



**TAVARES CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 6, 2022 – 4:00 PM
TAVARES CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
201 EAST MAIN STREET, TAVARES**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

**Lori Pfister, Mayor
Walter Price, Vice Mayor
Amanda Boggus, Council Member
Sandy Gamble, Council Member
Troy Singer, Council Member**

STAFF PRESENT

**John Drury, City Administrator
Lindsay Holt, City Attorney
Susie Novack, City Clerk
Scott Aldrich, Community Services Director
Crissy Bublitz, Human Resources Director
Phil Clark, Utilities Director
James Dillon, Public Works Director
Mike Fitzgerald, Community Development Director
Lori Houghton, Finance Director
Richard Keith, Fire Chief
Stoney Lubins, Police Chief
Mark O'Keefe, Public Communications Director
Bob Tweedie, Economic Development 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 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 Pfister asked if there were any changes to the Agenda. Mr. Drury said staff had no changes.

MOTION

Amanda Boggus moved to approve the Agenda, seconded by Sandy Gamble. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

IV. PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

Tab 2. National Library Week 2022

Mayor Pfister read a Proclamation in its entirety designating April 3, 2022, through April 9, 2022, as National Library Week in the City of Tavares.

Alpa Pandya, President of the Tavares Friends of the Library, thanked the Council and said the library provides vital resources for the community. She said over 84,000 books were borrowed in 2021 and noted an Easter Bonnet Pet Parade scheduled for April 16, 2022. Ms. Pandya thanked the Library staff for their hard work and dedication.

Rebecca Campbell, Library Director, thanked the Council and said she enjoys working with the Library staff. She encouraged those present to stop by the library to sign up for library cards.

Mayor Pfister thanked the Library staff and Friends of the Library volunteers.

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

Attorney Holt said 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 Resolutions by title only:

RESOLUTION 2022-05

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, RECOGNIZING THE SISTER CITY PROGRAM ESTABLISHED BY THE PRESIDENT OF

THE UNITED STATES IN 1956 AND ENDORSING A PRELIMINARY INVITATION TO THE PEOPLE OF BISCARROSSE, FRANCE TO ENTER INTO A SISTER CITY PROGRAM WITH THE CITY OF TAVARES.

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-06

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA, PERTAINING TO THE 2022 REBUILDING AMERICA INFRASTRUCTURE WITH SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUITY (RAISE) GRANT FOR THE WEKIVA TRAIL EXTENSION PROJECT (SEGMENT 1 AND SEGMENT 5); PROVIDING FOR LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF PRIOR RESOLUTIONS; PROVIDING FOR COMMITMENT TO SHARE IN FEES AND EXPENSES; PROVIDING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS; PROVIDING A SAVINGS CLAUSE; PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENER'S ERRORS; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Pfister asked if any wished to pull an item from the Consent Agenda for discussion. Council Member Singer asked to pull Tab 4 for discussion.

MOTION

Amanda Boggus moved to approve the Consent Agenda minus Tab 4, Cottages at Heritage Grove [Approved Tab 3, Approval of the March 16, 2022, City Council Regular Meeting Minutes], seconded by Walter Price. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 3. Approval of the March 16, 2022 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

Approved on the Consent Agenda.

Tab 4. Cottages at Heritage Grove – Final Plat

Council Member Singer noted his support for the project and referred to the title letter in the agenda packet. He asked for clarification the homes would not be tax-exempt. Mr. Fitzgerald confirmed and said that while Habitat for Humanity is a tax-exempt entity, taxes would be assessed once the plat was recorded and the homes and lots were sold to individual homeowners.

MOTION

Amanda Boggus moved to approve, seconded by Troy Singer. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS

Tab 5. Resolution 2022-06 – RAISE Grant Application

Mr. Dillon made the following presentation:

In FY-21, Tavares City Council authorized the pursuit of a \$25 million RAISE grant for the planned Wekiva Trail Extension Project - Segment 1 and Segment 5.

In order to apply for the FY-22 RAISE grant program, a new resolution is required authorizing staff in partnership with Lake County Florida, and the City of Mount Dora to submit to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) a \$25 million 2022 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Application for the planned Wekiva Trail Extension Project - Segment 1 and Segment 5.

On March 15, 2022, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 (Pub. L. 117-103, "FY 2022 Appropriations Act") appropriated an additional \$775 million for the FY 2022 RAISE Grant Program. Therefore, a total of \$2.275 billion in funding is now available for the FY 2022 RAISE Grant Program.

Staff recommends approval of Option 1, for Council to move to approve Resolution No. 2022-06 to apply and accept, in partnership with Lake County Florida, and the City of Mount Dora to submit to the Department of Transportation (DOT) a \$25 million 2022 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant application for the planned Wekiva Trail Extension Project - Segment 1 and Segment 5 and to share the cost of the operation and maintenance of the trail project once completed.

Mr. Dillon noted a typo on page 2, section 4 of the Resolution; it should reflect not exceeding \$24,000 for the consultant cost.

Mayor Pfister asked for comments from the Council.

Council Member Singer noted the City is in its third year requesting the grant and asked for the previous two years' City anticipated contributions. Mr. Dillon stated 2021 was approximately \$39,000, and 2020 was \$40,000. Council Member Singer noted the current grant match amount is significantly less. Mr. Dillon said that as the project progressed, more information was collected, and the City did not have to contribute as much data and information as it had already been obtained. Council Member Singer said the grant request is for \$25 million dollars. Mr. Dillon confirmed.

Vice Mayor Price asked if Mount Dora and Lake County have already passed their resolutions. Mr. Dillon confirmed.

MOTION

Amanda Boggus moved to approve (Resolution 2022-06], seconded by Sandy Gamble.

Vance Jochim, 12619 Milwaukee Avenue, Lake County, asked if there were any matching requirements for the grant. He said he would like information on costs to maintain and operate the trails and any other conditions placed on the grant.

The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 6. Resolution 2022-05 – Sister City – Biscarrosse, France

Mr. Drury made the following presentation:

During the February 2, 2022, City Council meeting, the Mayor brought forth a proposal to explore a Sister City relationship with Biscarrosse, France. There was a consensus from the Council for staff to contact the Biscarrosse Mayor and staff and to begin building a Sister City relationship. The Mayor of Tavares contacted the Mayor of Biscarrosse, France, and received positive feedback on the initiative, including an invitation for a delegate visit to Biscarrosse. (see attached letter)

Tavares currently has a Sister City relationship with New Taipei, Taiwan, where exchanges have benefited the City through bilateral visits from students and dignitaries and Dragon Boat racing events. The City and Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Miami have worked together throughout the years to build a robust and effective Sister City relationship. A Sister City relationship with Biscarrosse, France would enhance the Tavares Sister City program, similar to many cities throughout the country that maintain several Sister City relationships throughout the world.

Sister City relationships are intended to expand, strengthen and deliver great benefits to both parties by encouraging business, trade, education, cultural exchanges, and projects between the twin sister cities.

The City Administrator offers the following as it relates to this Sister City initiative with Biscarrosse, France:

- 1. The City of Tavares and Biscarrosse, France are both lakeside cities.*
- 2. The City of Tavares and Biscarrosse, France are both aviation seaplane-centric cities and share an "aeronautical history in that respect."*
- 3. The City of Tavares and Biscarrosse, France are similar in population and demographics.*
- 4. Biscarrosse, France is the home of a seaplane museum located at the shores of the lake.*

5. *The City of Tavares and Biscarrosse, France are both pedestrian-friendly cities with vibrant downtown centers which host community activities, events, and festivities where visitors of all ages can enjoy themselves.*
6. *The City of Tavares and Biscarrosse, France share in their value and desire to maintain history.*
7. *The City of Tavares and Biscarrosse, France are destination cities.*

Before the Council is Resolution 2022-05, which endorses an invitation to the government and people of Biscarrosse, France to negotiate a Sister City program and appoint the Mayor of Tavares as the honorary representative for Tavares.

Mayor Pfister asked for comments from the Council.

Council Member Boggus asked if the resolution begins the negotiation process and if there are no other current obligations. Mr. Drury confirmed and said the City of Biscarrosse would consider passing a Resolution. Both cities would develop a program for the youth with the Tavares Rotary, Chambers of Commerce, and government aspects, such as Police and Fire Rescue. Council Member Boggus said this is just a kick-off for negotiations. Mr. Drury confirmed.

Council Member Gamble noted funding concerns. Mr. Drury said the upcoming budget would include funds for the Sister City program during FY 2023 for consideration, and no funds would be incurred during the current fiscal year.

MOTION

Amanda Boggus moved to approve [Resolution 2022-05], seconded by Sandy Gamble. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Mayor Pfister welcomed the Sister City relationship with Biscarrosse, France. She said the City looks forward to many years working together.

IX. ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING

First Reading

Second Reading

X. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Tab 7. Board Appointments

Mayor Pfister made the following presentation:

Tavares Library Board

The City received a letter of resignation from Tavares Library Advisory Board member Duan Dement, whose term expires June 2023. The City advertised the open position in the Daily Commercial and City website. One application was received from Kathy Czyrnik. (attached)

Mayor Pfister said she would like to appoint Kathy Czyrnik to the Tavares Library Board.

Lake County Library Advisory Board

The City received notice from Lake County Library Services advising that the positions of City Representative and Alternate to the Lake County Library Advisory Board expired on February 28, 2022. Norma Emerson served as the City Representative and Amanda Boggus served as the alternate. The new term will be four years, from March 1, 2022, through February 28, 2026. Norma Emerson submitted a request for re-appointment to continue as the City Representative. (attached) Amanda Boggus indicated she would like to open the alternate position to interested parties. The City advertised both positions in the Daily Commercial and City website and received no new applications.

Mayor Pfister said she would like to reappoint Norma Emerson as the City Representative to the Lake County Library Advisory Board; and Debi Weinert as the Alternate City Representative to the Lake County Library Advisory Board.

MOTION

Amanda Boggus moved to approve all three appointments [Kathy Czyrnik to the Tavares Library Board for the remainder of a term expiring June 2023; and, the reappointment of Norma Emerson as the City Representative to the Lake County Library Board; and the appointment of Debi Weinert as the Alternate City Representative to the Lake County Library Advisory Board], seconded by Troy Singer. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Debi Weinert said she is delighted to be involved with the library.

The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 8. Economic Development Strategy 2022 Update

Mr. Tweedie provided an annual update on the Tavares Economic Development strategy, including the four pillars; Pavilion on the Lake, Downtown CRA and Special Events, Seaplane Base and Marina, and Business Retention, Expansion, and Recruitment. He provided a high-level overview and PowerPoint presentation on the 2022 12 Point Economic Development Strategy Plan, including the following areas:

- Medical Village

- Lakeview Center experienced growth with a new Dialysis Center, medical-specialty practices, surgery centers, and a Post-Acute Care Facility opening in Fall 2022.
- Atwater Apartments
 - Atwater Apartments 240 units are full with a waiting list. The developer is looking to work on other projects in the area.
- Charter School
 - Open for 2 years and expanding by the addition of one grade per year until a K-12 goal is reached.
- Downtown Entertainment Business District
 - Retail spaces are full occupancy on Ruby Street. Several new businesses are open and thriving.
- Industrial Area SR561 and SR448
 - Lakeridge Industrial Park is at maximum capacity and a strong job producer.
- Seaplane Base and Marina
 - The Seaplane Base and Ribbon Cutting was held in October with an enhanced waterfront. Seven new water-related businesses have opened, with additional businesses in negotiations. The marina is back and at full capacity.
- Special Events
 - An update on post-Covid current and future events was provided.
- Arts and Culture
 - Monthly Art Exhibits and new History Museum.
- Highway Commercial
 - Growth along the SR19 corridor with outparcel development including storage units, 7/11, Popeyes, Taco Bell, Dollar General, and more commercial development in the future.

Mr. Tweedie said the Council has been provided a copy of the full plan that was submitted in the agenda packet.

Mr. Drury said many communities focus on one or two industry sectors in their economic programs. The City of Tavares is unique, with many economic development sectors and programs that provide a diverse economic base that can weather economic or natural storms. He said he is proud of the Council and Economic Department Team for creating a diverse economic development base.

Vance Jochim, 12619 Milwaukee Avenue, Lake County, suggested adding build and repair centers to the economic base, including auto mechanics. He said the City should focus on work-at-home businesses.

Mr. Drury noted many auto repair areas in Tavares, including Van Gannaway, Wheelers Auto Body, R Cars, and a Tire Store. He said government creates fertile ground for the private sector to respond.

Council Member Gamble asked for an update on leasing the Historic Train Depot. Mr. Tweedie said staff is working with an interested party with a marketplace food mall concept. They are preparing a full-scale proposal in which a lease would be negotiated and brought back for the Council's consideration.

Council Member Singer said when he first moved to the area in the late 1970s, the only industry was citrus. He said it took a long time to recoup from the loss of the citrus industry in the 1980s. Council Member Singer said it is great the City is diversified and commended Mr. Tweedie and the Economic Development Department. He said residents are also needed to patronize businesses.

MOTION

Amanda Boggus moved to approve, seconded by Troy Singer. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

XII. OLD BUSINESS

XIII. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

Mason Kimmel, 12022 Pine Court, provided information on gene therapy and asked the Council for funding to assist in funding a gene therapy development. Mr. Drury asked Mr. Kimmel to send a letter to the City, identifying the funding request, how it serves a valid public purpose, and the amount requested.

Vance Jochim, 12619 Milwaukee Avenue, Lake County, discussed cities implementing Community Development Districts (CDD) to fund infrastructure. He suggested the City look into CDDs in the future. He said the Lake County Commission would be approving new road impact fees later in the month and urged the Council to lobby the Lake County Board of County Commissioners not to issue discounts.

Mr. Drury said he is excited that the City has been addressing roads for years, including the intersections at David Walker Road and Dead River Road. The City is working with the State to make upgrades on US 441 at Lake Tire. Tavares is aggressive in improving traffic operation on roads in the City.

XIV. REPORTS

Tab 9. City Administrator Report

Mr. Drury noted wood fire steamboat meet was in Tavares through the weekend and encouraged those present to check them out.

Mr. Tweedie provided an update on upcoming events, including Hydrodrag Nationals. He said the Planes, Tunes, and BBQ event would be rescheduled with dates provided in the coming days as musical performers were being rescheduled for the event.

Mr. Tweedie introduced Ken Cunningham, Aviation Operations Supervisor, and provided a brief professional history. Mayor Pfister welcomed Mr. Cunningham to the Tavares Team.

Mr. Aldrich said a new program would be starting in the summer; flag football. He said the program has a registration fee and would be budget neutral.

Mr. Aldrich thanked the Council for their support of the Tavares Library. He said Senator Marco Rubio contacted the City and will be providing a mobile office service in the new library expansion on April 19, 2022, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. He said the mobile office service is open to all.

Ms. Bublitz noted the City is hiring and encouraged anyone who would like to join the Tavares Team to visit the city website at www.tavares.org.

Tab 10. City Council Member Reports

Council Member Gamble thanked Ms. Dement for her work at the Library and welcomed Mr. Cunningham to the Tavares Team.

Council Member Gamble said the west left turn signal at Dead River Road was recently installed creating a safe turn environment.

Council Member Singer said Mr. Tweedie's presentation reflects development that had enhanced the entire City.

Council Member Singer said he looks forward to Planes, Tunes, and BBQ being rescheduled and commended the Economic Development Department for making the decision to cancel due to inclement weather.

Council Member Singer thanked the Public Works Department for their work at Summerall Park.

Council Member Boggus said she looks forward to Planes, Tunes, and BBQ being rescheduled.

Vice Mayor Price said he is impressed with the work at Summerall Park and looks forward to Planes, Tunes, and BBQ being rescheduled.

Mayor Pfister noted Debi Weinert filled out a Request to Speak form under the Audience to be Heard section on the Agenda and invited Ms. Weinert to the podium.

Debi Weinert, 724 Lake Dora Drive, Tavares, provided a handout to the Council on the Triangle Community Alliance. She said the organization is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization supporting education and childhood literacy. She said the Dolly Parton Imagination Library would be their first project for the children of Tavares and requested the City consider including a grant for their programs during the upcoming budget year.

Mr. Drury said the grant awards program would be accepting applications on October 1, 2022.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business and Mayor Pfister adjourned the meeting at 5:01 p.m.

Respectfully,

Susie Novack, MMC, FCRM
City Clerk