



**TAVARES CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 5, 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 - *Absent*
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
Sarah Coursey, 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. Phil Clark, Utilities Director

Phil Clark, Utilities Director, provided the invocation and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor asked for changes to the Agenda. Mr. Drury said he would like to add the following items to the Agenda:

Tab 2A – Hurricane Ian Update – Emergency Management Director

Tab 2B – Hurricane Ian Update – Fire Chief

Tab 2C – Hurricane Ian Update – Police Chief

MOTION

Walter Price moved to approve the Agenda with additions [Tabs 2A, 2B, and 2C Hurricane Updates], seconded by Troy Singer. The motion carried unanimously 4-0.

IV. PROCLAMATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

Tab 2. Proclamation – White Cane Day 2022

Mayor Pfister read a Proclamation in its entirety declaring October 15, 2022, as White Cane Safety Day in Tavares in recognition of the contributions of blind and low-vision Americans. Mayor Pfister presented the Proclamation to Chantel Buck, President/CEO of New Vision for Independence, Inc.

Ms. Buck thanked the Council and said the advocacy of persons with disabilities deserve dignity and access to the community.

MOTION

Troy Singer moved to approve the Proclamation, seconded by Sandy Gamble. The motion carried unanimously 4-0.

Tab 2A. Post Hurricane Ian Update – Emergency Management Director

Mr. Drury asked the Emergency Management Director to provide an update on the recent hurricane. He said the Fire and Police Chiefs would follow with their updates.

Mr. O'Keefe noted the City was on day six post-hurricane Ian, and fortunate there was a limited impact in Tavares. He provided a recap of the emergency plans leading up to the hurricane, including actions taken in the City's departments, with some of the following highlights:

- When the storm was a tropical depression, the City reviewed Federal and State software at the City's disposal for updates.
- Tenants removed Marina's vessels in accordance with leasing procedures.
- City departments secured facilities, work areas, and City records.
- The Emergency Management Department organized activities and took steps to prevent, mitigate, prepare, respond, and recover from potential disasters, working with each Department's Director:
 - City Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was staffed with three staff members throughout the storm coordinating with the County's EOC.
 - Lake County Emergency Operations Center (LCEOC) – Three City representatives worked in shifts throughout the storm coordinating with the City's EOC taking calls and working with key officials in the County to assist the City.
- Damage assessment meetings were held after the storm; opening roads was the priority.
- Demobilized 24-hour EOC after the storm to Level 2 partial activation; cleanup began.
- Garbage pickup resumed the day after the storm; two weddings were held at the Pavilion on the Lake on Saturday and Sunday after the storm.

Tab 2B – Post-Hurricane Ian Update – Fire Chief

Chief Keith said the State Emergency Response Plan (SERP) was instituted in 1992 after Hurricane Andrew. The Florida SERP developed into a pool of resources throughout the state that goes to needy areas. He said Tavares Fire Department vehicles, resources, and staff were assigned to the Florida SERP response to assist South Florida in recovery after Hurricane Ian. Five Firefighters and one engine were in South Florida; Ft. Myers. The Federal Government pays for SERP resources. Chief Keith provided PowerPoint slides of the Tavares SERP Strike Team; Battalion Chief Eric Wages, Lieutenant Mark Kidd, Firefighter Madison Leary, Firefighter Anthony Carter, and Firefighter Ethan Hunter. The City of North Port was their first house-to-house search and rescue deployment. After four days, the team relocated to Ft. Meyers.

Tab 2C – Post Hurricane Ian Update – Police Chief

Chief Coursey said she could not be prouder to work with such a team of professionals throughout the City. She said the planning that went into the storm made implementation seamless. There were no major law enforcement issues during the storm. She noted the Police Department accreditation acceptance was placed on hold as the event was scheduled in the Ft. Meyers/Sanibel Island area. She said the Police Department would take donations to the affected area over the weekend.

Mr. Drury said a meeting was held each day through Zoom and radio with each Department Director and thanked those who attended the meetings. He noted the Building Inspector also participated in the discussions and the Mayor was active daily with staff to help and receive updates on the City. Mr. Drury said each Council member was kept up to date, and he was proud of how the City and Council protected the City and maintained services. =

Council Member Singer said the residents do not see what happens behind the scenes, and the Council and Staff were well-prepared to take care of emergencies.

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 NO. 2022-18A

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA; RELATING TO THE DECLARATION OF STATE OF LOCAL EMERGENCY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-19

A RESOLUTION OF CITY OF TAVARES, FLORIDA; AUTHORIZING THE APPLICATION FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE FROM THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY THROUGH THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FOR ASSISTANCE RELATED TO THE HURRICANE IAN EMERGENCY UPON PRESIDENTIAL DECLARATION; AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE DOCUMENTS RELATED TO FEDERAL PUBLIC ASSISTANCE FOR THE EMERGENCY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS, SEVERABILITY, AND EFFECTIVE DATE.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

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

MOTION

Walter Price moved to approve the Consent Agenda [Tab 3. Approval of the September 7, 2022, Regular Meeting and Budget Hearing Minutes; and, Tab 4. Authorization to Use Forfeiture Funds], seconded by Sandy Gamble. The motion carried unanimously 4-0.

Tab 3. Approval of the September 7, 2022 Regular Meeting and Budget Hearing Minutes

Approved on the Consent Agenda.

Tab 4. Authorization to Use Forfeiture Funds

Approved on the Consent Agenda.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS

Tab 5. Resolution 2022-18A – Local Disaster Emergency Declaration

Mr. Drury made the following presentation:

On September 23, 2022, Ron DeSantis, Governor of Florida, issued Executive Order Number 22-218 Declaring a State of Emergency for Brevard, Broward, Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Hillsborough, Indian River, Lee, Manatee, Marin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Okeechobee, Osceola, Palm Beach Pasco Pinellas Polk, Sarasota, and St. Lucie Counties due the expected impact of Tropical Storm 9, now known as Hurricane Ian to the State of Florida, and

On September 24, 2022, in response to an increased threat of risk to the Florida Peninsula from Tropical Storm 9/Hurricane Ian, Ron DeSantis, Governor of Florida, issued Executive Order 22-219 expanding his Executive Order stating that because weather conditions were projected to constitute a major disaster, the Governor declared that a state of emergency exists in the State of Florida.

Chapter 252, Florida Statutes, Emergency Management provides for Local Emergencies; and Lake County was included under a State of Emergency by Governor DeSantis Executive Order Number 22-219.

Resolution 2022-18A sets forth a Local Emergency Declaration, and provides a request to Governor DeSantis to arrange and deliver recovery and response activities as may be necessary and available to aid the citizens of the City of Tavares, Lake County, Florida during and after the emergency.

Resolution 2022-18A is effective retroactively from September 26, 2022. Staff recommends Option 1, for the Council to move to approve Resolution 2022-18A providing for a Local State of Emergency due to Hurricane Ian effective September 26, 2022.

MOTION

Troy Singer moved to approve Resolution 2022-18A, seconded by Walter Price.

Vice Mayor Price asked if the timing of the declaration was typical for a disaster. Mr. Drury confirmed.

The motion carried unanimously 4-0.

Tab 6. Resolution 2022-19 – Authorizing Application for Federal Public Assistance for Hurricane Ian in the Event of a Presidential Declaration

Mr. Drury made the following presentation:

On September 23, 2022, Ron DeSantis, Governor of Florida, issued Executive Order Number 22-218 Declaring a State of Emergency for Brevard, Broward, Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Hillsborough, Indian River, Lee, Manatee, Marin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Okeechobee, Osceola, Palm Beach Pasco Pinellas Polk, Sarasota, and St. Lucie Counties due to the expected impact of Tropical Storm 9, now known as Hurricane Ian to the State of Florida, and

On September 24, 2022, in response to an increased threat of risk to the Florida Peninsula from Tropical Storm 9/Hurricane Ian, Ron DeSantis, Governor of Florida, issued Executive Order 22-219 expanding his Executive Order stating that because weather conditions were projected to constitute a major disaster, the Governor declared that a state of emergency exists in the State of Florida.

Chapter 252, Florida Statutes, Emergency Management provides for Local Emergencies; and Lake County was included under a State of Emergency by Governor DeSantis Executive Order Number 22-219.

When a Presidential Disaster Declaration for Lake County is issued due to the impact of Hurricane Ian, the City of Tavares will be eligible to recover costs related to the disaster through Federal Public Assistance, FEMA.

Resolution 2022-19 provides authorization for the City Administrator to make application for Federal Public Assistance for eligible Hurricane Ian Disaster related expenditures. Resolution 2022-19 also provides authorization for the City Administrator to execute agreements and contracts related to and required by application for Federal Public Assistance.

Staff recommends Option 1, for Council to move to approve Resolution 2022-19 authorizing the City Administrator to apply for Federal Public Assistance related to Hurricane Ian, upon eligibility by Presidential Disaster Declaration, and to

execute all documents related to and required by the application for Federal Public Assistance for Hurricane Ian.

Mayor Pfister asked for comments from the Council.

MOTION

Sandy Gamble moved to approve Resolution 2022-19, seconded by Walter Price. The motion carried unanimously 4-0.

IX. ORDINANCES – PUBLIC HEARING

First Reading

Second Reading

X. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Tab 7. Mayor's Youth Council Update

Ms. Novack made the following presentation:

Each year the City Clerk's Office provides scheduling assistance between Tavares High School (THS) and the City for the Mayor's Youth Council program. Mr. Stokes, THS Mayor's Youth Council program administrator, has advised the Mayor's Youth Council member application process deadline was the previous day; October 4, 2022. Two resumes were received that would be forwarded to the City for pairing with the Council. Mr. Stokes indicated he would continue to promote the program for more members.

Ms. Novack asked the Council if they wished to begin the program while the school continued to promote the program or wait until there were five participants.

Mayor Pfister said the program began in 2016. She stated her support for the program and said the past members were doing well and thankful for their participation opportunities. Mayor Pfister noted previous graduates included the Mayor's Youth Council as part of their college applications.

Mr. Drury said it might be appropriate for the Mayor to visit the school or a class as a guest speaker.

Council Member Singer said it was a great program and enjoyed the Mock Council Meetings, which would be difficult to accomplish with two members. He noted his support for holding the program until there were five participants.

Council Member Gamble asked how wide the school broadcasted the opportunity. Mr. Drury said it was a school-wide opportunity and was unaware of how the program was promoted.

A discussion was held and there was a consensus from the Council to hold the program and have the Mayor make a morning public address announcement on the Mayor's Youth Council program.

Tab 8. Dispatch Agreement with Lake County Sheriff's Office for Dispatch Services

Chief Coursey made the following presentation:

The Lake County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) provides dispatch and 911 services for the Tavares Police Department. The agreement has not changed from previous years, including the cost. Staff recommends Option 1, for the Council to approve the agreement with the Lake County Sheriff's Office for dispatch and 911 services. Staff recommends Option 1, for the Council to approve the agreement.

Mayor Pfister asked for comments from the Council.

Council Member Singer noted dispatch services were previously in-house. He asked how long the Lake County Sheriff's Office provided the service to the City and the cost for the City to provide the service in-house. Chief Coursey said the City had contracted with the Sheriff's Office for seven years. Mr. Drury said the cost would be over \$1 million dollars. Council Member Singer and Vice Mayor Price noted the significant cost savings to the City by contracting dispatch services to the Sheriff's Office.

Mayor Pfister and Council Member Gamble provided an overview of the City's dispatch services. Mayor Pfister noted a small percentage of 911 calls were directed to the Tavares Police Department while the service was in-house, and most went through the Sheriff's department.

MOTION

Sandy Gamble moved to approve the Lake County Sheriff's Office Dispatch Agreement, seconded by Walter Price. The motion carried unanimously 4-0.

Tab 9. Lake Economic Area Development Partnership

Mr. Tweedie made the following presentation:

During the annual budget development process Council requested the LEAD program be brought back to Council for a discussion and decision on funding, deliverables and updates for the Council for the ensuing year.

Attached is the LEAD proposal (Exhibit A) and LEAD Budgetary request (Exhibit B). The Lake 100 group is spearheading this effort with Lake County's economic development department, Elevate Lake. Lake County will be providing the bulk of the funding (\$500,000) to fund LEAD with cities contributing \$1 per capita. Lake County cities will have two representatives on the LEAD Board (One Large City - Tavares) and one Small City.

This public/private partnership as constituted, with a regionally focused approach, can provide opportunities that can leverage and extend Tavares economic development reach, particularly in the area of business recruitment to areas Tavares presently has limited capabilities to capture with the city's limited resources. The city has had and continues to have great success in economic development locally within the City developing a very balanced, broad-based, and diverse business climate within the City. The city had great success in recruiting/ retention, and expansion of its local companies (Sea Ray Aircraft, Jones Brothers, The Big House, Advent Health Waterman Hospital, Osprey Lodge, Atwater Apartments and Sunday Cool to name just a few) however, with a staff of one, dedicated to these efforts (on top of managing a department including Seaplane Base/Marina, Pavilion, CRA, and Special Event Operations) the City's capabilities to reach out farther and do the "big game hunting" necessary to effectively recruit the larger higher wage producing companies to relocate/expand into the Tavares community is limited. To extend the city's present reach would require additional staff and/or consultant partners at a much greater cost.

The cost to hire additional in-house staff and/or consultant partner(s) would far exceed the proposed cost of \$19,000 to the City (likely by a factor of 4 to 5 times this amount \$70,000 to \$90,000). Leveraging the County's \$500,000 with the city's \$19,000 would benefit Tavares. At present the \$19,000 is budgeted.

An opportunity is present to discuss:

- 1. If the Council wants to fund and support participation in LEAD?*
- 2. If the Council wants the City Administrator to be the representative for the Large City category or someone else?*

If the City decides to fund and support LEAD, quarterly reports will be provided to the City Council on deliverables achieved or not achieved.

Staff recommends the City participate in LEAD, assign the City Administrator to represent Large Cities, fund lead, and request quarterly updates from LEAD.

Mr. Tweedie said Mr. Sheilley, President/CEO of the Ocala Metro Chamber and Economic Development Partnership and LEAD representative, was present for questions.

Mr. Drury said the LEAD program was one of a series of partnerships with Lake County that County Commissioner Smith was leading. He noted several partnerships with the County and said the County was carrying the majority of funding into the LEAD program.

Mayor Pfister asked for comments from the Council.

Vice Mayor Price said he would like a sunset provision so the Council would not have to continue in the program if it was not beneficial to the City.

Mr. Sheilley said the agreement is for one year and was performance-based with regular reporting and accountability so that the Council could see a return on investment. In addition to the County, there were over \$250 thousand dollars in five-year private investments. Mr. Sheilley said LEAD would take existing relations with large consultants to work together to benefit all of Lake County and the region. Mr. Drury noted quarterly reports would be provided to the Council.

Vice Mayor Price inquired how businesses would be spread between the 14 municipalities in Lake County. Mr. Sheilley said the first interest and goal is to locate companies in Lake County, and locations would be determined by identifying sites and buildings in a competitive market. A significant portion of funds approved by the LEAD Board had been made to identify those sights and fund engineering studies. He said LEAD looks forward to being an extension of Tavares Economic Development to bring more resources. Mr. Drury said Tavares has an industrial and medical park that many cities do not have.

Council Member Gamble inquired about projects and non-participating cities. Mr. Sheilley reiterated Lake County locations are the number one focus, whether or not a municipality participates, and the funding is to ensure they have the resources to sell the County.

Council Member Singer asked which cities were participating in the program. Mr. Sheilley said he believed nine cities were confirmed, with two additional in consideration. Mr. Drury said he would report back to the Council. Council Member Singer noted that the City's Economic Development is a department of one, and an additional employee would cost four to five times more than participation in the LEAD program. Mr. Tweedie said the program has well-established relationships with large sight selectors, companies, and developers for manufacturing firms that are relocating. He said the program saves the City time and money.

Mayor Pfister inquired about the LEAD Board. Mr. Sheilley said the Board of Directors included business leaders in Lake County. Mr. Sheilley said he was involved in economic development for 28 years. He received the National Excellence in Economic Development Award for the United States Department of Commerce. In 2020 the Ocala Chamber of Commerce was named the National Chamber of the Year in the United States. He said the Team they have hired has education in the workforce focusing on

business retention and entrepreneurship. Mr. Drury said the Board includes members such as the CEO of Advent Hospital Waterman, South Lake Hospital, Duke Energy, and other business leaders throughout Lake County. He said he represents Tavares as a large City on the Board.

Council Member Singer noted his support and said it is challenging to accomplish economic development with one person. Mr. Tweedie said they use their resources and leverage for high-wage jobs in the area. Mr. Drury said it is not only about bringing in new business and includes business retention, recruitment, and expansion.

MOTION

Troy Singer moved to support the LEAD initiative and have the City Administrator serve for the Large City category, seconded by Sandy Gamble.

Council Member Gamble said he said it is an investment to help the City staff at a low cost.

The motion failed 2-2 as follows:

Lori Pfister:	No
Walter Price:	No
Sandy Gamble:	Yes
Troy Singer:	Yes

XI. NEW BUSINESS

XII. OLD BUSINESS

Mayor Pfister inquired about sandbags during the storm. She said Commissioner Smith advised some locations volunteered to assist the City with sandbags in the future, including the Elks Lodge.

Council Member Gamble and Vice Mayor Price noted their support for having a sandbag location in Tavares. Mr. Drury said staff would work with the County to designate a space in Tavares for sandbags.

XIII. AUDIENCE TO BE HEARD

Gary Santoro, Royal Harbor, noted his support for consolidated dispatch and said it worked well in Tavares.

Bylinda Rink, 216 Fern Avenue, Tavares, thanked Chief Coursey, the Fire Department, and those staff members that helped in storm recovery in the Ft. Meyers area. She said the City's support is helping those who grew up in Tavares, such as Doris Ragin's son, Terry Ragin.

XIV. REPORTS

Tab 10. City Administrator Report

Mr. Tweedie provided an update on upcoming events including Roctoberfest and Monster Splash.

Tab 11. City Council Member Reports

Council Member Gamble thanked the City staff for their efforts during the storm.

Council Member Singer said he could not attend the America in Bloom Symposium due to the storm. He noted October was Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Vice Mayor Price commended the City's Emergency Management Department, Police Department, and Fire Department throughout the storm event. He said they ran a professional and smooth operation.

Mayor Pfister commended the Department Directors and said she is proud of Tavares. She said the City is the best because of the employees and leadership.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business and Mayor Pfister adjourned the meeting at 5:26 p.m.

Respectfully,

Susie Novack, MMC, FCRM
City Clerk