



**CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA
JULY 20, 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, July 20, 2021, at 6:00 P.M. in the 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 Keefe.

II. ATTENDANCE

Roll was taken by City Clerk Lane Gamiotea to establish a quorum. Members present: Mayor Dowling R. Watford, Jr., Council Members Noel Chandler, Monica Clark, and Bobby Keefe. Council Member Bob Jarriel was absent.

III. AGENDA AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

A. Mayor Watford asked whether there were any agenda items to be added, deferred, or withdrawn; there were none.

B. Motion by Council Member Clark, seconded by Council Member Keefe to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

C. There were two comment cards submitted for public participation. The Okeechobee Citizens Recreational Association Dixie Youth Little League team members and coaches were present to announce they recently won the State runner-up position to represent Florida in the Little League World Series, being held in Laurel, Mississippi August 7 through 12, 2021. The team is raising money to off-set the travel costs. A BBQ lunch will be held on July 30, 2021, in Flagler Park (No. 3); tickets are available for purchase. The Mayor and Council congratulated the team members and posed for a group photograph.

Mr. Phil Berger and Ms. Kari Berger individually submitted comment cards for the same topic. Ms. Berger advised she was representing an investor of a potential multi-family development. This was for the property whose Comprehensive Plan Small Scale Future Land Use Map Amendments No. 21-003-SSA and No. 21-004-SSA, Ordinances No. 1225 and No. 1226; and Rezoning Petitions No. 21-003-R and No. 21-004-R, Ordinances No. 1227 and No. 1228; was denied by action at the July 6, 2021 meeting. She requested to have the applications and rezoning's reconsidered. The issue was deferred to Attorney Fumero to provide the necessary information outside of the meeting.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Mrs. Courtney Moyett, together with two Okeechobee High School students and SWAT Club members, made presentations on the benefits of tobacco free parks. Materials consisting of examples of polices and signage from surrounding communities as well as a recommendation from the Flagler Park Design Review Advisory Committee (FPDRAC) to adopt a policy (May 24 minutes) were provided in Exhibit 1. **The consensus of the Council was to instruct City Attorney Fumero and City Administrator Ritter to draft a policy including signage to present to Council for consideration at a future meeting. City Staff are to notify Mrs. Moyett when the item will be presented.**

B. Motion by Council Member Clark, seconded by Council Member Keefe to approve a contract with Open Edge a division of Global Payments to provide credit/debit card payment services and authorize the City Administrator to execute the contract [as provided in Exhibit 2]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

C. Motion by Council Member Keefe, seconded by Council Member Chandler to approve the millage rate for advertising the 2021 Tax Notices at 8.6018 for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2022 [as provided in Exhibit 3]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

IV. NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

- D.** Motion by Council Member Clark, seconded by Council Member Chandler to approve the budget calendar for FY 2021-2022 setting Workshops for July 27, 2021 at 5:00 P.M., August 11, 2021 at 5:00 P.M., and August 17, 2021 at 5:00 P.M.; First Budget Hearing for September 7, 2021 at 6:00 P.M. with the regular Council Meeting, and reschedule the September 21, 2021, regular Council meeting to be held the same date as the Final Budget Hearing for September 27, 2021 at 6:00 P.M. [as provided in Exhibit 4]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- E.** Motion by Council Member Chandler, seconded by Council Member Clark to approve the agreement with the Okeechobee County School Board for the 2021-22 School Resource Officer Program [as provided in Exhibit 5]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

V. CITY ATTORNEY UPDATE

Attorney Fumero reported on the progress of the transfer of the Fire Department employees including pension matters and separation agreements.

VI. CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

Interim Administrator Ritter provided information and updates on the following topics: meetings he attended also relating to the Fire Department transfer to the County; a meeting with Florida Department of Transportation representative on resurfacing projects; on July 28, 2021 the City will be hosting Colonial Kelly of the Army Corp of Engineers together with officials from the County and Okeechobee Utility Authority; the Craig A. Smith contract will be presented at the August 3, 2021 meeting for consideration as well as a presentation from the Landscape Architect based on recommendations from the July 19, 2021 FPDRAC meeting; and the Request for Qualifications for Engineering Services is due to the City by next Wednesday.

VII. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Clark suggested the Council recognize the Firefighters at a meeting before their last day. The consensus of the Council was not to pursue that suggestion. **Mayor Watford** announced that the Army Corp of Engineers has prematurely announced their selection of Plan CC for the Lake Okeechobee System Operating Manual (LOSOM) before the public participation and review period has ended, and regardless of the information provided to use Plan Bb from the agriculture communities and municipalities around the Lake. He also expressed his disappointment in Congressman Brian Mast's behavior and vulgarity in a recent public meeting on the LOSOM issue.

VIII. ADJOURN: Mayor Watford adjourned the meeting at 7:40 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.