



CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA
NOVEMBER 7, 2023, 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 November 7, 2023, at 6:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers, located at 55 Southeast (SE) 3rd Avenue (AVE), Room 200, Okeechobee, Florida. The invocation was offered by Pastor Don Hanna, First United Methodist Church; followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Vice Mayor Clark.

II. ATTENDANCE

City Clerk Lane Gamiotea called the roll. Members present to establish a quorum: Mayor Dowling R. Watford, Jr., Vice Mayor Monica M. Clark, and Council Members Noel A. Chandler, Robert "Bob" J. Jarriel, and David R. McAuley.

III. AGENDA AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

A. New Business, item VIII. I, Exhibit 13 was added. An Exhibit, numbered 14, was added for New Business item VIII.B, and an Exhibit, numbered 15, was added for New Business item VIII. A.

B. Motion and second by Council Members Jarriel and McAuley to approve the agenda as amended.
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 proclaimed the month of November 2023 as Hospice and Palliative Care Month, **Exhibit 1**. The Proclamation was presented to Treasure Coast Hospice Representatives, Vice President of Business Development and Community Relations, Ms. Terry Fesler, and Community Outreach Representatives Ms. Lea O'Brien and Mr. Craig Perry, and Nurse Practitioner, Ms. Sunita Dhillon, and read into the record as follows: **"Whereas, Medicare's first proven coordinated care model, Hospice, is a program that works offering person-centered, compassionate care, ensuring people dignity, choice, and quality of life; and Whereas, the Hospice model involves an interdisciplinary, team-oriented approach to treatment, including expert medical care, quality symptom control, and comprehensive pain management as a foundation of care; and Whereas, beyond providing physical treatment, Hospice attends to the patient's emotional, spiritual, and family needs, and provides family services like respite care and grief counseling; and Whereas, Hospice and palliative care organizations are advocates and educators about advance care planning that help individuals make decisions about the care they want; and Whereas, forty-one years ago, volunteers came together to establish Treasure Coast Hospice because they wanted their family, friends, and neighbors to have access to compassionate, quality end-of-life care from a locally based hospice provider. Founded in 1982, Treasure Coast Hospice is a non-profit community organization of skilled professionals and dedicated volunteers whose mission is to provide access to compassionate, caring, expert and professional hospice and grief support services to patients and families at the end of life. Today, Treasure Coast Hospice now serves more than 4,000 patients annually, providing holistic patient-centered care and comfort to patients and families in Martin, St. Lucie, and Okeechobee counties. During the next year, Treasure Coast Hospice will celebrate the 10th Anniversary of its specialized pediatric care program, Little Treasures, which improves the quality of life of children and teens with a life-limiting illness by providing support for the entire family. Now therefore, I, Dowling R. Watford, Jr., by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Okeechobee, do hereby proclaim November 2023 as Hospice and Palliative Care Month in the City of Okeechobee and encourage our residents to learn more about Hospice and palliative care at the end of life and try to help as they can and commend the Treasure Coast Hospice Team for their service to the people of the City of Okeechobee."**

B. Mayor Watford proclaimed the week of November 12 through 18, 2023, as National Nurse Practitioner Week, **Exhibit 2**. The Proclamation was presented to the President of the Nurse Practitioner's Council of the Treasure Coast, Ms. Karin Klause, and Nurse Practitioner, Ms. Sunita Dhillon, and read into the record as follows: **"Whereas, Nurse Practitioners (NPs) play a critical role as trusted providers of health care for patients in our Treasure Coast Community who depend on the more than 355,000 licensed NPs in the United States, 21,000 in the State of Florida, and nearly 1800 on the Treasure Coast, to diagnose, manage, and treat their chronic and acute health care conditions; and Whereas, NPs work to expand health care access in underserved communities, promote health equity in care and improve health outcomes for all by providing high-quality primary, acute and**

IV. PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS CONTINUED

- B. Continued. specialty health care services while emphasizing health promotion, disease prevention, health education and counseling, guiding patients to make smarter health and lifestyle choices every day; and Whereas, the confidence that patients have in NP-delivered health care is evidenced by the more than one billion visits made annually to NPs across the country, giving NPs a pivotal role in the health and welfare of our communities; and Whereas, leading governmental and policy entities, including the National Academy of Medicine, National Council of State Boards of Nursing, National Governors Association and Federal Trade Commission, have taken notice of the benefits of providing patients full and direct access to NP-delivered care; and Whereas, the City of Okeechobee is proud to recognize and honor the countless contributions NPs have made over the past half century and will continue to make on behalf of the health and well-being of citizens in our community. Now therefore, I, Dowling R. Watford, Jr., by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Okeechobee, do hereby proclaim the week of November 12 through 18, 2023, as National Nurse Practitioner Week in the City of Okeechobee.”
- C. Mayor Watford proclaimed the week of November 15 through 22, 2023, as Farm City Week, **Exhibit 3**. The Proclamation was presented to Mr. Mickey Bandi, President of the Okeechobee Florida Farm Bureau, and read into the record as follows: **“Whereas, Florida farmers and ranchers help feed the world by producing a bounty of nutritious foods. To do this, they rely on essential partnerships with urban and rural communities to supply, sell and deliver finished products to consumers across Florida and around the globe; and Whereas, rural and urban communities working together have built our nation’s rich agricultural resources so that they contribute to the health and well-being of our country and the strength of our economy; and Whereas, during National Farm City Week, we recognize the importance of this cooperative network. Agriculture and related enterprises employ more than 2 million workers, including farmers and ranchers, shippers, processors, marketers, retailers, inspectors and others who contribute an annual impact of \$149 billion to Florida’s economy; and Whereas, farmers and ranchers preserve freshwater recharge areas, wildlife habitat, and greenspace while performing their daily work, and consumers help maintain natural resource conservation practices by purchasing Florida’s agricultural products; and Whereas, Farm City Week activities celebrate the mutually beneficial relationships that support the quality of life we all enjoy. This week, as we gather with family and friends around the Thanksgiving table, we count these relationships among our many blessings. Now, therefore I, Dowling R. Watford, Jr., by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Okeechobee, Florida, do hereby proclaim November 15 through 22, 2023, as Farm City Week, and I do further call upon all citizens to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of all those who, working together, produce and supply our community, our nation, and the world with an abundance of agricultural products.”**

V. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Council Member Jarriel, second by Vice Mayor Clark to:

- A. Dispense with the reading and approve the Revised Minutes for October 17, 2023 [as presented in **Exhibit 4**]; and
- B. Temporarily close a portion of Southwest (SW) 3rd and 4th AVE between North (N) and South (S) Park Streets (ST) from 5:00 P.M. on December 8, 2023, to 9:00 P.M. on December 9, 2023, for the Christmas Festival as submitted by Okeechobee Main ST [as presented in **Exhibit 5**].
Motion Carried Unanimously.

VI. MAYOR WATFORD OPENED THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR FINAL PLAT ADOPTION POSTPONED FROM OCTOBER 17, AT 6:12 P.M.

- A. Motion and second by Council Members Jarriel and McAuley to approve, with contingencies [as listed], Final Plat Application No. 23-003-TRC/FP, proposed development is a 16.2+/- acres commercial subdivision, to be titled: PARK ST COMMERCE CENTER, located in the 1100 to 1200 blocks along the N side of N Park ST/State Road 70 East, just West (W) of the eastern City Limits/Northeast (NE) 13th AVE. The newly platted subdivision will consist of five lots for future commercial development, two master stormwater tracts, rights-of-way NE 3rd ST and NE 13th AVE, and an abandonment of the unimproved and unutilized portion of NE 12th AVE, formerly Mobley ST, submitted by Adam Ramsey, Registered Agent for Park ST Okeechobee, LLC; property owner William R. Grigsby, Jr. [as presented in **Exhibit 6**]:
1. Title commitment legal description and plat legal description must be consistent.
 2. Applicant shall provide construction drawings that meet or exceed all applicable standards. The Opinion of Probable Cost and associated Surety Bond shall be modified as necessary to incorporate any revisions to the construction drawings.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING FOR FINAL PLAT ADOPTION CONTINUED

- A. Continued. There were no public comments. For clarification, the final plat will not be executed by City officials until the contingencies stated above have been approved by the City's Planner, Reviewing Engineer, and Surveyor.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

MAYOR WATFORD CLOSED THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:14 P.M.

VII. MAYOR WATFORD OPENED THE FIRST PUBLIC HEARING FOR PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE PERMITTED USES IN SEVERAL ZONING DISTRICTS AT 7:14 P.M.

- A. Motion by Vice Mayor Clark, second by Council Member Jarriel to read by title only, proposed Ordinance No. 1281, Land Development Regulation (LDR) Text Amendment Application No. 23-004-TA, adding a definition for Medical Marijuana Dispensaries, removing them as permitted uses in the following zoning districts: Light Commercial (CLT), Heavy Commercial (CHV), Commercial Business District (CBD), and Industrial (IND); and existing facilities to be considered nonconforming [as presented in **Exhibit 7**].

Motion Carried Unanimously.

City Attorney Greg Hyden read the title of proposed Ordinance No. 1281 into the record as follows: "**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA, PROHIBITING MEDICAL MARIJUANA DISPENSARIES WITHIN THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE AS SUBMITTED IN LDR TEXT AMENDMENT APPLICATION NO. 23-004-TA; AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES CHAPTER 66 GENERAL PROVISIONS, SECTION 66-1 DEFINITIONS; AMENDING CHAPTER 90 ZONING, ARTICLE III DISTRICTS AND DISTRICT REGULATIONS, DIVISION 7 CLT DISTRICT SECTION 90-252 PERMITTED USES, DIVISION 8 CHV DISTRICT SECTION 90-282 PERMITTED USES, DIVISION 9 CBD SECTION 90-312 PERMITTED USES, AND DIVISION 10 IND DISTRICT SECTION 90-342 PERMITTED USES; PROVIDING FOR EXISTING MEDICAL MARIJUANA DISPENSARIES NONCONFORMING; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**"

Motion by Council Members Chandler, second by Vice Mayor Clark, to approve the first reading and set December 5, 2023, as the Final Public Hearing date for proposed Ordinance No. 1281.

Mrs. Raia Black asked whether the Ordinance allowed or prohibited medical marijuana dispensaries. Mayor Watford responded it would prohibit the operation of any new dispensaries and existing ones would be nonconforming uses. **Roll Call Vote:** Chandler-Yea, Clark-Yea, Jarriel-Yea, McAuley-Yea, Watford-Yea.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

MAYOR WATFORD CLOSED THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:19 P.M

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Mr. David Ramdon, President and Chief Executive Officer of Advanced Medical Sanitation, a biomedical waste facility, is interested in purchasing property within the City's Commerce Center to expand his business. The Council previously declined the offer when informally made through Administrator Ritter. In an effort to explain the method and processing used, Mr. Ramdon gave a detailed explanation, utilizing photographs in a 21-slide presentation, labeled as **Exhibit 15. The consensus of the Council was to reconsider selling property within the Commerce Center to Mr. Ramdon, this item will be discussed at a future meeting.**
- B. Ms. Kaylee King, President of the Okeechobee County Economic Development Council, provided a quarterly update which included a brief overview of their mission, purpose, and membership. Activity from July through October 2023 included 30 business meetings, one site visit, 15 speaking engagements, one new project, and continued work on 12 active projects. Business support for Fiscal Year 2022-23 included 29 prospects. Future projects for 2023-24 include Business Retention and Expansion Program, Positive Community Campaign, Site Selection Inventory-Utility Capacity, support of Okeechobee Junior Leadership Program, Career Fair 2024, Treasure Coast Makers Workforce Campaign, Indian River State College Data Campus Initiative, and continued support of Policom Objectives. The power point is labeled as **Exhibit 14**, this was for informational purposes only, no official action required.
- C. Motion and second by Council Members McAuley and Jarriel to read by title only, proposed Ordinance No. 1282, Abandonment of Right-of-Way (R-O-W) Petition No. 23-002-AC, for the alleyway laying N to S between Lots 3 through 6 and 9 through 12 of Block 34, FIRST ADDITION TO S OKEECHOBEE, Plat Book (PB) 1, Page (PG) 17, Okeechobee County Public Records. Application submitted by Steven M. Guelff, on behalf of property owners, Guelff Family Limited Partnership and Porter Holdings of Okeechobee. The property is located between S Parrott and SW 2nd AVE and SW 17th and 18th ST [as presented in **Exhibit 8**]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

VIII. NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

- C. Continued. City Attorney Hyden read the title of proposed Ordinance No. 1282 into the record as follows: **"AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA; VACATING AND ABANDONING A CERTAIN R-O-W BEING AN UNIMPROVED PORTION OF AN ALLEYWAY LYING WITHIN BLOCK 34, FIRST ADDITION TO S OKEECHOBEE, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN PB 1, PG 17, PUBLIC RECORDS OF OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA, AS SUBMITTED IN ABANDONMENT OF R-O-W PETITION NO. 23-002-AC; DIRECTING THE CITY CLERK TO RECORD THE ORDINANCE IN THE PUBLIC RECORDS OF THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT IN AND FOR OKEECHOBEE COUNTY, FLORIDA; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

Motion by Council Member Chandler, second by Vice Mayor Clark, to approve the first reading and set December 5, 2023, as the Final Public Hearing date for proposed Ordinance No. 1282. There were no comments from the public. **Roll Call Vote:** Chandler-Yea, Clark-Yea, Jarriel-Yea, McAuley-Yea, Watford-Yea.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

- D. Motion by Council Member Jarriel, second by Vice Mayor Clark to approve Preliminary Plat Application No. 23-010-TRC/PP, replatting Blocks 4 through 6, 11 through 13, 20, 22, and Lots 1 through 3, 10 through 26, and the W 15-feet of Lot 9 in Block 21, OKEECHOBEE, PB 5, PG 5, Okeechobee County public records, into a new Plat consisting of nine blocks, six stormwater tracts, and rededicating the previously vacated alleyways back to the City, titled MALLARD LANDING, submitted by Holiday Builders, Inc., on behalf of property owners Okeechobee Lots LLC and John B. Lashley, consisting of 31.283± vacant acres located from Northwest 3rd to 7th AVE and 11th to 14th ST [as presented in **Exhibit 9**].

Motion to amend the motion on the floor by Vice Mayor Clark, second by Council Member Jarriel to include the following contingencies:

1. Applicant shall provide revised plat and boundary survey with corrections, noted in redline within Exhibit 9.
2. Applicant shall provide updated certificates and title commitments with consistent fee simple owners per Code of Ordinances LDR Section 86-73(a)(16).
3. Applicant to provide acreage of subject property by block on the boundary survey for review and to confirm consistency with final plat by Staff.
4. Applicant shall resubmit infrastructure plans which comply with all local, State, and Federal regulations.
5. Upon approval of infrastructure plans by Staff, applicant shall construct all infrastructure improvements according to approved infrastructure plans prior to final plat approval; except that sidewalks are exempt from the required infrastructure improvements to be completed prior to final plat approval and shall be constructed in accordance with contingency 7b below.
6. Final plat and required supplementary materials shall be submitted for final plat approval within 12-months from today.
7. A developer's agreement submitted to and reviewed by Staff, shall be executed prior to the final plat approval, and meet:
 - a) All requirements of Code of Ordinances LDR Chapter 86.
 - b) Include and adequately address stipulations guaranteeing compensation to the City for any sidewalk improvements that are constructed by the City, should the applicant fail to comply with construct sidewalks as follows: Applicant shall construct sidewalks prior to certificate of occupancy for each dwelling unit. Additionally, continuous sidewalks shall be completed for each block segment within 12 months of the first certificate of occupancy issued for a dwelling unit on that block.

Motion to Amend Carried Unanimously.

Motion as Amended Carried Unanimously.

- E. Motion and second by Council Members Jarriel and McAuley to ratify an Agreement in the amount of \$465,170.97 to B & B Site Development, Inc., for the construction of additional dry retention areas and lake segment at the City Commerce Center [as presented in **Exhibit 10**].

Motion Carried Unanimously.

- F. Motion by Council Member McAuley, second by Vice Mayor Clark to approve contracting with Dana Safety Supply to install the patrol car equipment in the amount of \$31,301.00 [as presented in **Exhibit 11**].

Motion Carried Unanimously.

- G. Motion and second by Council Members Jarriel and McAuley to approve contracting with Graphic Designs to install the patrol car decals in the amount of \$2,790.00 [as presented in **Exhibit 12**].

Motion Carried Unanimously.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

- H. Administrator Ritter presented an offer by Mr. Al Lewis of Gator Security to purchase a non-conforming lot owned by the City adjacent to their property and cover the cost of the survey. Motion and second by Council Members Jarriel and McAuley to accept the offer of \$16,250.00 [for legal description: Lot 1 of Block 220, FIRST ADDITION TO OKEECHOBEE, PB 1, PG 11 AND PB 5, PG 6, Okeechobee County public records, located at the corner of SE 5th ST and 2nd AVE].
Motion Carried Unanimously.

- I. Item added: Motion by Vice Mayor Clark, second by Council Member Jarriel to approve the amended School Resource Officer Agreement with the Okeechobee County School Board for two officers for the 2023-24 School Year [as presented in **Exhibit 13**].
Motion Carried Unanimously.

IX. CITY ATTORNEY UPDATE

- Continuing to work on proposed ordinances regarding Stormwater Management and Smoke Free Parks.
- Reviewed documents for Mallard Landing.
- Completed satisfaction of mortgage for Shirley Roberts
- On-going issue with title of Cattlemen's Square.
- Amendments to the City Code required due to the adoption of the new Charter are a work in progress.

X. CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

- Announced the date of the City Employee Christmas Luncheon was changed to December 12, 2023.
- A flyer will be distributed soon with the dates and times for Santa photos at City Hall and his tour throughout the City on the float.

XI. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Chandler thanked all for the card and best wishes during his recent injury.

Council Member McAuley inquired whether citizens affected by the mandatory water and sewer connection ordinance had been contacted and was advised the Okeechobee Utility Authority is responsible to provide those notifications.

Mayor Watford invited all to attend the Veteran's Day Program in Flagler Park on Saturday, November 11, 2023, 10:00 A.M.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of discussion, Mayor Watford adjourned the meeting at 8:21 P.M.

Submitted By:



Lane Gamiotea, CMC, City Clerk