



CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA
AUGUST 17, 2021, REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
AND FINAL BUDGET WORKSHOP
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, August 17, 2021, at 5:00 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 Clark.

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, Bob Jarriel, and Bobby Keefe.

III. AGENDA AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

A. Mayor Watford asked whether there were any agenda items to be added, deferred, or withdrawn. Due to advertising, Items III. Agenda and Public Comments, IV. Presentations and Proclamations, VII. City Attorney Update, VIII. City Administrator Update, and IX. Council Comments would be considered first; action items under Consent Agenda and New Business cannot be considered until 6:00 P.M. Should there be remaining time prior to 6:00 P.M. a recess will be taken, or a portion of the Budget Workshop would be reviewed.

B. Motion by Council Member Chandler, seconded by Council Member Jarriel to approve the agenda as amended. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

C. There were no comment cards submitted for public participation at this time. Council Comments were re-opened due to the amended agenda; see page two.

IV. PRESENTATION AND PROCLAMATIONS

A. Mayor Watford proclaimed the month of September 2021 as Hunger Action Month. A proclamation was presented to Ronald Wise and Holly Mixon of the Treasure Coast Food Bank and read into the record as follows: "Whereas, hunger and poverty remain issues of grave concern in the United States, the State of Florida, the Treasure Coast, and the City of Okeechobee, with 7,776 children and adults in Okeechobee County now categorized as food insecure; and Whereas, the City of Okeechobee is committed to taking steps to raise awareness about the need to combat hunger in every part of our City and to provide additional resources that the citizens of Okeechobee need; and Whereas, the City of Okeechobee is committed to working with the Treasure Coast Food Bank in mobilizing people about the role and importance of food banks and other hunger relief organizations in addressing hunger and bringing attention to the need to devote more resources and attention to hunger issues; and Whereas, food banks and hunger relief organizations across the country, including the Treasure Coast Food Bank, coordinated Hunger Action Day on September 17, 2021 and will continue to host numerous events throughout the month of September to shed light on this important issue and encourage involvement in efforts to end hunger in their local community. 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 the month of September 2021 as 'Hunger Action Month'."

B. Mayor Watford presented a Certificate of Appreciation to former City Administrator Marcos Montes De Oca, which was read into the record as follows: "Certificate of Appreciation extended to Marcos Montes De Oca for his faithful service and dedication as the City Administrator City of Okeechobee, Florida October 1, 2015, to June 18, 2021."

VII. CITY ATTORNEY UPDATE: no update was provided.

VIII. CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

Interim Administrator Ritter provided a brief update on the outcome of the August 16, 2021, Flagler Park Design Review Advisory Committee (FPDRAC) meeting. He, together with representatives from Okeechobee Main Street and Calvin, Giordano, and Associates (CGA), will meet to generate a revised budget and plan for the Cattlemen's Square Project to be presented to the FPDRAC on September 2, 2021. Once finalized, representatives of the FPDRAC will make the presentation to Council and other agencies as needed. The draft contract with Taymer Properties, LLC for the purchase of Lots 17A and 17B in the City Commerce Center was mailed August 13, 2021. The fully executed proposal No. P4142 from Craig A. Smith and Associates has been received; they anticipate starting at the end of September.

IX. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Clark explained that Sharie Turgeon of the Okeechobee County Tourist Development Council offered support for the FLAGLER PARK project. She also updated the Council on the number of clients that Healthy Start is currently serving. **Council Member Chandler and Keefe** spoke briefly on the Cattlemen's Square project with Council Member Keefe recommending the Council consider increasing the amount budgeted. The consensus was to review the revised conceptual plan before making this decision.

MAYOR WATFORD RECESSED THE MEETING AT 5:34 P.M. AND RECONVENED AT 6:00 P.M.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mayor Watford re-opened public comments.

C. There were two comment cards submitted for public participation. Ms. Casey Rogers provided information on Rite Life Services, Incorporated located at 202 Northeast 2nd Street, which is a non-profit peer support organization that offers a wide variety of services to the community. They currently have funding to assist individuals, focusing on the homeless and recovering addicts, with medication, substance abuse and mental health treatment, transportation to and from appointments, and housing. The grand opening is scheduled for August 25, 2021, at 12:00 P.M. A virtual walk for overdose awareness month will also be held the same day. A Narcan training class will be held on August 29, 2021, at 3:00 P.M. Suicide awareness meetings are currently being held; all our welcome.

Mr. Brandon Tucker, Chairman of the Economic Council of Okeechobee (ECOK) requested the Council consider adopting a Reserve Fund Balance policy, as it is the opinion of ECOK the balance is larger than it needs to be and could be used on projects that would encourage economic development.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Council Member Keefe, seconded by Council Member Clark to approve Consent Agenda Items **A** [Temporary Street Closing request from Okeechobee Main Street to close Southwest 3rd Avenue between North and South Park Streets for "Movie Night in the Park" on October 9, 2021, November 13, 2021, December 10, 2021, January 8, 2022, February 12, 2022, March 5, 2022, and April 9, 2022 from 5:00 to 9:00 P.M. as provided in Exhibit 1], and **B** [Temporary Street Closing request from Okeechobee Main Street to close Southwest 3rd and 4th Avenues for the Labor Day Festival on September 5, 2021 at 3:00 P.M. until September 6, 2021 at 10:00 P.M. as provided in Exhibit 2]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Motion by Council Member Jarriel, seconded by Council Member Clark to read proposed Ordinance No. 1236 by title only revising Section 2-172, Chapter 34, [this portion of the motion should not have been included as it is addressed in the next item: and Table 2 of Appendix G] of the City Code of Ordinances to reflect changes as a result of the City entering into an Interlocal Agreement with Okeechobee County to provide fire services within the City [as provided in Exhibit 3]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

Mayor Watford read proposed Ordinance No. 1236 by title only as follows:
 "AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA;
 REVISING SECTION 2-172 AND CHAPTER 34 OF THE CODE OF
 ORDINANCES TO REFLECT CHANGES AS A RESULT OF THE CITY

VI. NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

- A.** CONTINUED: ENTERING INTO AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH OKEECHOBEE COUNTY TO PROVIDE FIRE SERVICES WITHIN THE CITY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.”

Motion by Council Member Jarriel, seconded by Council Member Clark to approve the first reading of proposed Ordinance No. 1236 and set September 7, 2021, as the Final Public Hearing date. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

- B.** Motion by Council Member Jarriel, seconded by Council Member Keefe to adopt proposed Resolution No. 2021-06 amending the schedule of fees for inspection and enforcement of fire safety codes to adopt Okeechobee County's inspection fee schedule [as provided in Exhibit 4].

Mayor Watford read proposed Resolution No. 2021-06 by title only as follows: “A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA; AMENDING RESOLUTION NO. 2018-10, APPENDIX G, TABLE 2, OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES WHICH ADOPTS THE SCHEDULE OF FEES FOR INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT OF FIRE SAFETY CODES; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.” **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

- C.** Motion by Council Member Jarriel, seconded by Council Member Clark to approve the settlement agreement offer [in the amount of \$4,500.00] for Bella Rose Day Spa and Salon, LLC, D/B/A Bella Rose Day Spa, in the appellate case of Bella Rose Day Spa and Salon, LLC, D/B/A Bella Rose Day Spa v. City of Okeechobee, Florida, in the Circuit Court of the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit in and for Okeechobee County, Circuit Case No. 21-AP-100, City Case No. 200312003 [as provided in Exhibit 5]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

X. MAYOR WATFORD RECESSED THE REGULAR MEETING AND OPENED THE BUDGET WORKSHOP AT 6:19 P.M.

- A.** Finance Director Riedel distributed a document that provided the identification of revised items from the August 11, 2021, Workshop. The overall Fiscal Year 2021-2022 budget was decreased by \$542,300.00. A detailed listing of line item decreases was distributed as well as a revised budget dated August 16, 2021, 3:14 P.M., all of which has been incorporated in the minute file. After a brief discussion on utilizing the American Rescue Plan dollars to assist with stormwater needs of the Commerce Center, the Council directed Staff to shift \$45,000.00 from the Public Facilities Improvement Fund to the Capital Improvement Projects Fund to accomplish this. The Council thanked Staff for making the reductions. No additional direction was provided. The proposed budget dated August 16, 2021, will be presented at the First Hearing scheduled for September 7, 2021.

XI. MAYOR WATFORD ADJOURNED THE WORKSHOP AND RECONVENED IN REGULAR SESSION AT 6:42 P.M.

Council Member Clark questioned whether the \$15,000.00 budgeted for the Tree Program could be earmarked for the Cattlemen's Square Project. Interim Administrator Ritter and Public Works Director Allen responded those funds have been identified including the two trees in front of City Hall, and improving the landscape along South Park Street. The consensus was to review the revised budget plan and before earmarking specific funds. This item is tentatively being scheduled for the September 7, 2021, Council meeting but predicated on action by the FPDRAC at the September 2, 2021, meeting.

XII. ADJOURN: Mayor Watford adjourned the meeting at 6:45 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.