



**TAVARES CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 20, 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 Greg Watts, Liberty Baptist Church

Pastor Greg Watts, Liberty Baptist Church, provided the invocation and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Pfister asked for 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. Tavares High School Hall of Fame Presentation

Jacob Stein, Principal, Tavares High School, provided a high-level overview of a new program at Tavares High School, Tavares High School Athletic Hall of Fame. He said the Hall of Fame would be an annual event and noted several area high schools had implemented similar programs. A committee was formed to determine the award criteria and open application process. Mr. Stein said Tavares High School would celebrate its 100th anniversary in four years.

Greg Raczkowski, Athletic Director, Tavares High School, said the committee was selected by Mr. Stein, including staff personnel, community members, and retired educators. He reviewed the programs eligibility requirements as follows:

- Athletes who graduated from Tavares High School are eligible ten years after graduation and are selected based on individual school accomplishments, college accomplishments, and professional accolades.
- Coaches are eligible five years after retirement and are selected based on years of service and performance coaching or administering a sport.
- Community members who have enhanced the overall athletic high school experience are also eligible based on years of service and documented philanthropies.

Mr. Raczkowski said the school is excited about the inaugural Hall of Fame game, and the program would take place at the August 26, 2022, football game during half-time.

Mayor Pfister noted her support.

Tab 3. Tavares Chamber of Commerce Update

Mr. Drury said the Chamber President and CEO could not attend the meeting and the Council's representative to the Chamber of Commerce, Council Member Singer, had a few words to share.

Council Member Singer said he and Mr. Tweedie attended a recent monthly Chamber Directors meeting. He said they provided an update on current projects in the City, including the approval of the RAISE grant application. He said Mr. Tweedie provided an update on the City's economic development plan.

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

Tab 4. Proclamation – Water Conservation Month

Mayor Pfister read a Proclamation declaring April 2022 as Water Conservation Month in the City of Tavares.

MOTION

Amanda Boggus moved to approve the Proclamation, seconded by Walter Price. 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 resolution by title only:

RESOLUTION 2022-07

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA RELATING TO THE STATE REVOLVING FUND LOAN PROGRAM; AUTHORIZING FIRST AND FINAL AMENDMENT TO SRF LOAN AGREEMENT DW350980 FOR LAKE HERMOSA/AVALON PERMANENT BOOSTER STATION DESIGN ACTIVITIES; SETS THE LOAN AMOUNT; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS, SEVERABILITY, AND EFFECTIVE DATE.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Pfister asked if anyone wished to pull an item from the Consent Agenda. There were none.

MOTION

Amanda Boggus moved to approve the Consent Agenda [Tab 5. Approval of the April 6, 2022, City Council Regular Meeting Minutes], seconded by Sandy Gamble. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 5. Approval of the April 6, 2022 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

Approved on the Consent Agenda.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS

Tab 6. Approve and Adopt Resolution 2022-07 Authorizing the First Amendment and Final Amendment to Close-Out the SRF Loan DW 350980

Ms. Houghton made the following presentation:

Previously, the City Council Adopted Resolution 2021-14 authorizing the application and acceptance of State Revolving Loan DW350980 for design activities for the Lake Hermosa Permanent Booster Pump Project. The loan document was executed on July 15, 2021, with a disbursable loan amount of \$240,000.

This amendment, Amendment One (1), provides a completion date for the project and finalizes (closes) the loan for the Lake Hermosa Permanent Booster Pump Project Design Activities. In addition, the Amendment changes the date for the first semi-annual loan payment from November 15, 2022, to February 15, 2023. (Changes are shown in italics.)

- *Design activities – disbursable amount is \$240,000*
- *Capitalized interest (non-disbursable) amount is \$500*
- *Estimated loan service fee is \$4,800*
- *Semi-annual loan payments are estimated at \$12,972*
- *The first semi-annual loan payment is due November 15, 2022 February 15, 2023*
- *Loan term is Ten (10) years*
- *Annual loan interest rate is 1.08%*
- *Completion of Project Design Activities is scheduled for August 15, 2022.*

Staff recommends Option 1, for Council to move to approve Resolution 2022-07 which authorizes the Mayor to execute SRF Loan DW350980 Amendment One (1) to close-out and finalize the loan.

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

MOTION

Amanda Boggus moved to approve Resolution 2022-07, seconded by Troy Singer. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

IX. ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING

First Reading

Second Reading

X. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Tab 7. RAISE Grant Application Update

Mr. Dillon said the Council approved a resolution for the RAISE grant application on February 6, 2022. In partnership with Lake County and the City of Mount Dora, the resolution authorized staff to submit the application to the United States Department of Transportation for the \$25 million dollar RAISE Grant application for the planned Wekiva Trail extension project Segment 1 and Segment 5. He said staff successfully applied by the due date, April 14, 2022, at 5:00 p.m. If awarded, the project would complete the regional Wekiva multi-modal trail extension Segments 1 and Segment 5. Mr. Dillon said the segments are the last phases of the 26-mile paved regional trail. The proposed 14-foot-wide Rails-to-Trails project extends 11.5 miles and will provide a safe, high-quality, multi-modal corridor.

Mr. Dillon noted letters of support were included in the agenda packet. He said letters from the City's state representatives would be obtained once the application is submitted and a federal application was assigned an identification number. When the letters of support are received, staff would forward to the USDOT, who will include the letters with the application. Mr. Dillon said the City met with Congressman Daniel Webster, Senator Marco Rubio, and Senator Dennis Baxley to support the application.

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

Tab 8. Award and Authorize Contract for ARPA Funded Road Paving Bid 2022-0009

Ms. Houghton made the following presentation:

On February 16, 2022, the City of Tavares City Council Adopted Resolution 2022-02 which authorized the election of the Standard Option for funds awarded to the City of Tavares from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). The Resolution provided a Spend Plan which included Road/Street Paving for various City Streets/Roads.

In response to the approval of the City of Tavares ARPA Spend Plan, ARPA Funded Bid 2022-0009 for City Road Paving was issued and advertised on March 13, 2022.

Bids were received and opened on April 8, 2022 with two firms responding. The two responding firms and their respective bids are shown below:

*Paquette Company, Inc.
101 Weber Avenue
Leesburg, FL 34748
\$1,295,000.00*

*Hubbard Construction Company
P.O. Box 547217
Orlando, FL 3854-7217
\$2,068,587.47*

The City's Engineering consultant, Griffey Engineering, has reviewed the submitted bids and recommends the low bid, Paquette Company, Inc.

The following are attached for Council's review:

- *Bid 2022-0009 Advertisement*
- *Bid Opening Minutes*
- *Bid 2022-0009*
- *Listing of Roads to be Paved*

Staff recommends Option 1, for the Council to move to award ARPA Funded City of Tavares Bid 2022-009 for Rad Paving to Paquette Company, Inc., and authorize the City Administrator to execute contract documents, and issue a Notice to Proceed.

Ms. Houghton said the Spend Plan authorized \$1,083,195 for road paving and another \$43,195 for the City Hall Building Department parking lot. The bid came in at \$211,805, greater than the amount set aside in the Spend Plan. The Spend Plan also set aside \$787,812 for contingency. She said \$211,805 would come from the contingency funds leaving \$576,007 in contingency funds for other ARPA-funded projects.

Mayor Pfister asked for comments from the Council.

Vance Jochim, 12619 Milwaukee Avenue, Lake County, congratulated the Council on using ARPA funds for the road paving and parking lot. He recommended using reserve funds to repair the dock at the Tavares Nature Park.

MOTION

Amanda Boggus moved to approve the Paquette Company, Inc. bid award, seconded by Troy Singer.

Council Member Gamble said this is the first ARPA-funded project brought to the Council. He said the Council might wish to review the project list and prioritize as Reserves may deplete within 5 or 6 projects. Mayor Pfister concurred.

Mr. Drury said staff would bring the project list to the next meeting to provide the Council an opportunity to prioritize projects.

The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Mayor Pfister said she is happy a Lake County company was awarded the project.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

4th of July Celebration

Mayor Pfister said after speaking with her constituents, she had second thoughts about holding a street parade during the July 4th Celebration event. She stated her interest in having a festival during the evening after the afternoon rains. She asked Mr. Aldrich for his comments.

Mr. Aldrich said the July 4th event had included a street parade at 5:00 p.m., followed by activities and entertainment in the park. The evening ends at 9:00 p.m. with a fireworks show. Staff is currently planning for the parade, food trucks, and entertainment. If the Council wishes not to have a parade, staff would focus more on entertainment and family activities. The financial end of the parade is insignificant, with a few dollars spent on parade awards. The majority of the event budget goes toward entertainment, activities, and fireworks. He said the Police, Fire, Public Works, Utilities, and Parks staff could be redirected to work other parts of the event in the park. Mr. Aldrich said his team is prepared to move forward either with or without the parade at Council's direction.

Mayor Pfister asked the Council if they would like to have the topic agendaized for further discussion, which would provide an opportunity for the Council to discuss with their constituents. She said the citizens she spoke with were more comfortable having a family-oriented event in the evening during cooler temperatures. She inquired about parade attendance. Mr. Aldrich confirmed attendance is down.

Mr. Drury noted the parade had many delays due to Florida's afternoon showers, and the fireworks were not affected as much because they were held later in the evening.

Council Member Gamble said the parade was held in the morning years ago, with the remainder of the day spent on events and entertainment in the park. He noted the Tavares Chamber of Commerce was involved in the parade during that time.

Mayor Pfister said school bands did not participate in parades as school was not in session during the summer.

There was a consensus from the Council to place the July 4th Celebration parade on the May 4, 2022 agenda for discussion.

SR 19

Mayor Pfister said had been an above-average number of accidents on SR 19. She asked if Council would support asking staff to approach FDOT to evaluate and possibly improve safety in the area.

Council Member Boggus asked which portion of SR 19. Mayor Pfister said from Dead River Road to Slim Haywood Road. Chief Lubins confirmed the high accident rates in the area and provided statistics.

There was a consensus from the Council to approach FDOT.

Vice Mayor Price noted traffic issues and accidents at the intersection SR19 to SR561 and would be in support of exploring a traffic light at the intersection. Mayor Pfister noted upcoming development in the area and said she would like to address road issues sooner rather than later. Mr. Drury said staff would meet with FDOT District 5 for an evaluation. Staff would bring back their findings and recommendations to the Council.

Spring Employee Holiday

Mayor Pfister stated her appreciation for City employees. She said Tavares is growing, and it is important to hold on to the small-town feel and keep employees happy. Mayor Pfister discussed the Spring season and asked the Council to consider giving the City's employees an annual day off on Friday before the first Sunday after the vernal equinox, the first official day of Spring.

Council Member Boggus asked if it matches with Good Friday each year. Mayor Pfister said it does. She said it would be a spring holiday which the employees currently do not have, and believed it is a good day to provide the employees with an extra day off.

Council Member Gamble asked if it would be a paid holiday. Mayor Pfister confirmed. Council Member Gamble noted his support.

Vice Mayor Price noted his support and said many businesses are closed during that time.

Council Member Singer asked if City Hall would be closed. Mr. Drury confirmed.

Council Member Boggus asked if the Mayor would like to agendaize for discussion. Mayor Pfister confirmed and asked Mr. Drury to place the item on the next agenda.

Tavares Nature Park and Squibb Park

Council Member Gamble said he would like to present an item for consideration to be placed on the next meeting agenda. He said the City has two wetlands parks and insufficient staffing and equipment to maintain; Squibb Park and Tavares Nature Park. He asked the Council if Mr. Drury and his staff could investigate the possibility of giving the wetland parklands to the State of Florida as the State has the equipment to maintain preserves.

Council Member Boggus asked for more detail on maintenance issues in the parks. Council Member Gamble said Squibb Park has a boardwalk on the ground needing repair. He noted safety concerns for emergency access during rainy seasons. He said the expense of maintaining the parks takes staff away from other areas of responsibility and duties.

Mayor Pfister noted her support to place the item on the agenda.

Council Member Boggus noted her support as long as conservation issues were addressed, including the loss of conservation areas the City claims and potentially restricted access to public parks. She said the City had extensive square footage in both parks that would be depleted and was concerned if the State would improve the property.

Mr. Drury said staff could evaluate the cost of maintaining the parks and if the State would be willing to take over and run the parks as State parks. He said it would take time to research thoroughly, and an evaluation could be made and brought back to Council. Staff would need to go to Tallahassee and meet with the Trust Fund Board and any other groups involved to discuss the intent of the Council to keep the natural preserve parks available to the public and State-run. He said staff would bring back the process and cost savings.

Vice Mayor Price said having the State take over the two parks may be a good alternative for the City as the \$800,000 dock was cut from the budget each year. He said he understands many restrictions were placed on Tavares Nature Park when the City acquired the land and the original agreement would need legal review.

Mayor Pfister encouraged the Council to bring items up during New Business.

XII. OLD BUSINESS

XIII. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

Deb Murphy, 1723 Sunrise Court, Tavares, said growth discussions had been held in Tavares and across the State. She noted a concern that there are many definitions of affordable housing and said she would like to know the Council's definition of affordable housing.

Vance Jochim, 12619 Milwaukee Avenue, Lake County, discussed parking signs put up by the County around the County Administration building and parking garage. He said the signs restrict parking, and he has encouraged the County to place a disclosure on the signs that states parking is allowed after 5:00 p.m. He said a request made to the county to change the verbiage on the signs to allow parking after 5:00 p.m. may help downtown businesses.

Mr. Jochim asked if there are actual costs spent on each park for comparison as there may be other parks the City is spending more on.

Pastor Mike Watkins 805 Summerall Avenue, Tavares, noted his concern regarding traffic on Lona Street. He said the neighborhood has elderly residents afraid of the high-speed traffic and allowing their grandchildren to play in the area. He asked if there could be a way to stop vehicles from cutting through the neighborhood from SR19 to SR561.

Lou Buigas 110 E Ianthe Street, Tavares, said the Lake County Museum of Art was hosting a Salvador Dali exhibit. She said Tavares was the first of three stops in the United States for the show. The museum was open Thursday through Saturday from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., and the exhibit will remain through May 28, 2022.

XIV. REPORTS

Tab 9. City Administrator Report

Mr. Drury said the City would be placing boulders at the entrance to Tavares Nature Park to curtail unauthorized vehicle access. Mr. Jochim noted there is a second entrance to the park. Mr. Drury said staff would look at that entrance as well.

Mr. Tweedie said Planes, Tunes & BBQ was rescheduled to May 13 and 14, 2022.

Mr. Clark provided an update on the Lake Francis Estates project. He said the project is scheduled to conclude on May 15, 2022, and remains within budget.

Tab 10. City Council Member Reports

Council Member Gamble

- Council Member Gamble said he would not be available to attend Planes, Tunes & BBQ as he had a scheduling conflict.
- Council Member Gamble said water on each side of the Lake Francis Estates entrance was still high. He said it was his understanding the entrance would be raised. Mr. Clark said the second lift would be higher, and once completed water should sheet off the road.

Council Member Singer

- Council Member Singer noted America in Bloom judges would be in Tavares during the week and he was looking forward to hearing their feedback. He noted his support for the program and thanked Mr. Dillon, Traci Anderson, Parks Supervisor, and her team for their efforts.
- Council Member Singer said he recently read a Police Department report discussing the heroics during a recent incident. He asked the Chief to thank the Officers for their efforts each day. He recognized Officer Bannick, Corporal O'Shea, and Officer Carter for their heroism.

Vice Mayor Price

- Vice Mayor Price said he was looking forward to the Planes, Tunes & BBQ, and the Paratrooper events.

Mayor Pfister

- Mayor Pfister said it was a good meeting and she is excited about the upcoming events coming up.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business and Mayor Pfister adjourned the meeting at 4:59 p.m.

Respectfully,

Susie Novack, MMC, FCRM
City Clerk