



**TAVARES CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 3, 2021 – 4:00 PM
TAVARES CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
201 EAST MAIN STREET, TAVARES**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

**Amanda Boggus, Mayor
Lou Buigas, Vice Mayor
Lori Pfister, Council Member
Walter Price, Council Member
Troy Singer, Council Member**

STAFF PRESENT

**John Drury, City Administrator
Bob Williams, City Attorney
Susie Novack, City Clerk
Mike Fitzgerald, Community Development Director
Bob Tweedie, Economic Development Director
Lori Houghton, Finance Director
Richard Keith, Fire Chief
Stoney Lubins, Police Chief
James Dillon, Public Works Director
Phil Clark, Utilities Director
Crissy Bublitz, Human Resources Director
Mark O'Keefe, Public Communications Director
Scott Aldrich, Community Services Director**

TAVARES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

J. Scott Berry, Executive Director

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Boggus called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

II. INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Tab 1. Pastor Mike Briggs, Tavares First United Methodist Church

Chief Keith, Tavares Fire Department, provided the invocation and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance in Pastor Briggs absence.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Boggus asked for 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. Introduction of Lake County Manager Alan Rosen

Kirby Smith, Vice Chairman, Board of County Commission, and former Mayor and Council Member of the City of Tavares, introduced Lake County Manager Alan Rosen. Mr. Smith thanked the Council for their work on behalf of the City of Tavares. Chairman Smith said Mr. Rosen came to Lake County in the middle of February 2021 and has the tenacity and drive to help move Lake County forward. He asked the Council to set up individual meetings with Mr. Rosen to get to know him and his ideas to move District Three, Lake County, and Tavares forward.

Mr. Rosen thanked the Council. He said he looks forward to getting to know the Tavares Council and has known Mr. Drury for many years. He said he was once a local government management consultant and conducted a performance measurement and strategic planning instruction with the Tavares Leadership Team. Mr. Rosen said it is an honor and pleasure to work in Lake County, and looks forward to many happy, healthy and prosperous years.

Mayor Boggus thanked Mr. Rosen and welcomed him to Tavares.

Tab 3. Tavares Chamber of Commerce Update

Mr. Berry, President, Tavares Chamber of Commerce, provided the following highlights:

- Alan Rosen, Lake County Manager, will be the Speaker at the March 24, 2021 Monthly Business Luncheon, 11:30 a.m. at the Tavares Pavilion on the Lake.
- A County-wide trails update is scheduled to be held at the Leesburg Venetian Center. Meeting information is available on the Chamber website.
- The Tavares Chamber is conducting more advocacy and economic development with information included in the monthly report provided to Council.

- Asked those present to contact all Florida Senate members to state their support for HB7 and SB72 regarding Covid 19 Liability Protection. He said the bill protects business from frivolous Covid 19 related lawsuits.

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

Tab 4. Proclamation – Florida Bicycle Month

Shawn Lukens, 7743 Sadler Road, Mount Dora, thanked the Council and said the proclamation is important as a small business owner in Mount Dora, and owner of property in downtown Tavares at the corner of Main Street and St. Clair Abrams Avenue. He said he is excited to possibly bring another bicycle shop to Tavares in the future, and appreciates the city's work on the Trail. He said biking is up 75% from the previous year.

Mayor Boggus read a proclamation in its entirety proclaiming March 2021 as Florida Bicycle Month.

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

MOTION

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

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

Attorney Holt asked if anyone present would like to discuss quasi-judicial matters on the agenda. There were none.

Attorney Holt asked Council if they had any exparte communications to disclose. There were none.

VI. READING OF ALL ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS INTO THE RECORD

Ms. Novack read the following ordinances and resolutions by title only:

RESOLUTION 2021-03

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, RELATING TO THE STATE REVOLVING FUND LOAN PROGRAM; MAKING FINDINGS; AUTHORIZING THE LOAN APPLICATION FOR PRECONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES FOR THE LAKE HERMOSA REGION BOOSTER PUMP STATION; AUTHORIZING THE LOAN AGREEMENT; ESTABLISHING PLEDGED REVENUES; DESIGNATING AUTHORIZED

REPRESENTATIVES; PROVIDING ASSURANCE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS, SEVERABILITY, AND EFFECTIVE DATE.

ORDINANCE 2021-01

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS BY AMENDING CHAPTER 21, SECTION 21-15 SINGLE OR TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL USES, REMOVING THE PROVISION FOR TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION SIGNS; SECTION 21-16 TEMPORARY SIGNS, REQUIRING THAT TEMPORARY SIGNS BE DISPLAYED FOR A MAXIMUM OF 120 DAYS IN A CALENDAR YEAR AND DELETING THE RESTRICTION ON VACANT PROPERTY AND LIMITING TWO (2) TEMPORARY SIGNS PER PARCEL OF PROPERTY; SECTION 21-17 MISCELLANEOUS SIGNS, DELETING THE PROVISIONS FOR FLAG CONTENT; SUBJECT TO THE RULES, REGULATIONS AND OBLIGATIONS ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TAVARES COUNCIL; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Boggus asked if any Council Members would like to pull an item on the Consent Agenda for discussion.

Vice Mayor Buigas said she would like to pull Tab 5.

Tab 5. Approval of the February 3, 2021 and February 17, 2021 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

Vice Mayor Buigas asked for the following correction:

February 17, 2021 City Council Regular meeting minutes, page 7, paragraph 1, line 3; change '30 story commercial; to '3 story commercial.'

MOTION

Lou Buigas moved to approve the February 3, 2021 and February 17, 2021 City Council Regular Meeting minutes with the correction, seconded by Troy Singer. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS

Tab 6. Resolution 2021-03 – Lake Hermosa Region Booster Pump Station State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) Application

Ms. Houghton made the following presentation:

Avalon/Lake Hermosa Region is located in the northern portion of the City of Tavares that includes Advent Health (Waterman) Hospital, the existing Etowah development, the Atwater Multi-family developments, the Pinecrest Charter School, and the Avalon Park Village. The Avalon Park Village is a planned 155 acre development that will include approximately 1,100 residential units, and a mixed-use community on the shores of Lake Hermosa. Water pressure has been and continues to be a problem in this employment and residential area. As a stop gap measure the City Council agreed to put in place a temporary booster pump to "get by" as the Utility Department completed a more longer term plan and funding program for a permanent solution.

The long term plan was developed, completed and approved by the City Council on October 21, 2020 by Resolution 2020-23. The plan calls for a permanent booster pump station to serve the entire area, ground storage tanks, and a transmission line to boost pressures to the required and desired service levels within the Avalon/Lake Hermosa Region under all flow conditions.

An SRF Design Loan for the long term booster project solution has been identified to perform the pre-construction activities (design work) necessary to qualify for eligibility for a construction activity low interest loan with SRF in the near future. Staff seeks authorization for the Mayor to execute the loan application and if awarded the loan agreement. This design work will kick off the project. This project was included in the City Council approved rate study and City Council approved capital improvement program and City Council approved Facilities Plan for this project.

The amount of this low interest (1.04%) SRF Design loan is \$249,751 including capitalized interest (excluding loan service fees). The SRF Loan will be pledged from Water, Wastewater, Reclaim, and Stormwater Utility Fees for repayment of this loan. All current covenants in existing SRF Loans will apply. The term of the Loan is ten (10) years. The loan interest rate is estimated at 1.04%, and annual debt service payments are estimated at \$26,426.84.

Staff recommends approval of Option 1; Approve Resolution 2021-03 authorizing the Mayor to execute documents for application and acceptance for SRF Design Loan for Avalon/Lake Hermosa Booster Pumps.

Mayor Boggus asked for comments from the audience. There were none.

Mayor Boggus asked for comments from the Council.

Council Member Pfister asked if this is a temporary booster pump. Mr. Drury said no, and noted a temporary booster pump station was previously purchased to get the charter school going as there was not enough water pressure. He said the temporary booster pump would be able to be used in other areas of the city if a need should occur again. The goal is to replace the temporary pump with a permanent pump for the entire

region. Council Member Pfister asked if it is common to find out after the fact that there is a need for an additional pump, and if a pump could be preplanned instead. Mr. Drury said typically a master utility plan is developed throughout the entire city, and noted the city does have a master utility plan. He said monies would not be spent on implementation until the city knows there are projects that can pay for upgrades. Sometimes the private sector moves faster than government, and in this case there was a charter school that wanted to move immediately. He said staff got creative with a temporary pump station to help the charter school get operational while the plan was implemented. Once a project is approved by the City Council, it takes a year to find the money, another year to design and engineer, and another year to construct. He said that is three years before adequate water pressure would be obtained in the area. In this case the Council approved the plan and staff began looking for the monies. The private sector wanted the school in place and to build an apartment complex. The temporary pump was installed, the apartment complex was built, the charter school was built, and the city went through the process of negotiating with SRF to obtain an adequate loan which is before the Council for consideration. The City will then spend a year designing and another year constructing with two more years before completion. Council Member Pfister asked if the upgrade would accommodate 100% existing and future growth. Mr. Drury confirmed.

Vice Mayor Buigas asked for the estimated service fee. Ms. Houghton said she does not have the exact fee and the approximate amount is \$1,500 for the life of the loan. Vice Mayor Buigas asked if the temporary booster pump would go into city inventory to be used again. Mr. Clark confirmed.

Council Member Price asked if there were any discussion regarding the developer incurring costs by lease or a 50/50 cost share. He noted a concern the City is paying the entire cost with no extra help from the developer. He said the costs would be paid out of fees, and asked if fees would increase for the citizens. Mr. Drury said the project is to bring the water pressure up to an entire region. Impact fees that are paid by the hospital, Atwater Apartment Complex Phase I and Phase II, Charter School, and every home will pay for the project. He said the city has a rate study which includes the project. The rate study sets the fees for water, sewer and stormwater. Typically, the rate study is conducted every five years, brought before the Council for consideration. The last rate study which included the booster pump project called for a national Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1% for water, sewer and stormwater. He said he would not say this project is driving the CPI plus 1% cost in the rate study. However, the project is a part of the rate study.

Mayor Boggus asked if there is any penalty to paying off the debt early. Ms. Houghton said no.

MOTION

Lori Pfister moved to approve

Council Member Singer said a 1.04% interest rate is less than the current inflationary rate and it would cost more in the long run to pay off early than to keep a loan with such a low rate.

Troy Singer seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

IX. ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING

First Reading

Tab 7. Ordinance 2021-01 – Land Development Regulation Amendment – Chapter 21 Temporary Signs and Miscellaneous Sign Content

Mayor Boggus said she received a Request to Speak Form, and advised the audience that there is no discussion at first reading of ordinances. She said the Council does look forward to hearing from the requestor in the future. Mr. Drury said the item will come back for public comment on March 17, 2021, 4:00 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers.

Second Reading

X. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Tab 8. Board Appointment for the Lake Community Action Agency

Mr. Drury made the following presentation:

Council Member Roy Stevenson previously served as the City representative to the Lake Community Action Agency Board. During the December 2, 2020 City Council Meeting, the Council directed staff to advertise for a citizen representative to serve as a City representative. The position was advertised in the Daily Commercial and on the City website. No application has been received to date. Staff is providing an opportunity for Council to discuss the position and determine if the City should continue to advertise the position, or if Council wishes to select a member from the City Council Board to be the representative.

By way of background, Lake Community Action Agency was originally chartered as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in February 1966 as the Lake County Economic Opportunity, Inc. It was one of the early community action agencies designated to carry out the mission of the "Great Society" programs. The mandate of these programs was to:

- Eradicate Poverty*
- Develop Economic Opportunities*
- Help disadvantaged people obtain skills and knowledge to become self-sufficient.*

Lake Community Action Agency is one of Lake County's leading organizations in the delivery of human services. For more than 44 years Lake Community Action Agency has advocated for the poor, elderly and disadvantaged, and administers anti-poverty programs throughout Lake County utilizing U.S Department of Health and Human Services and Community Services Block Grant funds allocated by the Florida Department of Community Affairs.

Mr. Drury noted the City Clerk received an application just prior to the meeting. He said the application was been provided to each Council member.

Mayor Boggus said it is her understanding Mr. Jochim is interested in the position.

Vance Jochim, 12619 Milwaukee Avenue, Lake County, said he used to audit welfare systems in California. He said he is familiar with LCAA programs and would be interested in helping the community. He said he was advised that he did not have to be a resident of Tavares and could live in an enclave. Mr. Drury confirmed Mr. Jochim would qualify even though he is not a resident of Tavares for this position. Mr. Drury asked Mr. Jochim if he has applied. Mr. Jochim said no. Mr. Drury said an option for Council would be to allow Mr. Jochim an opportunity to apply and table the item to the next meeting. He said another option is for Council to go ahead and make the appointment. Mayor Boggus asked Mr. Jochim if he cares if Council appointed someone during the meeting or if he would like Council to wait until he has an opportunity to fill out an application. Mr. Jochim said he would like to submit application.

Mayor Boggus asked for Council's preference to either make the appointment or table to the next meeting.

Vice Mayor Buigas said she likes to do her due diligence before making recommendations. She said in all fairness to Mr. Jochim or anyone else in the audience would like to submit application, it would be her preference to table the item.

Council Member Pfister asked for the application deadline. Mr. Drury said there is no deadline, and applications are accepted until the position is filled. He said if applications can be received within one week they would be placed on the March 17, 2021 agenda for consideration.

MOTION

Lou Buigas moved to table the item until the March 17, 2021 Regular City Council meeting, seconded by Walter Price. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Mayor Boggus recognized Brooke Matthews in the audience and thanked her for her interest in the position.

Tab 9. September 11, 2001 Twenty (20) Year Anniversary Memorial Observance in Tavares

Chief Keith made the following presentation:

On September 11, 2001, 2,997 innocent lives were lost in the terrorist attacks against the United States of America, and over 6,000 people were injured (September 11 is now officially recognized in the United States as "Patriot's Day").

While the time to mourn this terrible loss of life has come and gone, there was a promise to "Never Forget". In observance of Patriot's Day, and in remembrance of the terrible loss of life that took place on September 11, 2001, staff seeks approval to enter into discussions with neighboring cities and Lake County to host a regional 9-11 Patriot's Day memorial event in Tavares. Last year a similar event was hosted by Eustis.

If approved, staff would bring back plans, costs and funding back to City Council for final approval before making any commitments. Tavares Fire Chief would be assigned as the primary lead on these discussions and the Tavares Economic Development Special Events Coordinator would assist.

Staff recommends approval of Option 1, approve authorizing staff to enter into discussions with neighboring cities and Lake County to host a regional 9-11 Patriot's Day memorial event in Tavares and bring back any plans and costs to Council for final approval.

Chief Keith said during the previous year Vice Mayor Buigas and Eustis Mayor Holland suggested to their respective Fire Chiefs to recognize September 11. He said Tavares and Eustis put together a small 911 memorial event that was held at Hope Church, Eustis. Vice Mayor Buigas then noted the 20th anniversary of 9/11 would be in 2021. He said this request is before Council to consider allowing Tavares to start conversations on a regional 9/11 memorial service to take place on Saturday, September 11, 2021.

Mayor Boggus asked for comments from the audience. There were none.

Mayor Boggus asked for comments from the Council.

Council Member Pfister asked if costs would be shared by all cities. Chief Keith said costs and cost sharing would be included in future discussions, and noted costs are currently unidentified.

Council Member Singer thanked Chief Keith for bringing the item forward.

MOTION

Lou Buigas moved to approve Staff's recommendation [Option 1], seconded by Troy Singer. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab10. First Responder Park

Mr. Drury made the following presentation:

Previously the City Council created the Freedom Flag traffic circle with Lake County to honor our veterans and partnered with the community to obtain donations towards that effort. This was a highly successful project not only resulting in the Freedom Flag and but also a monument with engraved name plates recognizing those that donated to the project.

An opportunity is presented to the Council to develop a similar project at the gateway to Tavares across the street from the new Public Safety Complex which currently houses our first responders of Police and Fire. This location also abuts Lake County's Emergency Operations Center and 911 Communications Center (see attached map). The Tavlee Trail runs along this area too.

The City Administrator has developed a Horizon Team made up of the Fire Chief, Police Chief, Emergency Management Director and City Administrator to explore this gateway project to partner with the County and community to honor our First Responders.

Staff recommends approval of Option 1, approve the exploration of creating First Responder Park and assign a City Council member to the correlating Horizon Team

Mr. Drury said any item the Horizon Team develops would come to Council for full review, vetting, and approval or denial.

Mayor Boggus asked for comments from the audience. There was no public input.

Mayor Boggus asked if the proposed park is County or City property. Mr. Drury said County. Mayor Boggus asked if the city would have to acquire the property. Mr. Drury said another option would be for the County to partner with the City to help build First Responder Park. Mayor Boggus noted the County probation office is housed next to the park. Mr. Drury confirmed and said the City is looking to improve the gateway to the City. He said the area is a mix of dirt, gravel, millings, and an old building. He said there is a small park environment along the Tav-Lee Trail, and the thought was turning it into First Responder Park with possibly a small pavilion and bronze statue. He said it could be a place to conduct events such as the previously discussed 911 memorial event while improving the gateway to the county seat.

Mayor Boggus asked Council for their interest in serving on the Horizon Team. Discussion was held and there was a consensus for Troy Singer to serve on the First Responder Park Horizon Team. Council Member Singer said he would be honored to serve on the Horizon Team.

MOTION

Lou Buigas moved for Council Member Singer to serve on the First Responder Horizon Team, seconded by Walter Price. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

XII. NEW BUSINESS

XIII. OLD BUSINESS

Council Member Pfister said Lake County Days in Tallahassee went virtual. She said not all items are being held virtually and she was invited to Tallahassee by the City's state representative to advocate issues that will affect Tavares. She said she would still like to go and asked for Council approval.

There was a consensus for Council Member Pfister to go forward with her scheduled visit to Tallahassee in March 2021.

Council Member Pfister said the trip conflicts with the March 17, 2021 City Council meeting and she would not be present.

XIV. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

Vance Jochim, 12619 Milwaukee Avenue, Lake County, commended Mr. O'Keefe for his video work on the Council meetings. He said two Jacksonville commissioners were recently convicted of fraud in a case stemming from a federally backed loan and grant for a barbeque sauce business owned by one of the commissioner's family members. He said those are reasons why oversight is needed. Mr. Jochim asked Council to reverse the public input policy to include discussion at first readings of ordinances.

XV. REPORTS

Tab 11. City Administrator Report

Mr. Drury said downtown Tavares was bustling over the past weekend. He said it was good to see those helping Tavares business during these tough economic times as we recover from Covid 19.

Mayor Boggus asked Mr. Tweedie for an update on the docks. Mr. Tweedie said the project is 60-65% complete, on schedule, and well within budget. He said the project is anticipated to be complete at the end of June 2021.

Tab 12. City Council Member Report

Council Member Pfister said she likes the new look of the City Council chambers. She asked if the video booth could dim the lights during video presentations.

Council Member Singer said he looks forward to Babe Ruth opening day on Saturday, March 6, 2021.

Vice Mayor Buigas said it was impressive to see the downtown so busy that it appeared there was an event being held. She provided the following positive quote: "Happiness is not about getting all you want, it is about enjoying all you have." ~unknown

Mayor Boggus noted the Lake County Museum of Art has an exhibit opening Friday, March 5, 2021 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business and Mayor Boggus adjourned the meeting at 4:54 p.m.

Respectfully,

Susie Novack, MMC, FCRM
City Clerk