



**TAVARES CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 18, 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

**Lori Houghton, Finance Director
Freya McLain, 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
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. Dr. Tim Burdick, Lake County Baptist Association

Dr. Tim Burdick, Lake County Baptist Association provided the invocation and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Pfister asked for changes to the Agenda. Ms. Houghton 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. Proclamation – Florida State Representative Keith Truenow

Mayor Pfister read a Proclamation in appreciation for Florida State Representative Keith Truenow's efforts representing the Citizens of Tavares in his capacity as District 31 Florida Representative.

MOTION

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

The City Council presented the Proclamation to Representative Truenow.

Tab 3. Proclamation – County Commissioner Kirby Smith

Mayor Pfister read a Proclamation in appreciation and thanking Lake County Commissioner Kirby Smith for representing the Citizens of Tavares in his capacity as Vice Chairman of the Lake County Board of County Commissioners.

MOTION

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

The City Council presented the Proclamation to Commissioner Smith.

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

Attorney McLain stated there were no quasi-judicial matters before the Council.

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. There were no requests.

MOTION

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

Tab 4. Freedom Boat Club, Lease Agreement Amendment One

Approved on the Consent Agenda.

Tab 5. Cruising Tikis of Lake Dora, Lease Amendment One

Approved on the Consent Agenda.

Tab 6. Seaplane Base & Marina Leasing Policy Revision

Approved on the Consent Agenda.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS

IX. ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING

First Reading

Second Reading

X. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Tab 7. Purchase & Sale Agreement with Cagan Management Group, Caroline Street Property

Mr. Tweedie made the following presentation:

Previously, at the January 19, 2022, City Council meeting staff presented Council with an unsolicited letter of intent from Cagan Management Group (attached) for the purchase of a 5.83 -acre parcel of City-owned undeveloped land on Caroline Street (Alt Key # 13739334) for their intended purpose of developing a market rate multi-family rental apartment complex.

Council moved to accept the letter and authorized staff to hire a qualified property appraiser to conduct a full appraisal on the property and negotiate a

final purchase and sale agreement to be brought back to Council for consideration. The Spivey Group Inc. was engaged to conduct the appraisal and on February 10, 2022, submitted to the City the completed appraisal report with a fair market land value of \$510,200(attached). Cagan has agreed to this price.

The City Attorney, Staff, Cagan Management and their Attorney have negotiated a Purchase and Sale Agreement (attached) for Council consideration. Salient terms and conditions of the agreement include:

- The property's total purchase price shall be \$510,200 with \$50,000 in earnest money to be submitted to escrow upon execution of the agreement, the balance of \$460,200 at closing.*
- The buyer shall have an inspection period of 120 days to complete due diligence, including surveys, geotechnical inspection, soil borings etc.*
- Closing shall be subject to the condition of the property being rezoned to RMF-3; the rezoning will be City initiated.*

Staff recommends Option 1, for the Council to approve the purchase and sale agreement with Cagan Management Group for the sale of surplus City land in the amount of \$510,200 subject to the provisions of the agreement.

Mr. Tweedie said Ted Wicks, Wicks Engineering, Inc., was present and available for questions.

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

MOTION

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

Tab 8. Request for Proposals, Development of Tavares Square

Mr. Tweedie made the following presentation:

In 2015, the City purchased the property now known as Tavares Square from Lake County. At that time, the property (122 E. Main Street) was occupied by the Clerk of Court's Public Records Center. The intended purpose of the purchase was to fulfill the vision of the Downtown Tavares Redevelopment Master Plan by removing the final remaining component of County Government in the Center of Downtown Tavares and relocating it to the newly created County Government campus on West Main Street, opening the property up for future development consistent with the plan. The Master plan conceptualized a mixed-use development consisting of commercial, residential, and open public spaces.

The property was subsequently marketed to solicit interest from private sector

developers through RFP, commercial real estate brokers, advertising, and promotion locally, nationally, and even internationally for the following 2 years. However, market conditions were not favorable at that time and no viable responses were received. The council then opted to hold off on any further marketing efforts and expenses, continue to maintain the property as open public park space, and await more favorable market conditions for future development options.

Recently, staff has been approached by multiple private sector developers interested in potential development projects compatible with the vision of the master plan. In order to provide the Council with the best opportunity to weigh options for potential projects resulting in the highest and best use of the property consistent with the vision of the master plan, staff seeks Council approval to move forward with a Request for Proposals (RFP) solicitation.

If authorized, staff will immediately move forward with an RFP that would provide proposals with minimal guiding criteria for the private sector developers, driven by current and future projected market forces, to submit their best creative ideas with the greatest opportunity to submit development proposals consistent with the master plan vision. The RFP would then be published for a period of ninety (90) to one hundred twenty (120) days and a selection committee would be formed to grade and rank the proposals to bring back to the Council for consideration.

Staff recommends Option 1, for the Council to move to approve staff's request to solicit a Request for Proposals for the potential development of Tavares Square.

Mayor Pfister asked if Council would have the option to not choose any of the proposals. Mr. Tweedie confirmed.

Council Member Gamble asked who approached the City with interest. Mr. Tweedie said Cagan Management Group, G3 Development (Mount Dora), and a residential developer from California who attended a recent boat show. Council Member Gamble asked if the property would be owned by the City if developed. Mr. Tweedie said proposals might include purchase or lease. The City would leave the Request for Proposal as open as possible with as few parameters as possible to allow the marketplace and private sector to dictate what is reasonable and marketable. He said the proposal would most likely be for purchase, and the development would be commercial and residential mixed-use. He said the proposals would be brought back to the Council for consideration with a thorough review, analysis, rating, and ranking.

Council Member Gamble said he would like to receive citizen input on whether they prefer open space or a high-rise building. Mr. Tweedie said there would be an opportunity to receive public comment during the process, and the Council would not move forward with approvals without a thorough solicitation. The Council may or may not wish to move forward with any received Requests for Proposals. The property was

zoned for up to eight (8) stories. After speaking with the developers, he believed it would be unlikely they would go higher than three stories due to the increased cost of building higher. Mr. Tweedie said the Council would have control of the process through the Request for Proposal selections.

Ms. Houghton said the proposals would come back that meet the Downtown CRA Master Plan initiative the Council set forth.

Council Member Singer noted the Downtown CRA Master Plan was updated in 2017. At the time, the citizens were interested in a mixed-use for Tavares Square. He reiterated that the proposals would come back to the Council for consideration and said he would be interested to hear citizens' preferences. Council Member Singer said he looks forward to seeing what comes to fruition.

MOTION

Amanda Boggus moved to approve, seconded by Troy Singer.

Vice Mayor Price said the Downtown CRA Master Plan called for eight (8) stories with mixed-use. He noted the property is located in the middle of downtown, valuable, and he would be interested in seeing proposals.

Mayor Pfister said she likes that the Council has control over the project.

The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 9. Tavares Vertiport Discussion

Mr. Tweedie made the following presentation:

Tavares has established itself as a "City of Firsts" in the Central Florida Region with many of its initiatives, including the creation and development of the State of Florida's first and, notably, the nation's most renowned and recognized publicly owned, public-use full-service Seaplane Base with its 3,000-foot accompanying virtual runway. Tavares was the first city to build a Splash Park in Lake County, the first to develop an Entertainment District for its downtown in Lake County, the first to build a Stormwater Beemats Ecological Park in its downtown in Lake County, the first to develop a city-wide golf cart community and the first to implement the See-Click-Fix city reporting app.

The nation's Advanced Air Mobility initiative has been underway for the past several years with the exploration and development of technologically advanced Electric Vertical Takeoff and Landing (eVTOL) aircraft, a larger passenger-carrying version of the smaller drone aircraft we have become very accustomed to seeing operating all around our community and beyond every day and at large scale events and for the purpose of aerial observation.

These eVTOL aircraft are envisioned to be the next generation of aviation, providing an "airborne Uber" style transportation service for passengers to and from metropolitan centers, airports, and other transportation hubs, as well as small package delivery within regions. There are several companies investing billions of dollars in the advancement and development of these aircraft, such as the aviation industry leader Boeing, also other large multi-national corporations, such as Toyota, Hyundai, and Google co-founder Larry Page. They've been testing the technology for the last eight years. It is anticipated the first generation of these airborne vehicles being developed will receive FAA approval for passenger operations by the end of 2024.

A vertiport is a collective term referring to areas specifically designed for the takeoff, landing, and ground support functions of these aircraft, much like a heliport is explicitly designed for helicopters. The opportunity exists for the City of Tavares to achieve another "first" by leading our region and State through the development of the first fully functional public vertiport, right here in America's Seaplane City. Potential sites include the Tavares Seaplane Base (FA1) aircraft apron and the top floor of the downtown public parking garage owned and operated by Lake County.

At this time, staff seeks Council approval to explore the feasibility of this exciting and innovative potential project with Lake County, industry leaders (eVTOL aircraft developers/manufacturers), and regulatory agencies (FAA, FDOT). The first phase would likely be the exploration of a "test bed" facility here in Tavares with potential future use in actual transportation operations. Staff would conduct preliminary due diligence and report back to the Council with the next steps, any associated costs, and funding opportunities.

Staff recommends Option 1, for the Council to approve and direct staff to move forward with preliminary exploration and due diligence on the establishment of the State of Florida's first public vertiport in downtown Tavares.

Mr. Tweedie provided a video on eVTOL aircraft. He provided PowerPoint slide renderings depicting vertiport sites.

Mayor Pfister asked for comments from the Council.

Mayor Pfister asked for questions from the Council.

Council Member Gamble said a Tavares Square build-out could create another potential vertiport location and creating a vertiport could be an advantage for the developer. He asked for other possible vertiport locations. Mr. Tweedie said the City has plans for additional parking garages downtown, including the current Public Works site near City Hall. The most immediate sites are those already in existence. There was further discussion on existing sites and possible discussions with Lake County on the use of

their parking garage. He noted the Lake County parking garage was a well-suited site with limited costs to convert the top deck to a vertiport. The Seaplane Base parking apron would also be an excellent site as the vertiport is a temporary structure where a vehicle would fly in and out and not take up space long term. The aircraft are housed in other locations when not in use.

Council Member Boggus asked if the aircraft required a fixed landing pad or if a dock would be viable. Mr. Tweedie said docks are typically narrow and not designed structurally to handle a vertiport operation. Flat ground or structural surface would be most suitable. However, a waterborne platform of substance could be a potential site as well. Mr. Tweedie said it is a blank slate, a new technology, and a new evolution. The FAA is working on design standards, and it is an exciting time to get at the forefront and be a first. Mr. Tweedie said transportation is the lifeblood of any economy.

Vice Mayor Price asked for the advantage of an eVTOL over a helicopter. Mr. Tweedie said advantages include the type of operation, lightweight aircraft that can carry more payload, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and affordability. Chartering a helicopter is expensive, whereas the eVTOL uses battery technology, has multiple powerful engines, are efficient and lightweight.

MOTION

Amanda Boggus moved to approve, seconded by Sandy Gamble.

Council Member Singer thanked Mr. Tweedie for bringing the opportunity to the Council. He said Tavares would be a 1st and he looks forward to the future.

Mayor Pfister said she is excited, and Tavares is a city of firsts.

The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Tab 10. Approval of Award to I.C. Systems, Inc. by Piggy-Back on City of Ocala Contract for City of Tavares Debt Collection Services for Uncollectible Delinquent Accounts

Ms. Houghton made the following presentation:

Previously, the City of Tavares contracted with MJ Altman Companies, Inc. for the collection of delinquent utility accounts. MJ Altman has notified the City of Tavares that they will no longer provide collection services.

In order to expedite the onboarding of a new firm to provide collection services for utility accounts for the City of Tavares, staff researched area contracts that had been competitively bid, and thus could be utilized by piggy-back provision. The I.C System, Inc. contract with the City of Ocala was awarded through competitive solicitation and was publicly awarded and provides a competitive

collection rate.

Florida Statute 163.01, the Florida Interlocal Cooperation Act of 1969 authorizes local government units to utilize piggy-back contracts for city awarded contracts. The City of Tavares Purchasing Policy, Section VIII, provides for the piggy-back of an awarded contract of another jurisdiction when the award was competitively bid.

Exhibit B of the City of Ocala Contract (Collector Proposal) identifies a 7% collection fee. See excerpt below.

Utilizing the piggy-back provision for a contract with I.C. Systems, Inc. will allow the City to meet State and Federal requirements for delinquent account collections more quickly.

Staff recommends Option 1, for the Council to move to award contract with I.C. Systems, Inc. for City of Tavares delinquent account collections by utilizing piggy-back of the City of Ocala contract with I.C. Systems, Inc., and to authorize the City Administrator to execute a contract with I.C. Systems, Inc.

Council Member Boggus asked if the City would incur the 7% collection fee. Ms. Houghton said the firm would collect their fee, and the City would receive the difference. Ms. Houghton said accounts sent to collections do not have property interest and are over 90 to 120 days old, and the City has exhausted the ability to collect in-house.

Council Member Singer asked for the rate the previous company charged. Ms. Houghton said 35%. Council Member Singer said this is a better fee. Ms. Houghton confirmed.

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

Vance Jochim, 12619 Milwaukee Avenue, Lake County, said he enjoyed the Planes, Tunes, and BBQ event. He commended Tavares for allowing political candidates and party tables at events to enable the collection of petitions. He asked the Council to reconsider and expand sign regulations for proposed developments.

Bylinda Rink, 216 Fern Avenue, Tavares, inquired about a vertiport previously under consideration in the Lake Nona area. Mr. Tweedie noted it was a private partnership under discussion and said he would explore their status.

XIV. REPORTS

Tab 9. City Administrator Report

Ms. Houghton noted the following corrections to upcoming events:

- May 25, 2022, Tavares Chamber of Commerce Business Luncheon at the Civic Center, at 11:30.
- Lake County League of Cities Business Luncheon begins at 12:00 noon.

Mr. Tweedie provided an update on the recent Planes, Tunes, and BBQ event. He thanked Cheri Moan, Ken Cunningham, his Team, and various departments, including Police, Fire, Utilities, and Recreation, for their assistance during the event.

Mr. Fitzgerald said the second Smart Growth Workshop is scheduled for June 13, 2022, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers. He invited the Council and public to attend.

Tab 10. City Council Member Reports

Council Member Gamble asked if there would be stations during the Smart Growth Workshop. Mr. Fitzgerald said the first Smart Growth Workshop included stations for participants to communicate, share ideas, and provide written comments. The upcoming meeting would be in theater format with opportunities for individual comments.

Council Member Gamble said he could not attend the Planes, Tunes, and BBQ event due to other commitments.

Council Member Singer said he enjoyed attending Planes, Tunes, and BBQ and commended Mr. Tweedie and his staff. He said it was a great community event and the evening airshow was spectacular. He suggested adding an afternoon airshow to the event.

Council Member Gamble provided an update on Brady Singer's game stats. He said Eustis High School Girls Softball would go to State if they won their game on Friday.

Council Member Boggus said she enjoyed the Planes, Tunes, and BBQ event.

Vice Mayor Price commended the staff on the Planes, Tunes, and BBQ event. He said he received many wonderful comments on the event and noted the Mayor of Eustis attended.

Mayor Pfister said Planes, Tunes, and BBQ was a great event. She complimented the Babe Ruth All-Star League shirts depicting seaplanes.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business, and Mayor Pfister adjourned the meeting at 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully,

Susie Novack, MMC, FCRM
City Clerk