



**CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA**  
**MAY 3, 2022, REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Watford, called the regular meeting of the City Council for the City of Okeechobee to order on May 3, 2022, at 6:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers, located at 55 Southeast (SE) 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Room 200, Okeechobee, Florida. The invocation was offered by Pastor Don Hanna of the First United Methodist Church; followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by the Okeechobee High School (OHS) Junior Reserve Officer's Training Corp (JROTC) cadets.

**II. ATTENDANCE**

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

**III. AGENDA AND PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- A. There were no items to be added, deferred, or withdrawn from the agenda.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 presented. **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 presented Major Locklear and Division Commander Folbrecht of the OHS JROTC, along with seven JROTC Cadets with a framed Certificate of Outstanding Service, that was read into the record as follows: **"Presented to the 2022 Students and Teachers of the Okeechobee High School JROTC. In recognition of their outstanding community service, hard work, and dedication in aiding to beautify Flagler Park No. 4 and Bandstand."** There was a total of 32 cadets who participated in the community service project, and each will receive a City of Okeechobee lapel pin.
- B. Proclaim the month May 2022 as "Mental Health Awareness Month" - New Horizons. No one was present to receive the document. Staff will coordinate to reschedule them at the next meeting.
- C. Proclaim the month May 2022 as "Mental Health Awareness Month" – Our Village. No one was present to receive the document. Staff will coordinate to reschedule them at the next meeting.
- D. Mayor Watford proclaimed May 15 through 22, 2022, as "Water Reuse Week." The document was presented to Mrs. Libby Pigman with the South Florida Water Management District, and read into the record as follows: **"Whereas, safe, clean, and sustainable water resources are essential to Florida's environment, economy, citizens, and visitors; and Whereas, although Florida's water supplies are finite, the State's population and need for water resources continue to increase; and Whereas, water reuse provides a means for conserving and augmenting Florida's precious water resources and is key to the State's sustainable water future; and Whereas, Florida has established the encouragement and promotion of water reuse as State objectives in Chapters 373 and 403, Florida Statutes; and Whereas, Florida's permitted reuse capacity is more than 1.8 billion gallons per day (approximately 70 percent of Florida's total permitted capacity for all domestic wastewater treatment facilities); and Whereas, the City of Okeechobee has joined with the Water Reuse Florida, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the South Florida Water Management District in encouraging and promoting water reuse and conservation; and Whereas, the City of Okeechobee has implemented a water reuse program and encourages efficient and effective use of reclaimed water. 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 May 15 through 22, 2022, as 'Water Reuse Week' in the City of Okeechobee."**
- E. Mayor Watford proclaimed April 2022, as "Water Conservation Month." The document was presented to Mrs. Libby Pigman with the South Florida Water Management District, and read into the record as follows: **"Whereas, water is a basic and essential need of every living creature; and Whereas, the State of Florida, Water Management Districts and the City of Okeechobee are working together to increase awareness about the importance of water conservation; and**



IV. PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS CONTINUED

- E. Continued: Whereas, the State of Florida has designated April, typically a dry month when water demands are most acute, as Florida’s Water Conservation Month to educate citizens about how they can help save Florida’s precious water resources; and Whereas, the City of Okeechobee has always encouraged and supported water conservation through various educational programs and special events; and Whereas, every business, industry, school, and citizen can make a difference when it comes to conserving water; and Whereas, every business, industry, school, and citizen can help by saving water and thus promote a healthy economy and 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 April 2022 as ‘Water Conservation Month’ in the City of Okeechobee.”
- F. Mayor Watford proclaimed May 1 through 7, 2022 as “Municipal Clerks’ Week.” He read the following into the record and presented the document to City Clerk Gamiotea: “Whereas, the Office of the Municipal Clerk, a time honored, vital part of local government exists throughout the world and is the oldest among public servants, and Whereas, the Office of the Municipal Clerk provides the professional link between the citizens, the local governing bodies, and agencies of government at other levels serving as the information center on functions of local government and community, and Whereas, Municipal Clerks have pledged to be ever mindful of their neutrality and impartiality, rendering equal service to all; and Whereas, Municipal Clerks continually strive to improve the administration of the affairs of the Office of the Municipal Clerk through participation in education programs, seminars, workshops and the annual meetings of their state, provincial, county, and international professional organizations. Now Therefore, I, Dowling R. Watford, Jr., by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Okeechobee, FL, do hereby Proclaim the week of May 1 through May 7, 2022, as Municipal Clerks’ Week, and congratulates the Florida Association of City Clerks, the professional association for Florida’s Municipal Clerks, in celebrating its 50th Anniversary. I further extend appreciation to our City Clerk, Lane Gamiotea, and to all Municipal Clerks for the vital services they perform and their exemplary dedication to the communities they represent.”.

V. MAYOR WATFORD OPENED THE PLANNING AND ZONING QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:14 P.M.

- A. Motion and second by Council Members Keefe and Clark to read by title only, proposed Ordinance No. 1252, regarding Petition No. 22-003-R submitted by the property owner, Brian Keith Hickman/Huntermacko “LLC” to rezone from Residential Single Family-One (RSF-1) to Commercial Professional Office (CPO), Lot 1 of Block 3, SOUTH OKEECHOBEE, Plat Book 5, Page 7, Okeechobee County public records. Property located at 804 Southwest (SW) 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, consisting of 0.16+/- acres. The proposed use is to join the property with adjacent lot to the South [as presented in Exhibit 1]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

City Attorney John Fumero read proposed Ordinance No. 1252 by title only as follows: “**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA; AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE BY REZONING CERTAIN TRACTS OF LAND MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED HEREIN, FROM RSF-1 TO CPO, PETITION NO. 22-003-R; AMENDING THE ZONING MAP ACCORDINGLY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**”

Motion and second by Council Members Keefe and Clark to adopt proposed Ordinance No. 1252 [as recommended by the Planning Board].

Attorney Fumero collectively administered an Oath to: Mr. Steve Dobbs of 209 Northeast 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, and explained he was in attendance on behalf of his client, who is the applicant. There was no discussion. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

MAYOR WATFORD CLOSED THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:17 P.M.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Motion and second were made by Council Members Clark and Keefe to approve amending the format of the Action Minutes to include recording the dissenting voter(s) [as requested and explained by Mayor Watford]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- B. Motion and second by Council Members Keefe and Jarriel to dispense with the reading and approve the April 19, 2022, minutes [as presented in Exhibit 2], with added change to amend name of dissenting voter(s), [see action in previous Item A above]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**



## VI. NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

- C. Motion and second by Council Members Keefe and Clark to [approve a] Piggyback Agreement [with] Shenandoah General Construction Company, LLC [from] Broward College for Storm Drain Cleaning, Repairs, and Maintenance; [and approve Proposal No. P23885,] for the South 4<sup>th</sup> Street Pipe Lining Project in the amount of \$808,339.13 [as presented in Exhibit 3]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- D. Motion and second by Council Members Clark and Jarriel to [award a] Professional Services Agreement [for Request For Qualifications No. ADM 01-32-11-21, with effective date retroactive to May 1, 2022,] with Morris Depew Associates for [General] Planning Services [as presented in Exhibit 4]. Council Member Keefe moved to amend the motion, changing "City Administrator" to "City Council" in paragraph 8.1; seconded by Council Member Clark. **Motion To Amend Carried Unanimously.** Following further discussion, **Motion Carried Unanimously As Amended.**

## VII. CITY ATTORNEY UPDATE

- Will amend the Morris Depew contract with changes as amended by Council on previous Item D.
- Working with City Staff on two workers compensation cases.
- Working on the River Run Subdivision access documents.
- The Holding Zoning Ordinance is being renewed.
- Working with City Staff on metal detector agreements for the Primitive Baptist Church property and any City site/property.
- Working on easements with the new owner of the Okeechobee Fishing Village and RV Resort [located between SE 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Taylor Creek].

## VIII. ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

- Ensured Mayor, Council, and Staff were introduced to Mr. Stephen Conteaguero of Attorney Fumero's office, and in attendance.
- Provided update on the impact of Bills 2508 and 620, if signed by Governor DeSantis.
- Explained the "green bill" and that it was vetoed by Governor DeSantis.
- The City has several grants in the proposed State Budget, that remains unsigned to date.
- The new target date for Cattlemen's Square of Flagler Park is June, the project is progressing.
- Asked the Council their opinions on allowing scooters for rent in the downtown area as done in many other cities. Several Council Members stated their objections to the proposal.
- Reminded everyone of the May 24, 2022, 6:00 P.M. Joint Council and Planning Board Workshop. He will be meeting with Central Florida Regional Planning Council representatives to develop an agenda outline. If there are any specific issues the Mayor or Council want to discuss, they need to provide them by next week.

## IX. CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Chandler:

- Noted that Cattlemen's Square donors were not mentioned in a recent article. Administrator Ritter advised he is meeting with Okeechobee News Staff Writer, Cathy Womble to resolve this.
- Wished all the moms a Happy Mother's Day.

Council Jarriel:

- Happy to see the roadway stripping/improvements in the SW section.
- Administrator Ritter responded to his complaint about a business along South Park Street who has too many outdoor display items and within the City right-of-way. Code Enforcement has been working to resolve this issue.
- Inquired about garbage cans along South Park Street. Administrator Ritter advised the palm trees along South Park are being removed, trash receptacles will be put in their place.

Council Member Keefe:

- Inquired on the status of the Flagler Park Master Design. Administrator Ritter responded the next item is due August and referenced the previously provided timeline.
- Wished his mom, Dolly Mullaney, a very happy birthday!

## X. ADJOURN, Mayor Watford adjourned the meeting at 7:03 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.