



**TAVARES CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 15, 2020 – 4:00 PM  
TAVARES CITY COUNCIL VIDEO CONFERENCE MEETING  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/tavarespubcom1>**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT**

**Amanda Boggus, Mayor  
Lori Pfister, Vice Mayor  
Lou Buigas, Council Member  
Troy Singer, Council Member  
Roy Stevenson, 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  
Tamera Rogers, Community Services 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**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Boggus called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Mayor Boggus provided information on the virtual meeting and asked those who would like to make public comment to email the City Clerk at [councilmeeting@tavares.org](mailto:councilmeeting@tavares.org).

**II. INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**Tab 1. Richard Keith, Fire Chief**

Richard Keith, Fire Chief, provided the invocation and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Drury said there were changes to agenda from staff.

**MOTION**

Lou Buigas moved to accept the agenda as presented, seconded by Lori Pfister. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

**IV. PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS**

**Tab 2. Proclamation – April 2020 – Water Conservation Month**

Mayor Boggus read a Proclamation declaring April 2020 as Water Conservation Month.

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

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

**VI. READING OF ALL ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS INTO THE RECORD**

Ms. Novack read the following Resolution and Ordinance by title only:

**RESOLUTION NO. 2020-08**

**A RESOLUTION OF CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A RAILROAD REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT FOR THE INSTALLATION OF GRADE CROSSING TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES AND FUTURE MAINTENANCE AND ADJUSTMENT OF SAID DEVICES; PROVIDING FOR THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS; AND PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS, SEVERABILITY, AND EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**ORDINANCE 2020-04**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA AMENDING THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS OF THE CITY LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS; CHAPTER 23, SECTION 23- 14(b) IMPACT FEE DEFERRALS; SUBJECT TO THE RULES, REGULATIONS AND OBLIGATIONS ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TAVARES COUNCIL; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**VII. CONSENT AGENDA**

**Tab 3. Approval of the March 13, 2020 and March 18, 2020 City Council Meeting Minutes**

Mayor Boggus asked if Council wished to pull any item from the Consent Agenda for discussion.

## **MOTION**

Lou Buigas moved to accept the Consent Agenda, Seconded by Troy Singer. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

## **VIII. RESOLUTIONS**

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

#### **First Reading**

#### **Tab 4. Ordinance 2020-04 – Amendment to Land Development Regulations Chapter 23, Section 23-14(b), Impact Fee Deferrals for Large, Multi-Family Rental Developments**

*No discussion at first reading.*

#### **Second Reading**

### **X. GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

#### **Tab 5. Resolution 2020-08 – Railroad Grant Award \$226,064**

Mr. Dillon provided the following presentation:

*Mansfield Road is located within the City of Tavares and currently has an un-signalized railroad crossing. When an intersection is not signalized the trains are required to use their whistle to alert everyone in the area of their approach.*

*FDOT has funding available the City of Tavares may request for the installation of railroad Automatic Grade Crossing Signals Type III Class III to maintain a safe crossing. Residents will benefit from increased safety and noise reduction with signalization at the intersection.*

*The cost to install the railroad Automatic Grade Crossing Signals Type III Class III will be \$226,064.00 and will be reimbursed 100% by FDOT. The responsibility for maintenance of the signal will be assigned by FDOT to the City of Tavares at an annual cost of \$3,600.00, subject to future revision, once installed.*

*FDOT will require the City of Tavares to re-align the existing sidewalk and meet ADA compliance. The cost for Survey and Engineering Design will be \$4,050 and estimated construction cost of \$10,000.*

*Staff recommends Council move to approve Option 1 - Approve Resolution 2020-08, authorizing the City to apply and accept a non-matching grant in the amount of \$226,064.00 for the installation of railroad Automatic Grade Crossing Signals Type III Class IIII at Mansfield Road, to re-align the existing sidewalk meeting ADA compliance in the amount of \$14,050, and to assume the annual railroad signal maintenance cost of \$3,600.00, subject to future revision, once installed.*

Mayor Boggus asked for comments from the public. Ms. Novack said no public comments were received. She said any public comments submitted late or caught in the city's spam filtering system would be reviewed, sent to each Council member, and become part of the public record.

Mayor Boggus asked for comments from Council.

Council Member Singer asked for the funding source for ADA compliant sidewalks. Mr. Dillon said the funding would come from the sidewalk account as well as other accounts within the Streets Division budget. Council Member Singer asked if the City or FDOT would perform the annual maintenance. Mr. Dillon said Florida Central Railroad would provide maintenance.

## **MOTION**

**Troy Singer moved to approve [Option 1], seconded by Lori Pfister.**

Council Member Buigas asked if the sidewalk is continuous. Mr. Dillon confirmed and said the sidewalk upgrades are in the ADA transition plan.

Council Member Stevenson asked if the cost for the sidewalk upgrades will divert funds for other paving projects. Mr. Dillon said no, it would not impede any paving projects.

**The motion carried unanimously 5-0.**

## **Tab 6. City Attorney Contract**

Attorney Williams made the following presentation:

*The City Attorney is requesting a change to the City Attorney contract where he would continue to be the "Lead City Attorney" as he has for the past 30 plus years while he transferred some legal counsel services to attorney Lindsay Holt who currently works with him out of his office on Alfred Street.*

*A draft amendment to that contract is attached. Private practice City Attorneys generally bill their cities by a flat monthly retainer fee plus an hourly fee. During most of the City Attorney's tenure with the City, he has used this method which currently reflects a flat retainer fee of \$29,952 which covers all routine*

*meetings with the Council, P&Z Board, Code Enforcement Board, and other City Committees and routine consultation with staff and Councilmembers on city business. The hourly fee has been \$213 for all other services. The City previously budgeted \$185,385 as the estimated annual cost for City attorney services.*

*The City Attorney's proposed amendment would change his compensation to a flat retainer of \$5,000/month, effective February 1, 2020 (He has not billed the City since January, 2020). The proposed amendment would eliminate hourly billing from him while he continued to provide legal counsel to the city as lead attorney under a flat fee only.*

*He would utilize Lindsay Holt to handle litigation, routine contract review and other matters at the same hourly billable rate of \$213. The City Attorney will continue to attend all Council meetings and be available, as usual, for meetings, consults, phone calls and other legal matters.*

*Although the City Attorney is now 66 (He was 31 when first engaged!) and is limiting his practice somewhat, he would like to continue to represent the City for a while longer and work with Council, the City Administrator, and staff on the many projects that are underway. The City Attorney believes the flat retainer will fairly compensate him for his time as well as Lindsay Holt while keeping expenses for City Attorney services within the established budget.*

Mayor Boggus asked for questions from Council.

Vice Mayor Pfister asked if the associate attorneys will invoice the city separately. Attorney Williams confirmed and said they are subcontractors who agree to the same terms and conditions for compensation, itemization, and hourly billing within the City Attorney contract. Vice Mayor Pfister inquired about vacation time. Attorney Williams said he would continue all routine work as the City Attorney, including attending meetings, availability by phone at all times, and significant projects. He said he would no longer be performing court litigation.

Council Member Stevenson asked Mr. Drury if he is comfortable with the agreement. Mr. Drury confirmed.

Mayor Boggus asked if Attorney William's hourly rate is \$213.00. Attorney Williams confirmed and said an escalator is built-in for inflation. Mayor Boggus noted that it is a low billable hourly rate. Attorney Williams said he enjoys working for the city and looks forward to seeing some of the city's major projects come to fruition.

Council Member Singer said the city is fortunate to have Attorney Williams insight, knowledge, and expertise. He said he would like to see the city keep Attorney Williams on board as long as possible.

## **MOTION**

**Troy Singer moved to accept the contract with Attorney Williams, seconded by Lori Pfister. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.**

### **Tab 7. CDBG Grant for Senior Center and Improvements to Ingraham Park**

Ms. Rogers made the following presentation:

*The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is a competitive Federal funding program that is administered by Lake County which provides grants for Urban County Partners that represent low to moderate income constituents in a particular geographic area.*

*Over the past several years, CDBG funds have been used to construct public restrooms and improve other amenities at City parks such as Summerall, Aesop's, Ingraham, and Tavares Nature Park.*

*The grant applications are due on April 24, 2020.*

*Staff recommends Council move to authorize staff to apply for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to use toward the new construction of a Senior Center to be located next to the Public Library in Ridge Park and for improvements to Ingraham Park.*

Mayor Boggus asked for comments from the public. Ms. Novack said no public input was received. Mayor Boggus asked if the city received public input for Tab 6, City Attorney Contract. Ms. Novack said no.

Mayor Boggus asked for comments from the Council.

Vice Mayor Pfister asked if they are two separate grants. Ms. Rogers confirmed and said they are two different applications placed on one agenda item.

Council Member Stevenson asked if the \$200,000 grant locks the city into specific upgrades at Ingraham Park. Ms. Rogers said the city would seek public input from the community to bring back to Council for final consideration, approval, and allocation.

Council Member Buigas asked if she could serve as Council liaison for the direction of Ingraham Park.

**There was a consensus from Council for Council Member Buigas to act as Council Liaison for Ingraham Park Project.**

## **MOTION**

**Lori Pfister moved to approve to apply for the two grants, seconded by Roy Stevenson. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.**

## **XI. NEW BUSINESS**

Vice Mayor Pfister noted her concern that the Tavares High School Senior Class was not able to have their graduation due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She asked if Council would like to offer the Tavares Pavilion on the Lake facility at no charge to the Tavares High School 2020 Seniors on an appropriate date that would fit within the city and High School schedule for a celebration event. Mayor Boggus asked if it would be for a belated graduation or prom event. Vice Mayor Pfister said the Senior Class could determine what type of event they would like to have, with the city providing the facility only. The High School would pay for any other event costs.

Council Member Stevenson noted his support and said he would like to offer the facility on an off day. He asked for confirmation that any event would take place when the community returns to regular schedules. Vice Mayor Pfister confirmed.

Mayor Boggus asked if staff would be able to look into the request further. Mr. Drury said the idea is creative, and he could also envision a beautiful Senior photograph with the Pavilion in the background. He said that with the Council's approval, staff could reach out to the High School Principal to identify a date and an event that would fit with their plans. Vice Mayor Pfister said she would like to have a meeting with the Principal and be the Council Liaison for the project.

Council Member Singer said it is a wonderful idea and noted his support.

## **MOTION**

**Lori Pfister moved to provide the Tavares Pavilion on the Lake to the Tavares High School Senior Graduating Class of 2020, with the city paying the cost of facility use rental from the General Fund, to be scheduled on an off-day when the city will not experience a large revenue loss, seconded by Roy Stevenson. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.**

Council Member Buigas said a group that creates banners for veterans contacted her. She said the group is working with a neighboring city to provide the 2020 Senior Class members with banners throughout their city. She asked the Council if they would be interested in placing banners along the Main Street and Ruby Street light poles. The banners will be available at a discounted rate for the parents. Mr. Drury said the city's cost would be to purchase metal brackets that affix to poles. He said the school or student would provide the banner, which would be on display until July 4th in recognition of the graduating student.

Council Member Stevenson asked if there are enough light poles available for three hundred student banners. Council Member Buigas said she does not anticipate all students participating in the program. Council Member Stevenson said his only

hesitation would be a child denied an opportunity to participate. Mr. Drury said staff could bring back an estimated number of students who would participate, cost, and source of funding. He said the estimated cost for brackets is \$175.00 each or \$25,000 for 150 students. Mr. Drury said brackets would last approximately three years and could also be used during the holiday season. Vice Mayor Pfister asked if Council would be interested in six banners with 50 names each on the pier at the Pavilion on the Lake. She said the city might be able to gift those banners to the Senior class. She noted a concern for the expense to parents to purchase individual banners. Council Member Buigas noted her support in recognizing the students and said all options are excellent. Vice Mayor Pfister asked if staff could get cost estimates for both banner scenarios. Mr. Drury said two separate programs could be offered to the students. The use of the Pavilion with banners or banners along the streets. Mr. Drury said staff would bring back an agenda item for two programs for Council's consideration.

Mayor Boggus asked if any public comments were received under New Business. Ms. Novack said no public comments were received.

## **XII. OLD BUSINESS**

Vice Mayor Pfister said she received a public comment from Barbara Price who suggested the banners could be given to the Tavares High School senior class to use for their class reunions.

## **XIII. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

## **XIV. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD**

*No public comment received.*

## **XV. REPORTS**

### **Tab 8. City Administrator Report**

Mr. Drury noted the City Council agenda is posted at City Hall and on the website [www.tavares.org]. He said the Agenda is posted the Friday before the meeting and public comment can be provided any time after posting. He encouraged the public to forward public comments to the City Clerk at councilmeeting@tavares.org.

Mr. Drury asked Mr. O'Keefe to provide a high-level update on COVID 19. Mr. O'Keefe said the President of the United States is working on a plan to get the country back to work. He said the development of the program is ongoing. The method includes three phases for three types of community mitigation categories, including low mitigation areas (first to open), moderate mitigation areas (locations based on indicators), and significant mitigation areas (remain in shelter for a period until safe). The CDC and health officials are planning the Nation's reopening in three phases that include preparing the Nation through May 1, 2020, using a National communications campaign,

innovation, and ingenuity applied plan to the pandemic through May 15, 2020, and a stage reopening varied by local conditions and not before May 1, 2020.

Mr. Drury said there are three types of communities per infection rates, and when the City receives guidance, the information would be provided to the citizens. He said communities with low infection rates would reopen sooner than communities identified high infected rates. Mr. Drury said each Council Member has stayed in constant communication and been supportive of the City's mitigation efforts, including working with the hospital, providing first responders with protective equipment, and providing essential services to citizens. There are employees on the front line each day, working remotely, and cycling in and out in shifts. The City operates lean and mean, and all hands are on deck with everyone serving a vital role in keeping the City safe and well responded. Mr. Drury thanked the Council for being engaged throughout the process and said it is a marathon and not a sprint. He said there is an end which is within a month or two, and the City continues to work on budgets, plans to reopen the City, and assisting businesses and the community so they can get back up to speed as quickly as possible. Mr. Drury thanked the Council for being unified with the Tavares team, and each Department Director for leading their teams and coming in each day. He said all of the employees are doing a fantastic job.

Attorney Williams thanked the Council for their support.

Ms. Novack noted the Mayor's Youth Council Mock Meeting was rescheduled to May 6, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. She said the public can view the meeting at [www.youtube.com/user/tavarespubcom1](http://www.youtube.com/user/tavarespubcom1).

Ms. Rogers said summer camp registration begins the following week with plans to open June 1, 2020, if there are no mandates. The first Simply Married program wedding is scheduled the next week with social distancing practices. The July 4th celebration continues to move forward. The library is active on social media, including competitions. She thanked the Council for their support.

## **Tab 9. City Council Member Reports**

### **Council Member Buigas**

Council Member Buigas offered the following positive quote of the day:

"Always find opportunities to make someone smile, and to offer random acts of kindness in everyday life." ~ Roy T. Bennett

### **Council Member Singer**

- Thanked staff for adapting and overcoming the challenges during the pandemic.
- Noted Council's support for the employees, business community, and residents.

- Thanked the first responders, teachers, and medical professionals for their hard work during COVID 19.
- Said we will get through the challenges together.

#### Council Member Stevenson

Council Member Stevenson said he recently had a cookout at Summerall Park, where he encountered an 11 year old who was riding his bicycle in the area who stopped to pick up trash. He said Aden indicated he was cleaning the park because he spent time at the park and wanted to keep it beautiful. Council Member Stevenson noted Aden aspires to attend the Naval Sea Cadet Corp as a recruit in the future and said he is a remarkable young man. Council Member Stevenson commended Aden for his citizenry.

Mayor Boggus thanked Aden.

#### Vice Mayor Pfister

Vice Mayor Pfister thanked Aden. She said she looks forward to the community returning to normal operations.

#### Mayor Boggus

Wished everyone well and said she looks forward to the community reopening soon.

### **XVI. ADJOURNMENT**

There was no further business and Mayor Boggus adjourned the meeting at 5:12 p.m.

Respectfully,

---

Susie Novack, MMC/FCRM  
City Clerk