



MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL MEETING - REGULAR SESSION

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Bonifay City Hall Council Meeting Room – 301 J Harvey Etheridge St.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Cook called the meeting to order.

PRESENT

Mayor Larry Cook
Council Member Shelley Carroll
Council Member Rick Crews
Council Member Eddie Dixon

ABSENT

Council Member James Sellers

Also present- Police Chief Johnny Whitaker, Fire Chief Travis Cook, Executive Assistant Sierra Smith, Finance Director Tracy Walker, Public Works Director Aaron Taylor, and Chief Plant Operator Matthew Perry

A. Invocation

Councilman Dixon gave the invocation

B. Pledge of Allegiance

Councilman Dixon led the pledge.

II. APPROVE AGENDA

Executive Assistant Smith requested to add "Tracy St. Paving" as item C under new business. Motion made to add item and approve agenda by Council Member Dixon, Seconded by Council Member Carroll.

Voting Yea: Mayor Cook, Council Member Carroll, Council Member Crews, Council Member Dixon

III. APPROVE MINUTES

A. November 3rd, 2025

Motion made to approve the November 3rd, 2025 minutes by Council Member Dixon, Seconded by Council Member Crews.

Voting Yea: Mayor Cook, Council Member Carroll, Council Member Crews, Council Member Dixon

IV. APPROVE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE / TRANSFERS / FINANCIAL SHEETS TO REVIEW

Motion made to APPROVE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE / TRANSFERS / FINANCIAL SHEETS TO REVIEW by Council Member Carroll, Seconded by Council Member Dixon.

Voting Yea: Mayor Cook, Council Member Carroll, Council Member Crews, Council Member Dixon

V. VISITORS – PUBLIC ADDRESSING THE COUNCIL

NON- AGENDA AUDIENCE

Effective October 1, 2013, Florida Statute 286.0114 mandates that “members of the public shall be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a proposition before a Board or Commission.” Each individual shall have three (3) minutes to speak on the proposition before the board. **THIS IS NOT A QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION.** It is NOT a political forum, nor is it a time for personal accusations and derogatory remarks to/or about city personnel. Those who wish to speak are reminded to observe proper decorum, and to avoid the use of profane or vulgar language. If you would like to address the City Council please come to the podium and state your name and address for the record.

Rosalie McClain, 601 E Highway 90, addressed the council regarding approval of the agenda. She stated she does not know what is going on and that there are 11 people making decisions for Holmes County. She also stated that it does not make any sense to ask questions and not get answers. She stated citizens should have a say in Holmes County.

Richard Willsey of Happy Hollow Road, complained about not being able to hear well. He stated he saw the "wonderful ribbon cutting for the stormwater pond" and said it was a joyous day in the City of Bonifay. He said there is a stormwater pond (referencing the stormwater retention area on the other side of Middlebrooks park) built in 1994 that is "rodent infested, snake invested, gown up, overgrown, crap hole". He said he is sure the people that live adjacent to it appreciate the amount of attention it gets from the city. He also said that the new stormwater project wouldn't be maintained. He continued on about stormwater retention areas, flooding issues, drainage problems and thanked Mayor Cook for his facial expression.

Joyce Everett addressed the council, stating she was glad to be Joyce Everett, and questioned why there was no Veterans Day celebration for Veterans. Mayor Cook stated that Chief T. Cook would address that later in the meeting.

During Ms. Everett speaking, Richard Willsey was speaking, interrupting here. Mayor Cook warned him that he was out of order. Willsey continued to speak and was deemed out of order again. Willsey continued speaking and Mayor Cook directed Chief Whitaker to remove him. Chief Whitaker addressed Willsey. Willsey then whistled at Chief Cook and saluted him. Mayor Cook said if Willsey interrupts the meeting again, he is to be removed.

Angela Willsey of Happy Hollow Road, stating her family owned some of the land that the stormwater retention pond is on. She said they voluntarily released the land to the City and "helped them out". She said there are cattails, trees, and snakes in there.

VI. PLANNING & ENGINEERING

A. Southside Drainage Project

Executive Assistant provided an update on the southside drainage project. It is nearing completion with a final completion being towards the end of December.

B. Ribbon Cutting for Stormwater Pond

Executive Assistant Smith announced the ribbon cutting for the stormwater pond. The ribbon cutting is December 1st, 2025 at 10:00am. Smith explained the purpose of this project, mitigating flooding, preventing businesses and roads from flooding, and that is it aesthetically pleasing.

Richard Willsey interrupted the podium again. Mayor Cook and Chief Whitaker addressed it. Willsey continued on. Mayor Cook requested Willsey to be removed. Chief Whitaker walked him to the entrance door of the council room. Willsey said he was going to sue the city. The meeting continued.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. First Federal Bank Line of Credit

Finance Director Walker stated that our \$100,000 unsecured line of credit with First Federal Bank needed to be updated. She requested that the Mayor, Executive Assistant, and Finance Director be added.

Motion made to approve changing the names on the loan to be the Mayor, Executive Assistant, and Finance Director by Council Member Dixon, Seconded by Council Member Crews.
Voting Yea: Mayor Cook, Council Member Carroll, Council Member Crews, Council Member Dixon

B. Water Department Purchase

Mayor Cook explained the need to replace a backhoe at the Public Works Department. After obtaining bids, the trade came into \$99,500. We have 0% interest for 4 years through John Deere. Public Works Director Taylor addressed how this equipment will be beneficial to his department.

Motion made to authorize the mayor to purchase the backhoe at cost, not to exceed \$99,500, with credit for surplus backhoe, subject to satisfactory financing approved by mayor and city attorney by Council Member Crews, Seconded by Council Member Dixon.

Voting Yea: Mayor Cook, Council Member Carroll, Council Member Crews, Council Member Dixon

C. Tracy Street Paving

Mayor Cook stated that he obtained quotes on paving a section on Tracy Street. The quote came in at \$9,900 from Hollister paving.

Motion made to proceed with paving as outlined by quote by Council Member Crews, Seconded by Council Member Dixon.

Voting Yea: Mayor Cook, Council Member Carroll, Council Member Crews, Council Member Dixon

IX. COUNCIL / DEPARTMENT SUPERVISORS / CITY ATTORNEY DISCUSSION

Items not listed on Formal Agenda.

A. Council Updates

None

B. Department Updates

1. Bonifay Fire Rescue - Chief Cook

Chief Cook addressed the council regarding Veterans Day. The City supported several Veterans Day programs, including a dinner hosted by the Sheriff, a pancake breakfast hosted by Doctors Memorial Hospital, and the local school programs.

Mayor Cook called a 5 minute recess due to continued interruptions from Richard Willsey.

Chief Cook continued informing the council of the progress his department has made one year after the shift position. He stated the department's turnout time has decreased from an average of 3:48 in 2023 to it currently being 0:57 seconds now. The department ran 708 calls from September 2024 to September 2025, we gave aid to other county departments 73 times and received it 10 times. 102 were fire related calls, 268 were EMS or motor vehicle crashes, and 144 were aircraft standbys. He continued that the national average for a department to get a call and get on scene is 15:00 minutes. Bonifay Fire's is 7:34.

Chief Cook addressed the Mayor, Council, and everyone that sits behind the table that he appreciates their professionalism. He encouraged them to continue on and stated the City has never been in the position it's been in.

C. Employee Spotlight

1. Chief Whitaker Presentation

2. Chief Cook Presentation

Chief Whitaker nominated Lieutenant Castro for Employee of Quarter 4. He highlighted her attention to detail, unwavering commitment to seeing a case through, and her ability to look beyond the obvious. He said she works hard and is always willing to assist anyone who needs help.

Chief Cook nominated Captain Jack Griffiths for Employee of Quarter 4. He highlighted Jack for his dedication to the newer generation of firefighters. He supervises our candidates and probationary firefighters. Chief also mentioned Jack's commitment through the process and said that his efforts ensures that his dedication and work ethic does not go unnoticed.

X. ADJOURN

Persons with disabilities needing special accommodations to participate in this proceeding should contact City Hall at (850) 547-4238, at least five days prior to the proceedings.