



**TAVARES CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 5, 2025 – 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, 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, Support Services Director
Sarah Coursey, Police Chief
Phil Clark, Utilities Director**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Price 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 Dewey Smith, First Baptist Church of Mount Dora

Pastor Dewey Smith, First Baptist Church of Mount Dora, provided the invocation and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

MOTION

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

IV. PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

Tab 2. Proclamation – Employee Appreciation Day

Mayor Price read a Proclamation declaring March 7, 2025, Employee Appreciation Day. In 1995, Dr. Bob Nelson, a founding member of Recognition Professionals International, created Employee Appreciation Day to reward and thank employees for their hard work and dedication to an organization. Employee Appreciation Day is held on the first Friday of March each year.

MOTION

Sandy Gamble moved to approve the Proclamation, seconded by Bob Grenier. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

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. Novack read the following ordinance at First Reading by title only:

ORDINANCE 2025-01

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA AMENDING THE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES CHAPTER 6 FIRE PROTECTION AND PREVENTION, ARTICLE IV FIRE PREVENTION STANDARDS, SECTION 6-96 NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION CODES ADOPTED; AND AMENDING CHAPTER 6 FIRE PROTECTION AND PREVENTION, ARTICLE IV FIRE PREVENTION STANDARDS,

**SECTION 6-97 STANDARD FIRE PROTECTION CODE ADOPTED;
SUBJECT TO THE RULES, REGULATIONS AND OBLIGATIONS
ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TAVARES COUNCIL; PROVIDING
SEVERABILITY AND CONFLICTS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN
EFFECTIVE DATE.**

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

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

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to approve the Consent Agenda [Tab 3. Approval of the February 19, 2025, City Council Meeting Minutes], seconded by Bob Grenier. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 3. Approval of the February 19, 2025, City Council Meeting Minutes

Approved on the Consent Agenda.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS

IX. ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING

First Reading

Tab 4. Ordinance 2025-01 – Language Amendment to Chapter 6 of the City of Tavares City Ordinance, “Fire Protection and Prevention”

No discussion at First Reading.

Second Reading

X. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Tab 5. Accept and Award Recommended Architect Firm for the Golden Triangle Regional Park – West Campus Design

Mr. Aldrich made the following presentation:

On January 10, 2025, the City of Tavares advertised a Request For Qualifications (RFQ 2025-0001) for an architect firm to complete a build-out of the Golden Triangle Regional Park – West Campus at the Woodlea Sports Complex as a phased project. Three firms responded with statements of qualifications on February 13, 2025.

*Dix.Hite + Partners
150 West Jessup Avenue
Longwood, FL 32750*

*GatorSkitch Architects & Planners
1000 E. Highway 50, Ste. 201A
Clermont, FL 34711*

*Powell Studio Architecture
713 W Montrose St
Clermont, FL 34711*

A selection committee made up of the following evaluated the three proposals at a committee meeting on February 19, 2025:

*Pete Sherrard, City of Tavares
Phil Clark, City of Tavares
Angela Harrold, Lake County, Florida*

All firms were qualified and capable of the job, and it was a difficult decision to select the top firm. Ultimately, the selection committee unanimously ranked the firms as follows:

- 1. Powell Studio Architecture*
- 2. Dix.Hite + Partners*
- 3. GatorSkitch Architects & Partners*

Attached is the RFQ response from the number one selected firm, Powell Studio Architecture. The other RFQ responses are available upon request.

Staff recommended Option 1, for the Council to approve the recommended architectural firm, Powell Studio Architecture, and authorize staff to negotiate a contract.

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

MOTION

Sandy Gamble moved to approve the RFQ award to Powell Studio Architecture [Option 1], seconded by Lori Pfister.

Vice Mayor Pfister noted her confidence in the ranking committee.

The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Mr. Powell thanked the Council and said he looked forward to working with the City.

Tab 6. Provide Draft Report and Set public Workshop Dates for Fire, Police, Parks, and General Government Impact Fees

Ms. Houghton made the following presentation:

By way of background, the following bullet points are provided to assist the City Council as they review the City of Tavares 2025 Municipal Impact Fee Study Draft Report for Police, Fire, Parks and General Government Facilities Impact Fees. The Draft Study Report is dated February 13, 2025.

- *The prior study for City of Tavares Police, Fire and Park Impact Fees was dated September 12, 2006.*
- *The City Council adopted Ordinance 2007-02 on February 21, 2007, which implemented the 2006 study recommendations.*
- *On June 4, 2021, CS/CS/CS/HB337, known as the Florida Impact Fee Act, was signed into law which brought several changes to Impact Fee requirements.*

Some changes for Impact Fees provided in the Florida Impact Fee Act (F.S § 163.31801) include the following:

- *The law provides an introduction of definitions for the terms infrastructure and public facilities.*
- *The law also creates a cap on the amount local governments can increase impact fees. This cap limits the increase to no more than 12.5% in a given year and no more than 50% over a four-year period.*
- *An increase of greater than 50% requires a two-thirds vote of the City Council, and provides for at least two publicly noticed workshops (This is the case for Tavares).*
- *Local governments will be required to credit developers or builders on a dollar-for-dollar basis when they contribute toward public facilities or infrastructure.*
- *The law requires that impact fees be split out into their own accounting fund.*
- *Local governments must limit administrative charges for the collection of impact fees to actual costs.*
- *Changes to the Financial Statement Audit Affidavit requirements by the CFO.*

*The **Draft** Impact Fee report has been prepared by the City's Rate Consultant, Joe Williams of Raftelis, and discusses the following for each impact fee: Police, Fire, Parks, and General Government Facilities. The Draft Report has been prepared within the constraints of the Florida Impact Fee Act.*

- *An Introduction*
- *Existing Impact Fees*

- *Incremental Costs*
- *Impact Fee Development*
- *Impact Fee Comparisons*

This report is delivered to the City Council for their review in anticipation of two public workshops to be scheduled by the City Council.

Staff recommended Option 1, for the City Council to discuss setting dates for two Public Workshops for public discussions for review of the City of Tavares 2025 Municipal Impact Fee Study Draft Report dated February 13, 2025.

Ms. Houghton invited Raftelis Consultant Michelle Galvin to the podium for a presentation.

Ms. Galvin provided a PowerPoint presentation review of the 2024 Municipal Impact Fee Draft Study. She said two Workshops and readings for an Ordinance to adopt fees would be scheduled. Ms. Galvin noted that impact fees could not be implemented for 90 days after passage of an ordinance. She provided area fees and the proposed changes, which were average impact fee rates by comparison.

Mr. Drury noted the official process would begin at the two workshops.

Mayor Price asked for comments from the Council.

Vice Mayor Pfister noted her support for moving forward with scheduling the workshops.

Council Member Singer thanked Ms. Galvin for her hard work on the study. He said there was a lot of growth in the City, and people moved to it because they loved what was happening. Council Member Singer said the Council should ensure the development was paying for it rather than the current residents. If not, the City would be in a deficit of \$7.5 million dollars in 2034. He said it was time to address the City's impact fees and looked forward to the workshops.

Council Member Gamble asked if the impact fees would be for future developments, not those that had already come before the Council for approval or broken ground. Mr. Drury confirmed. He said the impact fees would not be effective until 90 days after adopting an ordinance. He said the ordinance could not be adopted until two public workshops were held.

Council Member Gamble asked if a moratorium on approving plans could be implemented until the process begins. Attorney Holt said she would look into it and return her findings to the Council.

Council Member Grenier noted his support for scheduling the workshops.

Council Member Singer recommended incorporating the workshops in the next two City Council meetings.

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to hold Impact Fee Workshops on March 19, 2025, and April 2, 2025, to be agendized with the Regular City Council meetings, seconded by Bob Grenier. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Mayor Price asked how often the study would be reviewed. Ms. Galvin said the study is reviewed every 4 to 5 years.

Mayor Price made the following comments regarding the study:

- Page 107 of 125, 4th paragraph – refers to the 'original cost' for the Police Department portion, and page 112 of 125 refers to the 'original value' for the Fire Department. Ms. Galvin said it was a cost based on the fixed assets. Mayor Price said page 112 should be correct to reflect 'costs.'
- Page 112 said the Fire Department's reflected cost was \$9,629,400; further down in the spreadsheet, it is reflected as \$8,657,800. Ms. Galvin said they would review the amounts.
- Page 116, Parks and Recreation, still included Fred Stover Sports Complex, which had been sold. Ms. Houghton noted the sale was pending when the information was added. Ms. Galvin said it would be addressed.
- Page 119, General Government Facilities, Table 27, reflects Public Works at \$241,900 when Public Works has a new facility at a higher cost. Ms. Galvin said a table was missing and the section would be added.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

XII. OLD BUSINESS

Council Member Grenier asked for an update on Aesop's Park. Mr. Dillon said the contractor broke ground, and the project was expected to be completed by the end of April 2025.

XIII. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

XIV. REPORTS

Tab 7. City Administrator Report

Mr. Tweedie provided an update on the positive economic impact of the recent Planes, Tunes, and BBQ event. He gave special thanks to Special Events and Operations Manager Cheri Moan for organizing the event, as well as the following staff members for their assistance:

Dan Charles, Waterfront Operations Manager

Diontre Schwier, Waterfront Operations Supervisor
Jason Santiago, Customer Service Specialist for Marina
Andrew Hamilton, Waterfront Operation Specialist for Marina
Chris Brink, Waterfront Operation Specialist for Marina
Brett Malikien, Waterfront Maintenance Technician for Marina
Kenneth Pearce, ROW Technician II
Gene Lajuenesse, ROW Technician II
Shawn Bronson, ROW Technician II
Rick Provencher, ROW Technician II
Kristie Pelfrey, Administrative Assistant
Jeff Caudill, Streets and Roads Maintenance Worker I
Emma Tighe, Parks Specialist I
Eric Lowe, Parks Specialist I
Latravirus 'Tray' Tolbert, Maintenance Worker I for Solid Waste
Dwayne Cannon, Maintenance Worker 1 for Solid Waste
Brandon Rosario, Senior Traffic Sign/Pavement Technician
Donald Hill, Utility Technician Worker for Water
Kayla Gaines, Recreation Coordinator
Adam Fisher, Network Administrator
Officer Courtney Burns
Officer Layne Sauseda
Officer Ben Postma
Officer Brenden Welte
Officer Alex Wilklow
Officer Dan Dixon
Corporal Cullin O'Shea
Sgt. Nicholas Dambro
Sgt. Joseph Kellan
Officer Dan Dixon
Captain Jared Blessing
Captain Jon Hall
Fire Division Chief Mike Willis
Fire Inspector Lee Cheney
Lieutenant Matt Simmons
Engineer Matt Parkhurst
Firefighter/Paramedic Shawn McDougald
Firefighter/Paramedic Imer Robles
Firefighter/Paramedic Alex Dacek
Firefighter/Paramedic Joseph Maleski
Firefighter/EMT Tyler Wagner

Mr. Tweedie thanked the Finance Department and said all departments in the City helped their small but mighty Team. He also thanked the Mount Dora Police Department for loaning the City a security system for the event.

Council Member Gamble recommended removing a tree along the shoreline as it blocks patrons' viewing of drone shows and fireworks.

Council Member Singer said the drone show was fantastic. He said Planes, Tunes, and BBQ was the first event utilizing the Tav Lee Trail Reroute around the Seaplane Base and asked if it helped the Tavares Teams and pedestrian traffic flow. Mr. Tweedie said it was a significant improvement with safety benefits, and the team did not have to set up barricades and maintain a perimeter around them. Council Member Singer said the reroute was well worth the investment.

Mr. Dillon said the Florida Chapter of the American Public Works Association awarded the City of Tavares a Project of the Year Award for the Public Works Facility and Lake Technical College Operations Center.

Mr. Aldrich thanked the Council for their support and for those who attended the Babe Ruth Baseball opening day event.

Tab 8. City Council Member Reports

Vice Mayor Pfister said she could not attend the weekend events due to her work schedule. She heard the Babe Ruth League opening day event was good and saw a lot of positive social media comments on the Planes, Tunes, and BBQ event. Vice Mayor Pfister said it was nice to see those comments from businesses who recognized City employees for their hard work and efforts.

Vice Mayor Pfister commended Mr. Dillon for winning the American Public Works Association Project of the Year award. She said it was an excellent week for employee appreciation.

Council Member Grenier noted his support for the Employee Appreciation Day Proclamation. He commended the staff for their hard work and efforts.

Mayor's Youth Council member Anderson Fish said he was optimistic about new development in the City.

Council Member Singer said the City employees are appreciated each day of the year. He commended all the employees who assisted with the Planes, Tunes, and BBQ event and Mr. Aldrich and Deputy Director of Recreation Pete Sherard for their efforts on the Babe Ruth League opening day event.

Council Member Gamble said he had a scheduling conflict and could not attend the Babe Ruth League opening day event. He commended Ms. Moan and the staff for their efforts on the Planes, Trains, and BBQ event. He noted his appreciation for the City staff.

Mayor Price expressed his appreciation for the City's employees. He attended the Babe Ruth League opening day event and noted that his son played in the program over 25 years ago at Fred Stover Field.

Mayor Price said he attended the Planes, Tunes, and BBQ and enjoyed the drone show.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business, and Mayor Price adjourned the meeting at 4:53 p.m.

Respectfully,

Susie Novack, MMC, FCRM
City Clerk