



**CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA  
JUNE 16, 2020, REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
SUMMARY OF COUNCIL ACTION**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Watford called the regular meeting of the City Council for the City of Okeechobee to order on Tuesday, June 16, 2020, at 6:00 P.M. in the Council Chamber, located at 55 Southeast 3rd Avenue, Room 200, Okeechobee, Florida. Pursuant to Executive Order No. 20-69 issued by Governor DeSantis on March 20, 2020, and extended by Executive Order No. 20-139 effective June 5, 2020, the meeting was conducted utilizing communications media technology (CMT) as provided by Florida Statutes 120.54(5)(b)2, by means of Zoom.com Meeting ID 2459713294. The Host computer was operated by Executive Assistant Brock. The audio file is retained as a permanent record<sup>1</sup>. The invocation was offered by Mayor Watford, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Council Member Keefe.

**II. ATTENDANCE**

City Clerk Lane Gamiotea called the roll. Mayor Dowling R. Watford, Jr., Council Members Wes Abney, Monica Clark, Bob Jarriel and Bobby Keefe were present in the Chamber.

CITY STAFF: City Attorney John Fumero, City Administrator Marcos MontesDeOca, Police Chief Bob Peterson, Fire Chief Herb Smith, Public Works Director David Allen, Deputy City Clerk Bobbie Jenkins, and Executive Assistant Robin Brock were also present in the Chamber.

**III. AGENDA AND PUBLIC COMMENTS**

A. Mayor Watford asked whether there were any agenda items to be added, deferred, or withdrawn; New Business Item VII.G. was added.

B. **Council Member Abney moved to adopt the agenda as amended; seconded by Council Member Jarriel.**

**VOTE: Ayes-Mayor Watford, Council Members Abney, Clark, Jarriel, and Keefe. Nays-none. Motion Carried.**

C. Clerk Gamiotea advised there were no agenda item forms or comment cards submitted for public participation for any issues not on the agenda.

**IV. PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

A. On behalf of the City, Mayor Watford presented Mr. William Saum, who was accompanied by his wife Gail and several family members, with a framed retirement certificate which read **"Whereas, Mr. William J. Saum, fondly known as Bill, began his public service career in the Street Division of the Public Works Department as a Motor Equipment Operator on April 24, 1981. The notes from his April 13, 1981, interview with Director L.C. Fortner provided him as the top applicant based on his seven years' experience in driving tractors, three and a half years' experience in lawn maintenance, and two months experience driving trucks; and Whereas, on October 2, 1982, a request to transfer to the Police Department to fill a Dispatcher position was approved by Chief Mobley. Then on May 27, 1985, his title changed to Patrolman Trainee, as the City Police Department sponsored Bill to enroll in the Police Academy at the Indian River Community College. He attended from October 7, 1985, until achieving his lifelong goal of becoming a Police Officer on December 18, 1985. He proudly served as an Officer assigned to the Road Patrol until June 30, 1997, when he transferred to the Detective Division for the remainder of his tenure. His commendable professionalism as a Detective and Department Liaison for several Neighborhood Watch Programs is evidenced by the many letters of commendation and correspondences of appreciation issued from the Office of the State Attorney and citizens of the community; and Whereas, education has been an important key to Bill's leadership.**



ITEM A. OF PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS CONTINUED: During his 35 years as an Officer he obtained 132 certificates of completion for attending seminars, conferences, training, and continuing education classes; and Whereas, being admired by his co-workers as impartial and fair, Bill was selected to represent the Department on the City-wide Employee Grievance Committee for many years, serving from 1990 to 1995, 2002 to 2006, 2009, 2010, and 2014 to 2016; and Whereas, during his 38 years in the Police Department, Bill served under the guidance of Police Chief Larry Mobley, Rehmund Farrenkopf, Dennis Davis, and Robert Peterson; all of whom have described him as an asset to the City due to his dedication and willingness to go above and beyond to care for the well-being of the citizens and his fellow Officers. Now, Therefore, this Certificate is being presented this 16<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2020, upon 39 years of faithful public service, in recognition of Bill's Retirement as of June 30, 2020. Retirement is a time to look back with admiration and look forward with anticipation. Your City family wishes you all the best on your next chapter!"

Police Chief Peterson shared a fond story about Detective Saum's introduction to becoming certified with the breathalyzer, followed by a prideful presentation of his retirement badge. Detective Sergeant Taylor then lead the majority of the Police Department members in presenting him with a large acrylic plaque featuring the City police badge, the historic and new police patches, and his dates of service.

#### V. CONSENT AGENDA

**A motion was made by Council Member Keefe to approve the consent agenda items A through C** [May 19, 2020, and June 2, 2020, Regular Meeting Minutes; May 2020 Warrant Register in the amounts: General Fund \$442,683.88, Public Facilities Improvement Fund \$15,164.44, Capital Improvement Projects Fund \$15,327.70, and Law Enforcement Special Fund \$75.00 (the complete list is included in the minute file); Temporary Maintenance Easement located at 703 Southwest 6th Street, as provided in Exhibit 1]; **seconded by Council Member Clark.**

**VOTE: Ayes-Mayor Watford, Council Members Abney, Clark, Jarriel, and Keefe. Nays-none. Motion Carried.**

#### VI. MAYOR WATFORD OPENED THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:29 P.M.

- A. A motion was made by Council Member Clark, and seconded by Council Member Keefe, to adopt proposed Ordinance No. 1212, regarding Comprehensive Plan Small Scale Future Land Use (FLU) Map Amendment Application No. 20-002-SSA, submitted by Loumax Development, Inc. on behalf of the property owner Nemec Children's Trust, reclassifying approximately 2.87 acres located in the 500 to 600 blocks along Southwest (SW) 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue (AVE), from Single Family Residential (SFR) and Multi-Family Residential (MFR) to Industrial (IND) [as provided in Exhibit 2; Legal Description: All of Blocks 190 and 191, OKEECHOBEE, Plat Book (PB) 5, Page (PG) 5, public records of Okeechobee County, Florida (FL); together with a portion of the FL East Coast Railway Company right-of-way (ROW), since abandoned, and of North Curve Street (ST), since abandoned, as shown on Plat of FIRST ADDITION TO OKEECHOBEE, FL, as recorded in PB 5, PG 6, of the public records of Okeechobee County, FL, and being more particularly described as follows: Commence at the intersection of the North ROW line of SW 6th ST with the West ROW of SW 7th AVE; thence North 00°08'53" West along the West ROW line of said SW 7<sup>th</sup> AVE, a distance of 76.17-feet (FT) to the point of beginning (POB); thence South 89°49'42" West, a distance of 199.99-FT to the intersection with the northerly extension of the West line of Block 251 of said Plat of FIRST ADDITION TO OKEECHOBEE; thence North 00°08'48" West along said northerly extension a distance of 693.57-FT to the intersection with the westerly extension of the North ROW line of SW 4<sup>th</sup> ST; thence North 89°47'29" East along said westerly extension, a distance of 60.00-FT to the Northwest (NW) corner of SW 4<sup>th</sup> ST; thence South 00°08'48" East along the West ROW line of SW 4<sup>th</sup> ST, a distance of 100.00-FT to the NW corner of Lot 1, Block 190, OKEECHOBEE, according to the Plat thereof as recorded in PB 5, PG 5, of the public records of Okeechobee County, FL; said point being a point of curvature of a curve to the left and having for its elements, a central angle of 27°36'08 and a radius of 1,230.00-FT; thence Southeasterly along said curve, an arc distance of 592.55-FT to the Southeast (SE) corner of Block 191 of said Plat of OKEECHOBEE; thence South 00°08'53" East along the West ROW line of said SW 7<sup>th</sup> AVE, a distance of 23.65-FT to the POB].**



ITEM A. OF PUBLIC HEARING CONTINUED: City Planning Consultant Mr. Ben Smith of LaRue Planning and Management Services presented the Planning Staff findings together with the Planning Board's review on May 21, 2020; both recommended denial. According to those findings, the Application was found to be inconsistent and incompatible with the Comprehensive Plan and adjacent uses. The current surrounding FLU designations are IND to the North, SFR to the East, and MFR to the South and West. The surrounding zoning districts are IND to the North, and Residential Multiple Family (RMF) to the East, South and West. The existing surrounding uses are an industrial manufacturing plant to the North; single family homes and vacant property to the East; a childcare facility to the South; vacant property and a proposed apartment complex to the West. The traffic impact statement provided an estimated 1,144 additional vehicle trips. Should the FLU Application be approved, it would be necessary to provide an additional assessment of the traffic impact on the adjacent streets and properties at the time of the site plan submission.

Mayor Watford opened the floor for public comment. The Applicant's Agent, Mr. Steve Dobbs of 1062 Jakes Way, Okeechobee, addressed the Council by explaining how traffic impact studies are formulated for IND uses. He championed for the Applicant's need for expansion, citing the business which is located immediately North of the subject property has been consistently growing for 19 years. He also referred to the five-page handout that he distributed prior to the meeting, which included the Applicant's plan to buffer the property. The Applicant's real estate agent, Mr. Jim Fowler, 470 SW 87<sup>th</sup> Terrace, Okeechobee, explained the property has been listed with an agent for approximately three years, but has been for sale for over 10 years. The current inconsistencies between the FLU and zoning maps for this property has made it difficult to sell. Mr. Fowler also championed for the Applicant by providing the number of employees the company retains, and the expected number of new positions the expansion will generate. He addressed the question of how the expansion will impact local traffic by explaining semi-trucks will no longer temporarily park along SW 7<sup>th</sup> AVE, but from the proposed loading docks on site. The Applicant, Loumax Development's President Mr. Neal Markus, 1110 Oysterwood ST, Hollywood, FL also provided a brief history of his business, and a current list of customers. Should the application not be approved, Mr. Markus anticipated he would have to relocate to another County that could accommodate his growing business.

**Mayor Watford recessed the meeting at 7:20 P.M. due to CMT difficulties, and reconvened at 7:28 P.M.**

Attorney Fumero responded to Mayor Watford's procedural question that to cure the issue of not reading the proposed Ordinance No. 1212 by title only prior to opening discussion, it should be done at this time: **"AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FL; AMENDING THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, ORDINANCE NO. 635 AS AMENDED, BY REVISING THE FLU MAP ON CERTAIN TRACTS OF LAND MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED HEREIN FROM SFR AND MFR TO IND (APPLICATION NO. 20-002-SSA); PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION OF ORDINANCE AND REVISED FLU MAP IN THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE."**

The discussion then turned to the possibility of amending the Code of Ordinances to allow manufacturing as a special exception in a heavy commercial zoning district. Planner Smith explained a text amendment could be an option, but it could create compatibility concerns within the zoning district. This particular industrial use may not have resulted in any complaints, but other uses may. Should the Council decide to explore and approve a text amendment, the Applicant would be required to submit a petition for a zoning change. Should the zoning change be approved, then he would petition the Board of Adjustments for a special exception, which may or may not be approved. It was also conveyed that should Mr. Markus sell the existing 1.60 site, any IND use could go into operation.



ITEM A. OF PUBLIC HEARING CONTINUED: Attorney Fumero explained the Council is required to establish for the record the basis for overturning the Planning Board's recommendation. The Council noted their findings accordingly: **the Application is found to be consistent and compatible with the Comprehensive Plan as it does not increase density, it protects the uses and values of adjacent properties, there are adequate public facilities to serve the proposed use, and there are no environmental impacts.**

**VOTE: Ayes-Council Members Abney, Clark, Jarriel, and Keefe. Nays-Mayor Watford. Motion Carried.**

#### **MAYOR WATFORD CLOSED THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:50 P.M.**

#### **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Mayor Watford explained the update on COVID-19 would not be provided as Mrs. Tiffany Collins had to leave due to the length of time the previous items had taken.
- B. Ms. Jennifer Codo-Salisbury, Central Florida Regional Planning Council (CFRPC) Deputy Director, presented the Council with an overview of the draft Economic Development Strategy and Disaster Resiliency Plan [as provided in Exhibit 3]. A project website has been created to allow the public to review and provide comments regarding the draft Plan, [www.cfrpc.org/okeechobee-florida](http://www.cfrpc.org/okeechobee-florida).

The top assets of Okeechobee were listed as Lake Okeechobee, location, quaintness, available land, and agriculture. The overall goal provided in the presentation was "strengthen and grow a resilient Okeechobee economy while improving the quality of life for all citizens."

Ms. Salisbury continued her presentation by providing the following detailed goals that will assist in achieving the overall goal. GOAL ONE-Support and expand opportunities for existing local and new businesses: A) Establish and expand partnerships between local business community and community/civic organizations to support the City's economic development efforts; B) Investigate funding opportunities to assist new and existing local businesses; C) Develop social media campaigns and community events highlighting local businesses; D) Increase collaboration with local, county, and regional economic development organizations, Main Street Programs, Chambers of Commerce, CareerSource, the CFRPC and other Stakeholder organizations; E) Collaborate with traditional and new partners to bring new businesses to the City; F) Investigate incentive opportunities for new businesses and retention of existing businesses; G) Promote the availability and use of the business incubator program at Indian River State College; H) Develop and implement a City-wide marketing plan to encourage existing businesses to invest in expansions and to attract new businesses; I) Coordinate with Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization, and other agencies to expand and enhance the transportation network in Okeechobee to provide improved access to commercial and industrial locations; J) Maintain an inventory of developable industrial land, free of significant development constraints to accommodate new development.

GOAL TWO-Support opportunities for the future workforce: A) Increase support for stronger K-12 education, vocational programs, workforce training and retraining, higher education, and other programs to meet needs of businesses, employees, and residents; B) Develop and maintain partnership with Indian River State College, CareerSource, and local businesses to implement job and education fairs; C) Encourage partnerships with local businesses and CareerSource to develop and implement training and internship programs; D) Encourage development of a mix of housing types to meet the needs of the community's workforce. Implement regular communication and collaboration with representatives of educational institutions and workforce development organizations.

GOAL THREE-Support Okeechobee's outdoor adventure and historic tourism: A) Consider formation of a Special Events Committee to develop new community events and promote existing events.



GOAL THREE OF NEW BUSINESS ITEM B. CONTINUED: B) Create a package of events like: Bass fishing tournament, Bird watching, BBQ competition, and other events on Lake Okeechobee; C) Investigate possibilities for repurposing buildings in downtown; D) Create a Historic Downtown Map to be linked to various websites and historical forums for use by visitors and residents; E) Use the City's murals and Florida Story Map to encourage visitors to explore Okeechobee; F) Coordinate with Visit Central Florida and develop a video storytelling of Okeechobee; G) Market and publicize special events and recreational opportunities through social media platforms and the City website as well as stakeholder and partner websites and social media pages; H) Consider using Florida Story to create a walking tour of downtown; I) Develop wayfinding or locational signage for areas of interest.

GOAL FOUR-Support quality of life: A) Support and maintain recreational amenities, areas, and opportunities including walkable neighborhoods, playgrounds, and parks; B) Encourage new development that includes aesthetic quality and safety features; C) Consider creation of a Revitalization Committee to address property maintenance and improvements and effective code enforcement policies; D) Encourage development of affordable housing options; E) Partner with economic development and other organizations to promote City amenities, events, recreational opportunities, and downtown businesses.

GOAL FIVE-Celebrate Lake Okeechobee by promoting Okeechobee as a destination location: A) Promote Ecotourism; B) Promote existing events and create new special events in the City; C) Implement branding; D) Partner with Visit Florida and Destination Lake Okeechobee to promote the City of Okeechobee.

GOAL SIX-Fund Strategic Public Investment: A) Ensure and evaluate availability of infrastructure to support new businesses; B) Continue communication and coordination with the state and federal agencies for new updates and opportunities; C) Review sidewalk network and parking challenges; D) Explore grant funding opportunities for capital infrastructure improvements; E) Support the FDOT "Complete Streets" and "Context Classification" programs to improve roadway conditions serving properties along the corridors.

GOAL SEVEN-Emphasize Strategies the City and its partners will take to ensure that Okeechobee is equipped to address current and future challenges: A) Educate and engage residents about risk reduction and preparedness so they can be self-sufficient for at least 7 to 14 days after a major event; B) Develop additional pathways to employment and the delivery of financial tools to support our most vulnerable residents; C) Cultivate leadership, stewardship, and equity with young residents; D) Reduce health and wellness disparities across neighborhoods; E) Equip government with technology and data to increase situational awareness and expedite post-disaster recovery; F) Grow public, private, and philanthropic partnerships increasing resources dedicated to building resilience.

Through the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant the City was awarded, the CFRPC will assist in the implementation of the Plan by identifying any inconsistencies between the FLU and Zoning Maps; draft amendments to support economic development; draft an economic development element for the Comprehensive Plan; draft Land Development Regulation amendments to address disaster resiliency, while also drafting amendments to address signs; and schedule future public meetings and hearings as needed. The Council thanked Ms. Salisbury for her presentation. **No official action was required or requested on this item.**

- C. A motion was made by Council Member Jarriel and seconded by Council Member Clark to read proposed Ordinance No. 1213 by title only, regarding Rezoning Petition No. 20-001-R submitted by Loumax Development Inc. on behalf of the property owner Nemec Children's Trust, to rezone approximately 2.87 acres located in the 500 to 600 blocks along SW 7<sup>th</sup> AVE from RMF to IND [as provided in Exhibit 4; Legal Description. All of Blocks 190**



**ITEM C. OF NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED:** and 191, OKEECHOBEE, PB 5, PG 5, public records of Okeechobee County, FL; together with a portion of the FL East Coast Railway Company ROW, since abandoned, and of North Curve ST, since abandoned, as shown on Plat of FIRST ADDITION TO OKEECHOBEE, FL, as recorded in PB 5, PG 6, of the public records of Okeechobee County, FL, and being more particularly described as follows: Commence at the intersection of the North ROW line of SW 6<sup>th</sup> ST with the West ROW of SW 7<sup>th</sup> AVE; thence North 00°08'53" West along the West ROW line of said SW 7<sup>th</sup> AVE, a distance of 76.17-FT to the POB; thence South 89°49'42" West, a distance of 199.99-FT to the intersection with the Northerly extension of the West line of Block 251 of said Plat of FIRST ADDITION TO OKEECHOBEE; thence North 00°08'48" West along said Northerly extension, a distance of 693.57-FT to the intersection with the Westerly extension of the North ROW line of SW 4<sup>th</sup> ST; thence North 89°47'29" East along said Westerly extension, a distance of 60.00-FT to the NW corner of SW 4<sup>th</sup> ST; thence South 00°08'48" East along the West ROW line of SW 4<sup>th</sup> ST, a distance of 100.00-FT to the NW corner of Lot 1, Block 190, OKEECHOBEE, according to the Plat thereof as recorded in PB 5, PG 5, of the public records of Okeechobee County, FL, said point being a point of curvature of a curve to the left and having for its elements, a central angle of 27°36'08 and a radius of 1,230.00-FT; thence Southeasterly along said curve, an arc distance of 592.55-FT to the SE corner of Block 191 of said Plat of OKEECHOBEE; thence South 00°08'53" East along the West ROW line of said SW 7<sup>th</sup> AVE, a distance of 23.65-FT to the POB].

**VOTE: Ayes-Mayor Watford, Council Members Abney, Clark, Jarriel, and Keefe. Nays-none. Motion Carried.**

Attorney Fumero read proposed Ordinance No. 1213 by title only as follows: **"AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FL; AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE BY REZONING CERTAIN TRACTS OF LAND MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED HEREIN, FROM RMF TO IND ZONING DISTRICT (PETITION NO. 20-001-R); AMENDING THE ZONING MAP ACCORDINGLY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE."**

**Council Member Clark moved to approve the first reading, and set a Final Public Hearing date of July 7, 2020, for proposed Ordinance No. 1213; seconded by Council Member Jarriel.**

Planner Smith provided the review of the Planning Staff Report and explained the Planning Board has recommended denial. This Petition is for the same property as the previous approved Public Hearing Item A, Ordinance No. 1212, Application No. 20-002-SSA. Mayor Watford opened the floor for questions or comments from the public; there was none.

**VOTE: Ayes-Council Members Abney, Clark, Jarriel, and Keefe. Nays-Mayor Watford. Motion Carried.**

- D. A motion was made by Council Member Abney and seconded by Council Member Jarriel to read proposed Ordinance No. 1214 by title only, regarding Rezoning Petition No. 20-002-R submitted by the property owner Best Value Real Estate, LLC, to rezone approximately 0.50 acres located at 204 East South Park ST, from RMF to Central Business District (CBD) [as provided in Exhibit 5; Legal Description: CITY OF OKEECHOBEE beginning at the Northeast (NE) corner of Lot 2, Block 171, TOWN OF OKEECHOBEE, PB 5, PG 5, public records of Okeechobee County, FL, and run South along the East line of Lot 2, aforesaid a distance of 142.50-FT. Thence West parallel to South Park ST to the intersection of the West line of Lot 3, Block 171 extended South; thence North along said extended West line a distance of 142.50-FT to the South boundary of South Park ST; thence East along the South boundary of South Park ST to the POB. Said lands also described as follows: Lots 2 and 3, Block 171, TOWN OF OKEECHOBEE, PB 5, PG 5, public records of Okeechobee County, FL, also that part of North Curve ST and part of the former but now abandoned FL East Coast Railroad ROW as shown on Plat of FIRST ADDITION TO TOWN OF OKEECHOBEE, recorded in PB 3, PG 26, public records of St. Lucie County, FL, lying South of and adjacent to said Lots 2 and 3, together with Lot 4, Block 171, TOWN OF OKEECHOBEE, PB 5, PG 5, public records of Okeechobee County, FL. Also that part of North Curve ST as shown on Plat of FIRST ADDITION TO TOWN OF OKEECHOBEE, recorded in PB 3, PG 26, public records of St. Lucie County, FL, lying South of and adjacent to said Lot 4, and lying North of the following described line: commence at the NE corner of Lot 2 of said Block 171; thence South 00°01'50" West, a distance of 142.50-FT; thence South 90°00'00" West, a distance of 100.00-FT to the Southerly extension of the East line of said Lot 4 and the POB; thence continue South 90°00'00" West, a distance of 34.64-FT to the Point of Terminus].**



ITEM D. OF NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED: **VOTE: Ayes-Mayor Watford, Council Members Abney, Clark, Jarriel, and Keefe. Nays-none. Motion Carried.**

Attorney Fumero read proposed Ordinance No. 1214 by title only as follows: **"AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FL; AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE BY REZONING A CERTAIN TRACT OF LAND MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED HEREIN, FROM RMF TO CBD (PETITION NO. 20-002-R); AMENDING THE ZONING MAP ACCORDINGLY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE."**

**Council Member Keefe moved to approve the first reading, and set a Final Public Hearing date of July 7, 2020, for proposed Ordinance No. 1214; seconded by Council Member Jarriel.**

Planner Smith explained the Applicant recently purchased an existing medical practice together with the property. When an existing commercial or industrial use property that is non-conforming is transferred or sold, it must come into conformance. The existing medical practice has been in operation at this location well over 30 years, prior to the adoption of the Land Development Regulations. The request has been reviewed based on the criteria the Code of Ordinances provides, and it has been found to be compatible and an appropriate place for the current medical practice. The Planning Board and Planning Staff are recommending approval. Mayor Watford opened the floor for public comments; there was none.

**VOTE: Ayes-Mayor Watford, Council Members Abney, Clark, Jarriel, and Keefe. Nays-none. Motion Carried.**

- E. Attorney Fumero provided a brief overview of the Charter Review process [as provided in Exhibit 6], and confirmed that the Charter has not been fully revised since approximately 1965. He posed three threshold issues for the Council to consider: scope of charter review; the process; and the timetable.

**The consensus of the Council was to begin the review process with a template model Charter; appoint a review committee by the citizen board application process requiring members be a resident or property owner within the City; advertise for approximately 60-days; public input throughout the process will be vital; the timetable will be one year.**

Direction was given to the Attorney and Administrator to ensure discussing expectations for this committee and any additional requirements is placed on a light agenda in the near future. The City Clerk was tasked with providing notices, advertisements, and processing the citizen board applications for Council to make the appointments.

- F. Mayor Watford entertained the option to conduct one meeting in July and/or August for the summer meeting schedule. After a brief discussion it was determined that the meeting schedule would remain unchanged.
- G. **ITEM ADDED TO AGENDA.** Mayor Watford provided a brief update on the outcome of the meeting held on June 10, 2020, regarding the Fire Services Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with the County. Those in attendance were himself, Okeechobee Board of County Commission (BOCC) Chair Terry Burroughs, the City and County Attorneys, Administrator MontesDeOca, and County Administrator Robbie Chartier. Representatives of the Local 2918 Fire Union were not present at this meeting as the City and County Attorneys determined their participation would have violated the sunshine law. Council Member Abney requested a copy of that determination in writing. It was recommended that a Joint Workshop between the BOCC and City Council be held to present the progress by this group. The BOCC approved and set a Joint Workshop for June 25, 2020 at 6:30 P.M.<sup>2</sup> to be held in the BOCC chambers. **The consensus of the Council was to accept the invitation.**



# **VIII. COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Council Member Abney voiced his concerns with the complaints he has received regarding the quality of the Zoom meeting videos. Administrator MontesDeOca replied Staff is currently working to resolve technical issues.

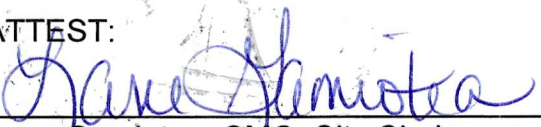
Council Member Jarriel expressed his satisfaction with how the Council supports City businesses.

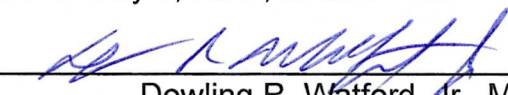
Council Member Keefe stated, "I wanted to publicly commend our citizens, and local law enforcement for the recent peaceful demonstrations conducted here locally. While across the nation and the globe, there have been riots and stand-offs between citizens and law enforcement, here in Okeechobee we have a community that can peacefully stand for their beliefs and share in the current activism of our nation. I appreciate the community standing in solidarity. The black lives matter movement has spurred a sense of unity across the nation that extends beyond color, race, or religion. I look forward to it growing to a sense of all of humanity standing together as one. A day when race or ethnicity are not instigators of controversy, because there is a unified belief that we are all equal and members of only one race, the human race. And to promote a community sense of inclusivity, I want to highlight another community that has been mistreated, oppressed, and even attacked, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer or questioning (LGBTQ) community, and I am sad that we have not announced publicly yet that June is pride month. Many municipalities across the state and nation issue proclamations declaring June as pride month. This simple act speaks volumes to those in the community, as it shows that they are recognized, accepted, and included. June 2020 marks the 50th anniversary of annual LGBTQ pride traditions. The first pride march in New York City was held on June 28, 1970 on the one-year anniversary of the stonewall uprising. Society has come far since then, but as we can see with the current events, there is more work to be done to get to a place of complete acceptance and inclusion, of all races, all genders, and all sexualities."

Council Member Clark requested an update on the funding available to the City from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Administrator MontesDeOca explained the County is currently maneuvering through the details. Information will be distributed once received. She then requested the information on the City providing its own ambulance services be an item on the July 7, 2020, agenda to compare to the proposed information to be provided at the Joint Workshop.

- IX.** There being no further items on the agenda, Mayor Watford adjourned the meeting at 9:11 P.M. The next regular meeting is scheduled for July 7, 2020, at 6:00 P.M.

ATTEST:

  
Lane Gamiotea, CMC, City Clerk

  
Dowling R. Watford, Jr., Mayor

Please take notice and be advised that when a person decides to appeal any decision made by the City Council with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, he/she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. City Clerk media are for the sole purpose of backup for official records of the Clerk.

<sup>1</sup> The video file became corrupted due to technical difficulties during the meeting, combined with software setting changes that discontinued the digital backup.

<sup>2</sup> The time of the Joint Workshop was changed to 6:00 P.M. by the BOCC.