



CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA
JUNE 21, 2022, REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MEETING MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Watford, called the regular meeting of the City Council for the City of Okeechobee to order on June 21, 2022, 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 Pastor Chad Keathley of Okeechobee Church of God; followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Watford.

II. ATTENDANCE

Roll was taken by Deputy Clerk Heather Prince to establish a quorum. Members present: Mayor Dowling R. Watford, Jr., Council Members Noel A. Chandler, Robert "Bob" Jarriel, and Robert "Bobby" M. Keefe, Jr. Council Member Monica M. Clark attended electronically via Zoom.

III. AGENDA AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

- A. There were no requests for items to be added, deferred, or withdrawn from the agenda.
- B. Motion and second by Council Members Keefe and Jarriel to approve the agenda as published. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- C. There were no comment cards submitted for public participation for issues not on the agenda.

IV. PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

- A. Mayor Watford and the Council extended a warm welcome to Mr. B.J. Pryor, the new Okeechobee High School Football Coach. Coach Pryor introduced his coaching staff and gave a brief summary of the Team Line Up.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Motion and second by Council Members Keefe and Jarriel to approve the Warrant Register for May 2022 [in the amounts: General Fund, \$420,306.46; Public Facilities Improvement Fund, \$25,226.54; and Capital Improvement Projects Fund, \$26,358.41, as presented in **Exhibit 1**]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Council approved a Capital Projects Budget Workshop at 5:00 P.M. on July 5, 2022, regarding high-profile projects with the intent of looking at projects to begin in the next Fiscal Year.
- B. Motion and second by Council Members Jarriel and Keefe to approve expenditures received from Okeechobee Main Street's General Contractor [Mark W. Brandel, Inc., to vendors Vest Concrete Contractors, Inc. and American Drilling Services, Inc. for the Flagler Park] Cattlemen's Square Project in the amount of \$48,492.50 [as presented in **Exhibit 2**]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- C. Motion and second by Council Members Keefe and Jarriel to approve payment of the Chamber of Commerce water bills [Okeechobee Utility Authority invoices] in the amount of \$945.77 [as presented in **Exhibit 3**]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- D. Motion and second by Council Members Jarriel and Chandler to approve [Amendment No. 2 to the] Grant FIBRS 2021-FBSFA-F2-043 in the amount of \$36,675.00 from the State of Florida Criminal Justice Information Services of FDLE [as presented in **Exhibit 4**]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- E. Motion and second by Council Members Keefe and Jarriel to renew the City Administrator Employment Agreement [with Gary Ritter as presented in **Exhibit 5**] with an amendment to change the date of the annual performance review to May to ensure reviews are completed prior to contract renewal date. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

VII. CITY DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Police Chief Donald Hagan

- 3005 citations have been issued year-to-date;
- 225 traffic accidents year-to-date;
- 2598 complaints year-to-date;
- No applications have been received for the two personnel vacancies.

VII. CITY DEPARTMENT REPORTS CONTINUED

General Services Coordinator Patty Burnette

- 161 Building Permits have been issued year-to-date;
- Slow progress on several current projects due to supply chain issues;
- Receiving many requests about home inspections due to renewal of homeowner's insurance policies;
- Planning Board met on June 16, 2022.

Finance Director India Riedel

- 80 Business Tax Receipts through the end of May to include 64 new/transfers, eight regulatory business (home-based), and eight new insurance companies;
- Reminder, Capital Projects Budget Workshop scheduled for July 5, 2022, at 5:00 P.M.;
- Increase in year-to-date revenue and a decrease in expenses;
- She was elected to serve on the Executive Board for Public Risk Management;
- Open enrollment for Benefits Fair to be scheduled;
- Anticipates renewing contract with Urgent Care.

Public Works Director David Allen

- Cattlemen's Square project is progressing;
- Survey completed for the Southwest (SW) 5th Avenue resurfacing project. The plans will be submitted to the Department of Transportation;
- New grant to install small kayak launch in Centennial Park;
- Next bid to go out will be for sidewalk repairs;
- Working on digitizing storm water field verification maps;
- Axel issue with the newer John Deere backhoe, a major rebuild is likely needed, may need to consider replacing the older backhoe;
- Department has one personnel position vacant, to be posted soon.

VIII. ATTORNEY UPDATE

- Continuing to monitor ongoing worker's compensation case;
- Working with Administrator Ritter on potential annexation located East of Airi Acres
- Researching the possibility to implement a landscape clause;
- Exploring what options there are to make the Technical Review Committee a non-Sunshine entity to allow for members to be able to discuss issues at any time. All decisions would still be made during the meetings which would continue to be open to the public;
- Revising wording within the fireworks section of the Code to ensure easier readability.

IX. ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

- Thanked the Council for their confidence in him;
- Diligently working on various grants to get more funds into the City for various projects, the grant process is time consuming;
- Resubmitted for a federal grant for the hardening of City Hall;
- Will be working with Attorney Fumero to ensure the sale of the City property at SW 3rd Avenue and 23rd Street is conducted properly.

X. CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Jarriel was pleased to see the Economic Development Corporation's Summer Program in action in the community.

Council Member Keefe:

- Thanked the Department Heads for the information provided during their reports;
- Reminded everyone of the importance of equality and freedom.

XI. ADJOURN, Mayor Watford adjourned the meeting at 7:10 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.