



CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA
APRIL 6, 2021, REGULAR CITY COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
Mayor Watford called the regular meeting of the City Council for the City of Okeechobee to order on Tuesday, April 6, 2021, at 6:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers, located at 55 Southeast 3rd Avenue, Room 200, Okeechobee, Florida. The invocation was offered by Mayor Watford, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Council Member Jarriel.
- II. **ATTENDANCE**
Roll was taken by City Clerk Lane Gamiotea to establish a quorum. Members present: Mayor Dowling R. Watford, Jr., Council Members Wes Abney, Monica Clark, Bob Jarriel, and Bobby Keefe.
- III. **AGENDA AND PUBLIC COMMENTS**
A. Presentations and Proclamations Items IV.A and IV.B were deferred to the April 20, 2021 meeting; New Business Item VII.F was added to the agenda.
B. Motion by Council Member Jarriel, seconded by Council Member Keefe to approve the agenda as amended. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
C. There was one comment card submitted for public participation for any issues not on the agenda. Mrs. Jennifer Tewksbury, Executive Director of the Economic Council of Okeechobee (ECOK), distributed a flyer containing details of an online Florida Institute of Political Leadership training being held May 4 through 6, 2021. This is an initiative by the Florida Chamber of Commerce, is free and open to the public. The ECOK has partnered with the Stuart/Martin County Chamber of Commerce to sponsor this event. A copy of the flyer has been incorporated into the minute file.
- IV. **PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS**
A. The Proclamation declaring the City of Okeechobee a Purple Heart City was deferred to the April 20, 2021 meeting.
B. The presentation of a 25-Year Longevity Service Award to Police Sergeant Bettye Taylor was deferred to the April 20, 2021 meeting.
- V. **CONSENT AGENDA**
Motion by Council Member Keefe, seconded by Council Member Abney to approve consent agenda item A [March 16, 2021 regular meeting and March 22, 2021 town hall meeting minutes]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- VI. **MAYOR WATFORD OPENED THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:05 P.M.**
A. Motion by Council Member Clark, seconded by Council Member Abney to read proposed Ordinance No. 1222 by title only. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

City Attorney Fumero read proposed Ordinance No. 1222 by title only as follows: "AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA; AMENDING CHAPTER 18, ARTICLE II OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES; AUTHORIZING THE CODE ENFORCEMENT MAGISTRATE TO CONSIDER FINE REDUCTIONS; INCREASING ADMINISTRATIVE FEES AS PROVIDED IN THE ORDINANCE; AMENDING OTHER REVISIONS TO REFLECT THE USE OF A MAGISTRATE; AUTHORIZING THE CITY ATTORNEY TO INSTITUTE FORECLOSURE PROCEEDINGS AS PROVIDED IN THE ORDINANCE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

Motion by Council Member Clark, seconded by Council Member Jarriel to adopt proposed Ordinance No. 1222. There were no public comments offered. **Motion by Council Member Abney, seconded by Council Member Jarriel to postpone the adoption of proposed Ordinance No. 1222 as recommended by Staff to provide time to address potential amendments. Motion Carried Unanimously.** The matter will be re-advertised and addressed at a future meeting. This matter correlates with New Business Item C.

MAYOR WATFORD CLOSED THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:10 P.M.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Motion by Council Member Abney, seconded by Council Member Clark to approve the Fiscal Year 2019-20 audited financials [as presented]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- B. Motion by Council Member Keefe, seconded by Council Member Jarriel to approve a Settlement Agreement [in the amount of \$3,667.00] for a recorded [Code Enforcement] lien on 1206 Southwest 5th Avenue [Legal Description: Lot 3 Repogle's Subdivision, OKEECHOBEE, Plat Book 2, Page 87, Okeechobee County public records] in the foreclosure case of City of Okeechobee v. Barbara Mills, in the Circuit Court of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit in and for Okeechobee County Case No. 47 2014 CA 000249, (City Case No. 190215011). **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- C. Assistant City Attorney Carlyn Kowalsky provided a presentation on the Code Enforcement Circuit Court process. A copy has been incorporated into the minute file. Upon completion of the presentation, Mayor Watford recessed the meeting at 7:07 P.M. and reconvened at 7:09 P.M. After a lengthy discussion, Staff was given direction to calculate the actual cost to process a case to determine a reasonable administrative fee. It was determined by consensus that foreclosure action approval will remain with the Council. It was further agreed to allow the Magistrate to approve fine reductions. However, a tiered fine reduction schedule that would be used by the Magistrate when considering fine reductions was requested to be presented for consideration. Lastly, the Council will review Table 3 of Appendix G and reconsider possible amendments. These items will be presented for review at a future meeting.
- D. Motion by Council Member Jarriel, seconded by Council Member Keefe to approve a 30-day extension for the Taylor Creek Southeast 8th Avenue Stormwater Conveyance Project No. PW 02-00-12-20. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- E. Motion by Council Member Jarriel, seconded by Council Member Clark to approve a landscape incentive program and suspension of building department commercial irrigation fees of \$84.00 until August 31, 2021. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- F. ITEM ADDED TO AGENDA. The consensus of the Council was to direct the City Clerk to provide revisions to supervisory (Police Chief and Public Works Director) level job performance evaluations and information on implementing 360 evaluations. The research will be presented at a future meeting.

VIII. CITY ATTORNEY UPDATE

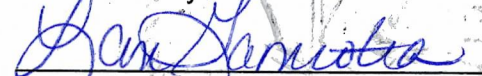
Attorney Fumero gave a brief update on the transfer of fire services to the County. He also provided a status of cases in foreclosure for code enforcement.

IX. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Abney requested an update on the Primitive Baptist Church property be on the next agenda. Council Member Keefe requested and received a status update on the installation of handicap accessible parking spaces along South Park Street.

- X. Mayor Watford adjourned the meeting at 8:06 P.M.

Submitted By:


Lane Gamiotea, CMC, City Clerk

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, s/he 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.