by the Council.

A discussion was held, and Mayor Price made the following Board appointments:

- Tavares Library Board – Revae Hughley – Appointed for the remainder of a term expiring June 2025
- Police Pension Board – Arthur VanDerStyf – Reappointment for a two-year term expiring November 2026
- Fire Pension Board – Jim Sweezea – Reappointment for a four-year term expiring November 2028

Tab 15. Board Representatives

Mr. Drury made the following presentation:

Below is a listing of the 2024 Board Representation. An opportunity is provided for the Council to discuss their representation to those Boards and make any changes so desired.

Board Representatives

B.E.T.T.E.R. Tavares Race Relations Group: (T. Singer, Alternate S. Gamble/J. Drury/S. Coursey)

Florida League of Cities Legislative Committees:

*Environment & Energy Council (P. Clark)
Transportation & Intergovernmental (A. Fabre)
Finance & Taxation (L. Houghton)
Utilities, Natural Resources, and Public Works (J. Dillon)*

Lake Community Action Agency – Donna L. Klinger Bonifacino

Lake County Library Advisory Board (3rd Thursday at 5 p.m.): (Lawrence Ross (exp 02-28-2026)/Debbie Weinert - Alternate (exp 02-26-2026) – Appointed 04-06-2022)

Lake County Arts and Cultural Alliance: (City Representative - Iliana Buigas/Alternate Erika Buigas appointed 03-15-2023)

Lake County League of Cities (2nd Friday at 11:30 a.m.): (S. Gamble/Alternate T. Singer)

Lake County League of Cities Solid Waste Advisory Committee: (L. Houghton)

Lake County Water Alliance Technical Committee: (P. Clark)

Lake Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization Governing Board Member: (S. Gamble/Alternate W. Price)

Lake Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee: (A. Fabre)

Lake Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization Community Advisory Committee: (T.J. Fish)

YMCA Golden Triangle Advisory Board: (John Drury & P. Clark & S. Coursey)

Tavares Chamber of Commerce: (T. Singer/B. Tweedie)

School Concurrency Committee Annual Meeting: (Sandy Gamble)

School Concurrency Technical Advisory Committee: (A. Fabre)

Mr. Drury said there was an appointment opportunity for a City Representative on the Lake County Library Board, as two applications were received for the Tavares Library Board. He said the City had representation on County boards to advocate for the City on the Council's behalf.

A discussion was held, and there was a consensus from the Council to appoint Lawrence Ross as the City Representative to the Lake County Library Board, with Debbie Weinert continuing to serve as the City's Alternate Representative.

Tab 17. Splash Park Rehabilitation, Phase 2

Mr. Tweedie made the following presentation:

The Tavares Splash Park at the Wooton Park waterfront has been in operation since 2010 and is a prominent Iconic feature of the City's spirit and brand and is an extremely popular and well-visited attraction for local families and visitors alike. Recently, phase 1 of a 2 phase restoration program was completed in the spring of 2024. Phase 1 was a "face lift" to the park, including replacement of the floor surface pad, rehabilitation of some existing water features and replacement of others and was a combined scope of work with the reconstruction of Wooton Wonderland and the adjacent playground/splash park picnic/plaza

area. After the approximately 18 month playground/splash park rehabilitation project was completed, the splash park re-opened in May of this year.

Unfortunately, there were numerous closures over this past summer due to outages of the “internal” pumps, plumbing and sanitization components, which required constant maintenance and repair. This is due to the age of the equipment and constant wear and tear due to the elements and the operating environment. The City Utilities Department team who monitor the water quality, maintain and repair the sanitization water circulatory system have done an outstanding job of keeping it operational and safe for all to use, however at 14 years of age, the system has reached the end of its useful life. The system needs to be replaced with new, modern, more efficient and automated and more reliable equipment.

The Utilities Department Director and staff, working with the Waterfront Operations Team of the Economic Development Department, have researched options, solicited information and quotes from numerous vendors and toured several similar public-use splash parks throughout the State of Florida and determined that the best option is a full replacement of all existing equipment. Through this process they have obtained the attached proposal from Aquamarine, including a detailed description of the scope of work and cost to provide a complete system replacement. The firm is well qualified and capable of performing the work and committed to completing the project in time to open for the 2025 summer season.

Previously, the Utility Fund effected an internal loan to the General Fund for the City to purchase the Tavares Square/Clerk Property in the amount of \$1M. Recently, the General Fund sold the Tavares Square/Clerk property for \$1,100,000. In lieu of repayment of \$485,000 of the internal loan from the sale proceeds, Council may consider forgiveness of \$485,000 of the internal loan amount to fund the project. There are sufficient reserves in the Infrastructure Sales Tax Fund to fund the remaining project costs in the amount of \$203,846.

Staff recommends Option 1, to approve the allocation of \$485,000 from Tavares Square Sale Proceeds, authorizes Partial Internal Loan Forgiveness, and \$203,846 from Infrastructure Sales Tax Reserves to provide the funding for the amount of \$588,846 for construction and \$100,000 for contingency and authorize the execution of a contract with Aquamarine for the scope of work provided to complete the project.

Mayor Price asked for comments from the Council.

Council Member Gamble said the Splash Park needed an update and noted his support as the City had the funds and did not have to acquire a loan.

MOTION

Sandy Gamble moved to approve [Option 1], seconded by Lori Pfister.

Council Member Singer asked what other options would be available if the Council did not proceed with the request. Mr. Tweedie said the project would be pushed out further, and the project may see an increase in cost and not be ready for the next season due to the solicitation, scope of work, design, and bid processes. Council Member Singer noted his support as financing was available, and he did not wish for the park to be closed for another season. Mr. Clark confirmed the upgrades could not wait another year.

The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

XVII. NEW BUSINESS

XVIII. OLD BUSINESS

Mayor's Youth Council Update

Mr. Drury noted the Council received a booklet containing the Mayor's Youth Council Syllabus to use as a guide and fill out as the Mayor's Youth Council members complete their assignments. He said information on how to contact the members through the school was also available in the booklet. Mr. Drury asked the Council members to turn in the completed booklets to the City Clerk at the end of the program to record in the record.

Mr. Drury asked each student present to identify how many meetings they attended.

- Kane Buigas said he attended two meetings
- Mitchell Garcia said he attended two meetings
- Anderson Fish said he attended two meetings and one event
- Kelly Lopez said she attended one meeting

Vice Mayor Pfister thanked Council Member Grenier for serving as Mayor the past year and attending all the City events. She said he did a great job.

Historic Train Station

Council Member Gamble asked for an update on the Historic Train Station. Mr. Tweedie said the City entered a lease agreement during the past year, and the building plans would return before the Council. He said all work and budgeted reimbursements on the building would require Council approval.

XIX. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

Michele Pietrowski, 460 Fern Avenue, Tavares, discussed a series of issues with one of her neighbors, including law enforcement and code enforcement issues with accrued fines of approximately \$90,000. Ms. Pietrowski said she would like speed bumps placed in the street. Chief Coursey said she would meet with Ms. Pietrowski after the meeting to discuss her issues further.

Mr. Drury noted the property in question was being code enforced, police were patrolling the neighborhood, and the staff was aware of the situations that needed to be addressed. He said staff would continue to assist the neighborhood.

Gary Santoro, Royal Harbor, congratulated and commended Ms. Houghton on a job well done in receiving the FGOA award.

XX. REPORTS

Tab. 18. City Administrator Report

Mr. Drury said a list of upcoming meetings was provided to the Council. He noted the Tavares Library Advisory Board would not be meeting in December.

Chief Coursey said the first successful Citizens Police Academy (CPA) was completed. She thanked the Council for attending a graduation and appreciated their support. Chief Coursey said the next CPA would begin in March 2025.

Mr. Tweedie provided an update on projects, including the following:

- The Seaplane Base Trail Reroute project was closing, and a Certificate of Occupancy would be received in a week after a few punch items were completed.
- The Tavares Square property closed, and Mr. Cagan was anxious to proceed with the mixed-use property and project.

Mr. O'Keefe recognized Yezenia Stephens, Support Service Staff Assistant, for her work with the meeting video equipment.

Mr. Aldrich said the Tavares Library would kick off their holiday concert series and invited those present to attend the events. He noted the Candyland Parade and Christmas Celebration was scheduled for December 7, 2024.

Ms. Houghton said the Finance Department would meet with FEMA and staff to review hurricane damage and reimbursement requests. She said the Council would be advised when additional information is obtained.

Mr. Fabre noted a woodfire pizza restaurant recently received a permit and would be opening on the west side of Main Street.

Attorney Holt said she was pleased to continue to work with each Council member.

Tab 19. City Council Member Reports

Vice Mayor Pfister

- Congratulated her fellow Council members on their elections.
- Said her grandson loved the STEAM program and commended Mr. Aldrich, Deputy Director of Recreation Pete Sherrard, and Recreation Coordinator Kayla Gaines.

Council Member Grenier

Council Member Grenier congratulated Mayor Price and Vice Mayor Pfister on their elections and looked forward to continuing to serve with them.

Council Member Singer

- Congratulated his fellow Council members on their elections and said he looked forward to continuing to serve with them.
- Said the Boo Fest and Roctoberfest events were wonderful.
- Said he attended the Tavares Police Citizens Academy Graduation and asked Chief Coursey to extend his thanks to Captain Hall and Reserve Officer Bell.

Council Member Gamble

- Congratulated his fellow Council members on their elections.
- Said he enjoyed attending the Tavares Police Citizens Academy graduation.
- Commended Mr. Dillon and the Public Works Team for their efforts in cleaning up the City after Hurricane Milton.
- Congratulated Ms. Houghton and the Finance Department Team on receiving the GFOA Award.

Mayor Price

- Thanked his fellow Council members for their confidence in serving. He thanked Council Member Grenier for his previous service as Mayor and to his fellow Council members on their elections.
- Said he attended the Octoberfest event, where he received many great comments from the citizens about the event.
- Said Boo Fest was an incredible success, and he gave out over 4,000 pieces of candy.
- Said he attended the Tavares Police Citizens Academy and noted that Mayor's Youth Council member Anderson Fish also attended.
- Said he was excited that a light would be installed at the intersection of CR561 and SR19.

Those present wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

XXI. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business, and Mayor Price adjourned the meeting at 5:47 p.m.

Respectfully,

Susie Novack, MMC, FCRM
City Clerk