



**TAVARES CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 21, 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
James Dillon, Public Works Director
Mark O'Keefe, Public Communications Director
Sarah Coursey, Police Chief**

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 Fred Boone

Pastor Fred Boon 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 Lori Pfister. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

IV. PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

Tab 2. Proclamation – Irish American Heritage Month

Mayor Grenier read a Proclamation dedicating March 2024 as Irish American Heritage Month in Tavares.

MOTION

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

Mayor Grenier presented the Proclamation to Greg Sean Canning, Florida Secretary of the Ancient Order of Hibernarians.

Mr. Canning thanked the Council for dedicating March 2024 as Irish American Heritage Month. He said the Proclamation coincided with festivities underway as the Irish celebrate their heritage throughout the state, noting that March 17 was the largest national day celebration globally.

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

Attorney Holt stated there were two quasi-judicial matters before the Council; Tab 7, and Tab 8. She swore in those who wished to provide testimony.

Attorney Holt asked the Council to disclose any exparte communications.

- Vice Mayor Gamble said he met with Mr. Duncan and Mr. Tetro.
- Council Member Singer said he met with the applicant and Mr. Kehr.
- Council Member Price said he met with Mr. Kehr.

- Mayor Grenier said he met with the applicant and Mr. Kehr.
- Council Member Pfister said she met with Mr. Tetro, Mr. Duncan, and Mr. Kehr.

VI. READING OF ALL ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS INTO THE RECORD

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

RESOLUTION 2024-04

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, TO VACATE UNIMPROVED RIGHT-OF-WAY OF WEBLEY'S SUBDIVISION, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF, AS RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK 1, PAGE 22, OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF SUMTER COUNTY, FLORIDA, SUBJECT TO THE RULES AND REGULATIONS ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TAVARES COUNCIL; PROVIDING FOR 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 2024-04

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, seconded by Troy Singer. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 3. Approval of the February 7, 2024, City Council Meeting Minutes

Approved on the Consent Agenda.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS

Tab 4. Resolution 2024-04 – KH CW Lake Harris LLC Request to Vacate Unimproved Right-of-Way Easement Located at the Westerly End of Woodlea Road of the Webley's Subdivision

Mr. Fabre made the following presentation:

This is a request to vacate a platted unimproved right-of-way easement located at the westerly end of Woodlea Road of the Webley's Subdivision, as recorded in Plat Book 1, Page 22, of the Public Records of Sumter County, Florida. The current property owner is petitioning to vacate the subject right-of-way since it is undeveloped and not practical as right-of-way. The right-of-way easement is completely situated on the existing Cresswind at Lake Harris Subdivision development.

On January 17, 2024, City Council approved the Final Plat for Phase 1 of Cresswind at Lake Harris, subject to vacation of this right-of-way. During the title and platting review process, a historic r-o-w easement dedicated to Sumter County was revealed. The Webley's Subdivision (AKA: "Infant Town of Florida") plat, filed on March 31, 1885, provides for an easement to be granted to Sumter County along the streets identified in the plat. On January 9, 2024, Sumter County has agreed to grant an Assignment of the R-O-W easements to the City of Tavares.

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.

Staff recommends Option 1, that the City Council moves to approve Resolution 2024-04 vacation of an unimproved right-of-way located at the westerly end of Woodlea Road of the Webley's Subdivision, as recorded in Plat Book 1, Page 22, of the Public Records of Sumter County, Florida.

Mayor Grenier said he had a Request to Speak form from Sheila Short. Ms. Short advised she would like to speak on Ordinances 2024-04 and 2024-05. Mayor Grenier noted those ordinances were at first reading with no discussion. Mr. Drury stated the ordinances would be discussed at their second reading on March 6, 2024.

Council Member Singer asked Mr. Fabre to confirm that the City had to wait for Sumter County to grant access to the right-of-way as it was established in 1885 and before Lake County became a County and was Sumter County at the time. Mr. Fabre confirmed.

Council Member Singer asked if the vacate was ministerial, and the City was waiting for Sumter County to agree. Attorney Holt said it was an old right of way before Tavares or Lake County were incorporated. The right-of-way was still in favor of Sumter County. She worked with the Sumter County Attorney, who brought it to the Sumter County Commission to disclaim any rights and assign those rights in favor of Tavares. The right-of-way now sits properly with the City of Tavares, so the Tavares Council can properly vacate the right-of-way.

MOTION

Troy Singer moved to approve Resolution 2024-04, seconded by Sandy Gamble. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

IX. ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING

First Reading

Tab 5. 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 – Valaquez & Escobedo

No discussion at First Reading.

Tab 6. 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 – Valaquez & Escobedo

No discussion at First Reading.

Second Reading

Tab 7. Ordinance 2024-01 – Rezoning of Approximately 19.46 Acres Located at the Southeast Corner of SR19 and Lane Park Cutoff – Idamere Crossings

Mr. Fabre made the following presentation:

The subject property consists of approximately 19.46 acres of vacant property located at the southeast corner of SR-19 & Lane Park Cutoff Road. The property is currently zoned as Highway Commercial (C-2), and the applicant is proposing that the property be rezoned to a mixed use Planned Development (PD).

On November 18, 2021, the Planning & Zoning Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of PD Ordinance 2021-11 which proposed a one hundred sixty-five (165) dwelling units multi-family apartment complex on the subject property. On December 15, 2021, the City Council denied the PD rezoning request as presented. In general, City Council rational of denial was to preserve existing commercial land use along SR-19.

At present, the applicant is proposing to develop the site with 1.7 acres of commercial land along SR-19 and a 110 dwelling unit multi-family apartment complex. The PD will limit the density to 25 dwelling units an acre and will specifically dictate the multi-family portion of the development shall be restricted to 110 multi-family dwelling units. The commercial uses will be subject to certain Highway Commercial (C-2) uses outlined in the proposed PD Ordinance 2024-01.

The proposed residential use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan by ensuring the availability, quality, and sustainability of a mix of housing types in Tavares. The subject property is approximately 0.30 miles from Tavares Middle School and is walkable for students as there is an existing sidewalk on the south side of Lane Park Cutoff. The Lake County School District has reviewed the proposed 110-unit development and determined that there are adequate school facilities to serve the approximately 29 students anticipated. The property owner is required to apply for and obtain a school capacity reservation prior to

development approval.

The environmental assessment submitted by E Sciences, Inc. indicates no adverse conditions or environmental concerns with the property. Prior to any development, the property owner must comply with all Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission provisions as they pertain to threatened species.

The preliminary traffic analysis submitted by VHB does not indicate an adverse impact on the level of service for surrounding roadways. The report states that the proposed planned development (PD) zoning and land use presents a potential trip reduction from the existing commercial zoning.

Development of the property will be in accordance with the provisions of PD Ordinance 2024-01 and the City's Land Development Regulations. The proposed mixed use Planned Development (PD) zoning is compatible with the surrounding zoning, which is a mixture of residential, commercial, and Public Facilities zoning. Prior to the issuance of any Building Permits for this property, compliance with all applicable regulations will be required. The City is concurrently processing a future land use map amendment to re-designate the property from Commercial (COM) to Mixed Use (MU) on the Future Land Use Map 2040.

On January 18, 2024, the Planning & Zoning Board voted (3-3) which resulted in a recommendation of denial for Resolution 2024-01 as presented.

Staff recommends Option 1, that the City Council moves to approve Ordinance 2024-01 rezoning of approximately 19.46 acres of property located at the southeast corner of SR-19 & Lane Park Cutoff from Commercial (C-2) to Planned Development (PD).

Michael Rankin, Land Planning Group, provided a PowerPoint presentation of the project versus a previous project at the site that was denied, including the following highlights:

- The number of units was reduced from 165 to 110 from a project previously submitted and denied.
- 34% open space on both projects.
- The number of parking spaces was reduced from 330 to 220.
- Change amenities with a boat dock and businesses with professional uses.
- Adding adult gaming and tattoo parlors as prohibited uses.
- Adding 20,000 square feet dedicated to commercial along SR 19.
- Reduction of traffic trips from 30,000 to 2,000.
- Shoreline and spring coordinated with St. John's River Water Management District.
- Reduction of building height from an allowable 60 feet to three stories at 35 feet.

Mr. Rankin said the units would be offered at market rate, comply with City codes, and support commercial mixed-use along SR 19. He said rooftops generate commercial development.

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

Audience Comments

Tim Lynn, 27910 Debbie Road, Okahumpka, provided PowerPoint images and noted he did not support the project. He stated a concern regarding debris and oils draining into the water retention area as it feeds directly into the lake.

Don Kehr, 16833 Deer Island Road, Lake County, said he provided the Council with Request to Speak forms and signed lists of area residents who opposed the project and requested their allotted speaking time be provided to Mr. Kehr.

Mayor Grenier granted Mr. Kehr fifteen minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Kehr provided a PowerPoint presentation against the development. He said the site was on a natural spring and stated his concern about the building height and moving to mixed-use along a commercial corridor. He said the plan did not support the City's goals for commercial growth, would slow commercial success, and would have a negative economic impact.

Audience member Mike Lelan said he agreed with Mr. Kehr and had no further comments.

Mr. Drury asked if anyone else in the audience wished to speak.

Vance Jochim, 12619 Milwaukee Avenue, Lake County, spoke against the project and noted his traffic concerns and the process of traffic engineer selection.

Francis Barto, 3707 Windy Meadow Drive, Tavares, noted his support for the project. Mr. Barto said he was concerned about a lack of housing options for elderly residents who can no longer care for their single-family homes.

Mr. Rankin said the proposed plan was at a conceptual stage. He reiterated the building height would be no more than 35 feet.

Vice Mayor Gamble asked if the apartment complex would use dumpsters or individual trash containers, noting the cost for the city to pick up individual trash containers versus dumpsters. Mr. Rankins said it could combine both and would comply with City codes.

Vice Mayor Gamble noted that the project was at a conceptual stage and that a final plat would come before the Council later in the process if it meets City codes and is approved by St. John's River Water Management District (SJRWMD) traffic trips per

day would be 30,000 if developed commercial and 2,000 trips per day as mixed-use. Mr. Rankin confirmed.

Logan Opsahl, 215 N. Eola Drive, Orlando, Attorney for the landowner, discussed the current and proposed allowable land use, commercial and residential development, and how they complement each other. He said the ordinance obligates the developer to meet or exceed City codes.

Bruce Duncan, Magnolia Circle, Tavares, Consultant for the landowner, said that before the Council was a reapplication with a 33% reduction in density, an added commercial component, reduced traffic, and workforce housing. He discussed efforts to bring a hotel to the site and the need for workforce housing in the area. Mr. Duncan also discussed the Live Local Act and said over 300 units were currently allowed on the site.

Council Discussion

Council Member Price noted his concerns for the project and said the Council wanted to maintain commercial along the SR 19 corridor. He noted the property was on a signalized corner, and SR 19 would expand to 4 lanes. Council Member Price discussed three approved housing developments in Tavares, traffic along SR 19, and parking issues at the Big House.

Council Member Singer said the property was unique and noted workforce housing needs. He said balancing commercial and residential was a tough job, and the applicant returned with a new plan that reduced the number of housing units and traffic trips with a commercial element. He said the Council would have more control over the Planned Unit Development and felt the project was the best use for the property.

Mayor Grenier said that when he moved to Tavares 30 years ago, he got involved to help create the place he wished to live, work, and play. He said he initiated an SR 19/561 Corridor Horizon Team in 2008 when he was elected to the City Council. Mayor Grenier said the City residents held visioning sessions, and the proposed project did not fit the area. He said he could not support an apartment complex on Lake Idamere.

Vice Mayor Gamble said he did not support the first project presented to the Council as it did not include a commercial element. He said the applicant returned with a proposal that included commercial and a mixed-use project with 2,000 car trips per day rather than a potential 30,000 with commercial only. Vice Mayor Gamble said he was the Council's representative on the Lake Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization Governing Board and noted SR 19, 561, and 48 were scheduled for future upgrades and growth impacts funding for upgrades. He said SJRWMD would oversee the lake and retention pond, and he supported the project.

Council Member Pfister said SR 19 was the last commercial corridor in the City. She said while there was some commercial in the project, she felt it was the safe way to go,

and she is a risk taker. She discussed the Live Local Act and said the state's legislation negated the residents' will.

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to deny Ordinance 2024-01, seconded by Walter Price. The motion carried 3-2 as follows:

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

Tab 8. Ordinance 2024-02 – Small Scale FLUM Amendment of Approximately 19.46 Acres Located at the Southeast Corner of SR19 and Lane Park Cutoff – Idamere Crossings

Mr. Fabre said Ordinance 2024-02 was a companion ordinance to Ordinance 2024-01 for the Future Land Use. He said that since the Council denied Ordinance 2024-01, staff recommended denying 2024-02 to prevent creating a future land use that would not be consistent with the zoning.

Mr. Drury asked if any audience members wished to speak on Ordinance 2024-02. There were no requests.

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to deny Ordinance 2024-02, seconded by Walter Price. The motion carried 3-2 as follows:

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

X. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Tab 9. Economic Development Strategy 2024 Update

Mr. Tweedie provided a PowerPoint presentation on the 2024 Economic Development Strategy, highlighting the following areas:

- Advent Health, Waterman Hospital Campus
- Medical Village

- Downtown Professional Services
- Downtown Entertainment District
- Commerce Park
- Marina/Ecotourism & Sports Tourism
- Seaplane Base
- Special Events
- Arts, Culture & History
- Highway Commercial/Retail
- Quick Service/Fast Casual Dining
- Light Industrial Manufacturing Center

Mr. Tweedie provided an update on new businesses.

The Council commended Mr. Tweedie on his efforts and presentation.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

XII. OLD BUSINESS

Council Member Pfister said she would like to agendize an impact fee discussion.

XIII. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

Jocelyn Williamson, 83 Geneva Drive, Oviedo, discussed her thoughts on the practice of praying after an invocation, including a desire to embrace diversity and concern that no particular religion is given preference.

David Williamson, Central Florida Freethought Community, 83 Geneva Drive, Oviedo, discussed the Council having a prayer after a previous invocation. He said the invocation time should have been limited and not open to rebuttal.

Don Kehr, 16833 Deer Island Road, Lake County, discussed terming developments as mixed-use when there is an undesired zoning on a project. He provided PowerPoint slides. He commended the Council on their efforts and said he was in support of prayer at Council meetings.

Debby Weinert, 724 Lake Dora Drive, Tavares, thanked the council for serving and being steadfast in their hard work. She thanked the Council for the community grant and said 188 Tavares children received books through the Dolly Parton Book Program. She said she was in support of prayer at Council meetings.

XIV. REPORTS

Tab 10. City Administrator Report

Mr. Drury said the Regional Park Horizon Team recently held a meeting that included Council Member Pfister, Lake County Commissioner and Chairman Kirby Smith, the

YMCA, and the CEO of AdventHealth on building a partnership. He thanked Council Member Pfister for her hard work and efforts.

Ms. Novack noted the annual City Council and Leadership Team photographs were scheduled for March 6, 2024, at 3:30 p.m.

Mr. Tweedie said Planes, Tunes, and Barbeque would be held on March 1 and 2, 2024. He said the event would include music, barbeque, vendors, a seaplane contest, and a drone show.

Mr. Dillon said the Public Works Operations Project was 75% complete and on time.

Tab 11. City Council Member Reports

Council Member Pfister said she recently drove by the Public Works facility, which looked beautiful. She said the YMCA project was fantastic and looked forward to sharing more with the Council and residents.

Council Member Price said he looked forward to the Planes, Tunes, & Barbeque event.

Council Member Singer said he looked forward to the Planes, Tunes & Barbeque event and noted Tavares was the first to host a drone show in Lake County. He congratulated Mr. Dillon on his Public Works completion efforts.

Vice Mayor Gamble said Babe Ruth's opening day was scheduled for March 2, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. He asked if the drone show would be added to the 4th of July event. Mr. Drury said it would be included in the budget for the Council's consideration. Council Member Pfister said the citizens were more excited about having a drone show rather than fireworks.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business, and Mayor Grenier adjourned the meeting at 6:13 p.m.

Respectfully,

Susie Novack, MMC, FCRM
City Clerk