



CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA
MARCH 1, 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 March 1, 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 Don Hanna of First United Methodist Church, 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 A. Chandler, Monica M. Clark, Robert "Bob" Jarriel, and Robert "Bobby" M. Keefe, Jr.

III. AGENDA AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

- A. There were no additions, deferrals, or withdrawals from the agenda. There was a request with no objections to move item "D" at the beginning of New Business items.
- B. Motion and second by Council Members Keefe and Jarriel to approve the agenda as presented.
Motion Carried Unanimously.
- C. No comment cards were submitted for public participation for issues not on the agenda.

IV. PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMTIONS

- A. Police Sergeant Cesar Romero, accompanied by his wife, children, and several members of the Police Department, was recognized by Mayor Watford and Police Chief Donald Hagan for his years of service. He was presented with an engraved crystal mantel clock and framed certificate, which read **"In recognition of your 15 years of service, hard work, and dedication to the City, its citizens and your fellow employees from March 17, 2007, through March 17, 2022."**

V. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion and second by Council Members Keefe and Clark to:

- A. [Dispense with the reading and] approve the Minutes for the January 24, 2022, Town Hall Meeting, February 1, 2022, and February 15, 2022, Regular Meetings, [as presented].
Motion Carried Unanimously.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- D. Motion and second by Council Members Chandler and Clark to approve a recommendation from the Technical Review Committee to deviate from the standards listed in Section 78-36 of the City's Land Development Regulations regarding the requirements for installation of sidewalks pertaining to the Budget Home, LLC triplex project located at Northeast 3rd Avenue and 5th Street [as presented in Exhibit 1 and postponed from the February 15 meeting]. Mr. Jimenez of Budget Home was present and responded to various questions from the Council. **Motion Carried.**

- A. Mr. Jim LaRue, Ms. Gloria Pellito, and Mr. Bob Franke from LaRue Planning and Management Services, Inc. presented their qualifications as submitted to the Request For Qualifications (RFQ) No. ADM 01-32-11-21, Planning Services. They have served as the City's planning consultant for many years and aware of Okeechobee's future planning challenges, and only serve local governments. Mayor Watford inquired about a new theory of zoning and what that meant. Mr. LaRue replied with the term Form Based Zoning, which is regulating land development to a specific urban form. The 11-slide powerpoint presentation has been incorporated into the official minutes. No official action was requested, item was for information only.

- B. Mr. Bill Morris, President, Mr. Ben Smith, Director of Planning, and Ms. Cindy Leal, Principal Planner of Morris Depew Associates, Inc. presented their qualifications as submitted to the RFQ No. ADM-01-32-11-21, Planning Services. Their company offers full-service consulting which includes planning, engineering, landscape architecture, and surveying. Mr. Smith was previously the City's Planning Consultant when he was employed with LaRue Planning and Management Services. The 22-slide powerpoint presentation has been incorporated into the official minute file. No official action was requested, item was for information only.

- C. Administrator Ritter provided an update following his meeting with Public Works Director David Allen, representatives from Okeechobee Main Street and the City's landscape architects, Calvin, Giordano & Associates, Inc., and Mr. Terry Burroughs regarding the Flagler Park Master Plan. A budget of \$300,000.00 or less per block has been established for better planning. The timeline provided at the February 15, 2022 meeting remains the same. No official action was requested.

VI. NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

E. Motion and second by Council Members Jarriel and Keefe to approve the revised Education Reimbursement Agreement [as presented in exhibit 2]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

VII. CITY ATTORNEY

- In addition to reviewing the revised Education Reimbursement contracts, he provided an addendum to adequately address the new E-verify requirements in current contracts.

VIII. ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

- The Charter amendments will be discussed soon.
- Verbal monthly reports from a representative of each Department will be on the next agenda.
- The presentation made by Ms. Magi Cable regarding the Primitive Baptist Church property has been sent to the City's grant coordinator to research possibilities.
- A Joint Workshop with the Planning Board will possibly be held on April 21st.
- As of March 1st, any delinquent Business Tax Receipts will be charged a late fee of \$250.00, there are approximately 130 that are delinquent.

IX. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Chandler:

- Shocked at the per park budget of \$300,000.00.

Council Member Jarriel:

- Confirmed with Administrator Ritter that the City's Appropriation requests were still in the proposed Legislative Budget.
- Recently the City received negative publicity via social media, but he is thankful for all the volunteers and businesses that do so much for the City. It is good to see restaurants finally getting great business again.
- Reminded everyone that the Speckled Perch parade is in two weeks, he enjoys participating in it.

X. ADJOURN, Mayor Watford adjourned the meeting at 7:25 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.