



**TAVARES CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
JUNE 17, 2026 – 4:00 PM  
TAVARES CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
201 EAST MAIN STREET, TAVARES**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT**

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

**STAFF PRESENT**

**John Drury, City Administrator  
Lindsay Holt, City Attorney  
Michelle Winegard, Deputy 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  
Karl Grogan, Police Captain  
James Dillon, Public Works Director  
Mark O'Keefe, Support Services Director**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Pfister called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. She 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 Kevin Honeycutt, First Baptist Church of Tavares**

Pastor Honeycutt provided the invocation and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

### **MOTION**

Doug Keown moved to approve the Agenda, seconded by Bob Grenier. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

### **IV. PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS**

#### **Tab 2. Tavares Chamber of Commerce Update**

No representative appeared on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce.

### **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**

### **VII. CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Pfister asked if anyone wished to pull an item from the Consent Agenda for discussion.

Council Member Gamble requested that Tab 4. FCCMA Resolution Honoring John Drury, be removed from the Consent Agenda for discussion.

### **MOTION**

Bob Grenier moved to approve the Consent Agenda [Tab 3. Approval of the May 20, 2026, City Council Meeting Minutes] with the exception of Tab 4. FCCMA Resolution Honoring John Drury. The motion was seconded by Walter Price and carried unanimously 5-0.

#### **Tab 3. Approval of the May 20, 2026, City Council Meeting Minutes**

*Approved on the Consent Agenda.*

#### **Tab 4. FCCMA Resolution Honoring John Drury**

Mayor Pfister recognized Mr. Drury by reading the FCCMA Resolution into the record.

## **MOTION**

Bob Grenier moved to approve the FCCMA Resolution Honoring John Drury, seconded by Sandy Gamble. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

## **VIII. RESOLUTIONS**

## **IX. ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING**

### **First Reading**

### **Second Reading**

## **X. GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

### **Tab 5. Board Appointments – Planning and Zoning Board and Library Board (Mayor)**

The Council agreed to table the agenda item until the July 1, 2026, City Council meeting to allow Mayor Pfister additional time to review the applications. There were no objections.

### **Tab 6. Golden Triangle Regional Park (East and West Campus) Conceptual Plan Workshop and Review (Community Services)**

Mr. Aldrich made the following presentation:

*On April 16, 2024, the City of Tavares advertised a Request For Qualifications (RFQ 2024-0006) for an architect firm to complete a build-out of the City's Golden Triangle Regional Park - East Campus. On August 7, 2024, at the regular scheduled city council meeting, Powell Studio Architecture was approved as the recommended top qualified firm.*

*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. On March 5, 2025, at the regular scheduled city council meeting, Powell Studio Architecture was likewise approved as the recommended top qualified firm.*

*On May 13, 2025, the City entered into an AIA Master Architect Agreement with Powell Studio Architecture for the design, engineering and complete build-out of the Golden Triangle Regional Park system made up of both the East Campus and West Campus. Over the past 12 months, a series of studies, community gathering sessions, and team meetings took place. A public engagement meeting was held at the YMCA on September 25, 2025, as well as one at the Tavares Civic Center on October 16, 2025, to include the community on hands-*

*on activities for designing the parks. Additionally, an online survey and project website were made available to collect specific insights on park amenities, desired activities, and overall functions of the design for both campuses.*

*Two separate Horizon Teams were established to focus design efforts individually for each campus in the regional park with the following representation:*

*The GTRP - East Campus Horizon Team*

*Mayor Lori Pfister, City of Tavares Council Representative  
John Drury, City of Tavares  
Scott Aldrich, City of Tavares  
Pete Sherrard, City of Tavares  
Kirby Smith, Lake County Commissioner  
Angela Harrold, Lake County  
Lindsaia Johansmeyer, Lake County  
Justin Higa, Central Florida YMCA  
Andy Weighill, Central Florida YMCA*

*The GTRP - West Campus Horizon Team*

*Sandy Gamble, City of Tavares Council Representative  
John Drury, City of Tavares  
Scott Aldrich, City of Tavares  
Pete Sherrard, City of Tavares  
Kirby Smith, Lake County Commissioner  
Angela Harrold, Lake County  
Lindsaia Johansmeyer, Lake County  
Don Griffey, Griffey Engineering*

*Meetings for the GTRP East Campus Horizon Team were held on January 22 and May 7, 2026, and the West Campus Horizon Team was on February 18 and April 27, 2026. Both Horizon Teams have worked closely with the Powell Studio Architecture design team to incorporate input from the community while creating a conceptual master plan for each park.*

*Representatives from the design team will present these conceptual plans in an engagement workshop format for City Council's input and feedback. The next steps will be to hold the third and final community engagement meeting sometime next month at the YMCA to provide the public with a full recap of the conceptual design process of both campuses and offer a chance for questions and answers to specific design decisions. Following that final community meeting, the design team will bring back to City Council the final master site plans for both the GTRP East and West Campuses, with a phasing strategy to guide future implementation.*

Mr. Jeff Powell and Mr. Ryan Seacrest of Powell Studio Architecture presented the conceptual design plan based on the information and feedback they received from the community engagement workshops. They first presented the East Campus plan.

Mayor Pfister asked for the Council's comments.

Council Member Gamble inquired about a gymnasium. Mr. Seacrest confirmed that the gymnasium would be within the 50,000-square-foot community center and would accommodate a double gymnasium.

Council Member Gamble noted that the conceptual design plan showed the soccer fields encroaching on the existing mobile offices. Mr. Seacrest confirmed that this plan would include the removal of the existing building and the relocation of those offices.

Mr. Seacrest then presented the West Campus conceptual design plan.

Mayor Pfister asked for the Council's comments.

Vice Mayor Grenier stated he loved the plans but did not want to lose the senior ball fields. He stated he preferred to keep both senior ball fields.

Council Member Gamble expressed support for retaining both senior fields and for considering installing artificial turf to allow them to serve both softball and baseball purposes. He stated that, while he was uncertain about the terrace, he believed the primary focus should be on the ball fields, particularly given the anticipated loss of access to the Fred Stover Park Sports Complex.

Council Member Gamble also noted that the senior fields were installed by Lake County and suggested that the County may have concerns if those fields were removed.

Council Member Price inquired whether there would be sufficient shade and space for parents to set up their own shade canopies. Mr. Seacrest confirmed that it was the case.

Council Member Gamble stated that he noticed the plans included foul-ball netting instead of chain-link fencing. He stated that netting was his preference and requested that the post be extended an additional 10–15 feet.

Council Member Gamble stated it was important that the sound not bounce off people's homes from the amphitheater.

Mayor Pfister stated she preferred the tops of the terrace seating areas to have grass seating areas built up by the concrete walls, rather than wooden bench seating.

Mr. Seacrest stated the next steps were to have a third community engagement meeting and then move on to phasing and budgeting.

Mayor Pfister stated she received a request-to-speak form from Mr. Vance Jochim and invited him to speak.

Mr. Jochim, a resident of unincorporated Lake County, expressed support for the proposed designs and asked whether studies had been conducted to evaluate community demand for the proposed recreational amenities. He suggested engaging local user groups to help increase participation and noted that future funding decisions may depend on the outcome of pending property tax legislation.

Mayor Pfister invited Mr. Gary Santoro to speak.

Mr. Santoro, a resident of Royal Harbor, expressed support for the proposed conceptual designs but raised concerns regarding parking capacity and stormwater management. He emphasized the importance of providing adequate parking to accommodate visitors and avoid overflow parking in surrounding areas. He also stressed the need to ensure that additional paved areas do not create stormwater runoff issues or negatively impact nearby properties.

Mayor Pfister invited Lake County Commissioner Mr. Kirby Smith to speak.

Commissioner Smith expressed appreciation for the dedication and collaborative efforts of the City of Tavares, Lake County, the YMCA, the consultant team, City Administrator John Drury, staff, and Council Members in advancing the project. He stated that it was encouraging to see the project progressing and noted that future implementation would depend on budget considerations. Commissioner Smith also thanked the presenters and commented that the presentation provided the public with a valuable opportunity to learn about potential future amenities and improvements.

## **MOTION**

**Bob Grenier moved to accept the Golden Triangle Regional Park (East and West Campus) Conceptual Plan Workshop and Review presentation, seconded by Walter Price. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.**

## **Tab 7. State's Referendum On Property Tax Reform (City Administrator)**

Mr. Drury made the following presentation:

*The Florida Governor and Legislature have approved a referendum on tax reform that will go before Florida voters on Tuesday, November 3, 2026. To pass, it would require 60% of the votes cast. The exact language is in the process of being approved by the Florida Secretary of State. Once it becomes available, it will be distributed.*

*The referendum includes several things, including an increase in the Homestead Exemption to \$150,000 for non-school property tax on January 1, 2027, and \$250,000 beginning January 1, 2028. It also reduces the tax increase cap of 10% on non-homestead property down to 5%. It also provides for other property tax-related uses.*

*If the referendum passes on November 3, 2026, it will not affect the current City budget which ends September 30, 2026, nor the proposed City budget that is currently being worked on that begins October 1, 2026, and ends September 30, 2027. It would, however, affect the FY 28 budget, which begins October 1, 2027, and ends September 30, 2028.*

Mr. Drury stated there would be no fiscal impact from receiving this information; he was merely making the public aware that this is scheduled for November and that the verbiage is still being vetted through the court system.

Mayor Pfister asked for the Council's comments. There were none.

Mayor Pfister stated she received a request-to-speak form from Mr. Vance Jochim and invited him to speak.

Mr. Jochim referenced recent news articles and ongoing discussions regarding proposed property tax changes and their potential impacts on local governments, school districts, and bond ratings. He noted that additional reviews of local government finances were being conducted at the state level and commented on the differing viewpoints surrounding the proposed changes. Mr. Jochim suggested that the City consider discussing its position on these issues and how it wishes to be perceived in future related discussions.

#### **Tab 8. Request for Code Enforcement Lien Reduction (Finance)**

Ms. Houghton made the following presentation:

*Chapter 2, Article 3, Section 2 of the City sets forth the Enforcement of Municipal Codes. Ordinance 2011-12 established the provision for the creation, establishment and levy of a lien against properties which have unpaid utility charges by the owner.*

*Currently, there are two outstanding Code Enforcement Liens with fines assessed on the property located at 1255 Wells Ave. Lake County Property Appraiser property records identify the property with Alt Key No. 1410614.*

*Carter Young, who is considering purchasing the property from its current owner, Stephan Clodwick, Jr., has requested Council's consideration for a reduction in the Code Enforcement Liens recorded against the property.*



*A summary of the Code Enforcement Liens and lien amounts are shown in the table below:*

| CODE ENFORCEMENT<br>CASE NUMBER       | Property<br>Owner        | Date of Lien | Date Recorded | Date of Circuit<br>Court<br>Judgement | Amount            |                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CET1810-0014                          | Stephan<br>Clodwick, Jr. | 3/23/2021    | 4/12/2021     |                                       | 37,876.82         | LDRSection 12-13<br>Nuisances Prohibited;<br>Section 12-23 Storage<br>Prohibited                                                                                    |
| CET2103_0016                          | Stephan<br>Clodwick, Jr. | 1/28/2025    | 2/19/2025     |                                       | 69,750.00         | Nuisances Prohibited;<br>Section 12-23( Storage<br>Prohibited) and City of<br>Tavares Code of<br>Ordinances Article IV,<br>Section 10.5-152 (No<br>Permit Required) |
| JUDGEMENT CASE No. 2022-<br>CA-001703 | Stephan<br>Clodwick, Jr. |              |               | 1/13/2023                             | N/A               | Final Judgement Granting<br>Permanent Injunction to<br>Abate Nuisances                                                                                              |
| <b>TOTAL AMOUNT OF LIENS</b>          |                          |              |               |                                       | <b>107,626.82</b> |                                                                                                                                                                     |

*Carter Young states that he has the property under a purchase contract, and further states that he is committed to closing if a workable path can be found. Mr. Young has requested the Council's consideration for a "substantial reduction in both liens conditioned on closing of the sale."*

Ms. Houghton stated that Mr. Carter Young was present.

## **MOTION**

**Doug Keown moved to hear Mr. Young's case, seconded by Bob Grenier. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.**

Mr. Young stated that he was currently under contract to purchase the property, but the existing code enforcement liens prevented the purchase and redevelopment from moving forward. He explained that he and his brother, co-owners of SurePath Properties, had entered into a purchase agreement for the property and intended to rehabilitate the structure and improve the site.

Mr. Young acknowledged the property's history of code enforcement violations and the City's efforts to address the conditions on the property. He indicated that, if the liens were reduced, he would attempt to renegotiate the purchase terms with the property owner to facilitate the sale and redevelopment of the property. He further stated that the property owner currently resides in an assisted living facility but lived at the property during the period when the code enforcement violations occurred.

Council discussed the property's lengthy history of code enforcement violations, including repeated complaints, enforcement actions, and City-led cleanup efforts. Several Council Members noted the significant staff time, equipment, disposal costs,



and other resources expended by the City to address conditions on the property. Council expressed concern about recovering a portion of those costs while also encouraging the property's rehabilitation and return to productive use.

Discussions were held regarding the impact of the liens on the property's marketability, and various reduction amounts were considered. Staff and City Attorney Holt clarified that any lien reduction would be conditioned on the sale of the property to SurePath Properties only and the completion of the transaction within the 120-day timeframe as required by the City Code.

## **MOTION**

**Bob Grenier moved to reduce the code enforcement liens to \$40,000, provided that the property is sold exclusively to SurePath Properties and the transaction closes within 120 days. The motion was seconded by Doug Keown and carried unanimously, 5-0.**

## **XI. NEW BUSINESS**

## **XII. OLD BUSINESS**

## **XIII. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD**

## **XIV. REPORTS**

### **Tab 9. City Administrator Report**

Mr. Drury thanked everyone for the recognition he received for the work that he has done for the City County Managers' Association for the last two years.

Mr. Aldrich invited everyone to attend the upcoming Fourth of July celebration and thanked those who were participating and planning to attend. Additionally, he announced that Ms. Florida, Paris Richardson, would be conducting a story time at the library on Friday, July 10, at 11:00 a.m.

### **Tab 10. City Council Member Reports**

Council Member Gamble inquired about the zip line at Wooton Wonderland. Mr. Drury advised that the zip line had been removed and would not be replaced.

Council Member Gamble also asked about the land-clearing activity near St. Clair Abrams Avenue and Lake Frances. Mr. Drury explained that the work was related to the Eagles stormwater project and was intended to improve drainage in the Lake Frances Estates area.

Council Member Gamble inquired about the status of the new parking lot and whether it would be available for the Fourth of July celebration. Mr. Tweedie stated that substantial

completion was anticipated by the end of the following week and that the parking lot was expected to be available for use by the Fourth of July.

Council Member Gamble also asked whether plans had been submitted for the proposed laundromat. Mr. Fabre stated that, to his knowledge, no plans had been submitted.

Council Member Gamble wished everyone a Happy Father's Day.

Council Member Keown announced that he would be conducting office hours on Monday, July 6, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in Conference Room C at the library. He also wished everyone a Happy Father's Day and congratulated Mr. Drury.

Council Member Price thanked Officer Daniel Dixon and the marine patrol team for their efforts on the Dora Canal, noting that residents were pleased with the reduction in speeders, noise, and various violations. He wished all the fathers a Happy Father's Day.

Vice Mayor Grenier wished all fathers a Happy Father's Day, extended his best wishes to the community, and encouraged everyone to stay safe.

Mayor Pfister expressed her appreciation for City Administrator John Drury and Finance Director Lisa Houghton, recognizing their dedication to the City. She also commended City staff for their professionalism and contributions, noting that their efforts made the Council's work easier.

Mayor Pfister recognized Lake Tire & Auto on its 40th anniversary in the City of Tavares. She wished everyone a Happy Father's Day, encouraged everyone to stay safe, and looked forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting.

#### **XV. ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectfully,



Michelle Winegard  
Deputy City Clerk