



HISTORIC TOWN OF EATONVILLE, FLORIDA REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 7:30 PM

Town Hall – 307 E. Kennedy Blvd.

SPECIAL NOTICE: These meeting minutes are presented in an abbreviated format intended as a public record discussion of stated meeting according to the Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine law. Meetings are opened to the public, noticed within reasonable advance notice, and transcribed into minutes for public record. ***Audio Recording are available through the Town's website on the Council Agenda Page.*

CALL TO ORDER AND VERIFICATION OF QUORUM:

Mayor Gardner called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and a quorum was established by Mrs. King.

PRESENT: (5), Councilman Tarus Mack, Councilwoman Wanda Randolph, Councilwoman LaDwyana Jordan, Vice Mayor Theo Washington, Mayor Angie Gardner

STAFF: (4) Marlin Daniels, **Chief Administrator Officer;** Veronica King, **Town Clerk;** Cliff Shepard, **Town Attorney;** Valerie Mundy, **Public Works Director**

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Invocation through a moment of silence led by Mayor Gardner followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Mayor Gardner MOTIONS to **APPROVE** the Agenda with an **AMENDMENT** to add Resolution 2026-7 to the Consent Agenda; **moved by** Vice Mayor Washington; **second by** Councilwoman Jordan. **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES.**

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION – (5)

Joyce Irby – Ms. Irby states that she is waving a white flag and will not make comments tonight.

Michelle Ford – Ms. Ford states that she has a concern about the adoption of the Tourism Master Plan. When I attended the CRA meeting and looked at the minutes, I did not see any approval or request for the plan. Was Mr. Johnson directed by the Council to create the Tourism Master Plan, and if so, did he receive public input or speak to the Town Planner? It is not a Master Plan if it does not include P.E.C., the Eatonville Chamber of Commerce, or residents. It seems like it came from ChatGPT. Ms. Ford also questions the freezing of HUD funds which is on the agenda. She recommends the funds be used for affordable housing because a lot of individuals need assistance. She asks that there be a plan before the Council freezes the HUD funds.

Angela Johnson – Ms. Johnson started by commending staff for the MLK parade this past Saturday. She also applauded the completion of a sidewalk in the Town. Ms. Johnson states that there is still a need for a sidewalk on Forrest City Road. Thank you for inviting representatives from Dr. Phillips for a discussion during the workshop. There are a lot of skilled individuals in our Town that have the credentials to sit on the advisory

board for Dr. Phillips regarding the Hungerford property. Ms. Johnson encourages the Council to look for these individuals.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Public Input of Resolution 2026-1 – Adopting A Tourism Master Plan – Vice Mayor Washington – Since I have been sitting on the Council, we have never gone for Tourism funding, and this is a policy or plan to start that. These funds are for the Town and not the CRA. Mrs. King states that she will read the preamble during Council Decisions. **Mayor Gardner opens up the hearing to questions or comments from the public.** Resident Michelle Ford, asks why would the Council approve a Tourism Master Plan when they do not have a Master Plan for the Town? If this is something that we are doing in a public forum, you put together a plan, but you did not get input from the residents. Ms. Ford also asks if the Council received feedback from Ms. N.Y. Nathiri? Joyce Irby asks if it was stated that the money was not going to the CRA but rather the Town? **Mayor Gardner closes public comments.** Vice Mayor Washington states that the plan is for the Town of Eatonville. He states that P.E.C. gets Tourism funding. The Vice Mayor restates his points made at the beginning of the Public Hearing. Mayor Gardner states that P.E.C. is receiving over \$3 million TDT over a period of three years leading up to their anniversary. The Vice Mayor asks when can the Town get started on receiving TDT funds? Mayor Gardner – Why would we not partner with the work that P.E.C. has shown to be successful with? Why does it have to be separated from P.E.C.? They have been doing this work for decades. By working together, we would not only be strengthening P.E.C., but it would also show the strength in partnership. Vice Mayor asks why the Town has not been at the table with them yet? He states he would like to see what possibilities on the town side. Mayor Gardner – If we are talking about going to TDC, who is going to do that work? The Vice Mayor states that the CAO will do the work. Councilwoman Randolph states that the Town needs a Tourism Master Plan. P.E.C. has a plan and they are well-defined on what they do. They have all of the components in order to succeed in tourism. We should all be having the same goals. I believe a collaboration and partnership with them would be beneficial. They have the staff, and we do not. We will have to hire someone. Vice Mayor (to Mayor Gardner) – Do you sit on a tourism advisory board? What are the procedures when a client like Dr. Phillips wants funds? Mayor Gardner – There is a separate committee that listens to proposals and they are the ones who advise the board. It is an application process and it is presented to the committee which includes financial and feasibility studies for their projects. Then the committee gives a quick synopsis and then it goes to the commission for approval. Mr. Daniels – The committee goes through a scoring system and they rank them depending on how much money is in the pot. Once they get to the last person, if there is still money left, they will fund it, but if not it is a cutoff. Vice Mayor – Where does the Town look for funds? Mayor Gardner states that you first start with grants. We have written grants in the past; the last one was for a civil engineer with Public Works. Vice Mayor asks if it was through tourist tax dollars through TDT? Mayor Gardner states that she is giving an example of grant writing. The input for the Public Works grant came from FEMA and not staff. Councilman Mack asks if they were to go for TDT dollars, would that impact other entities in the Town that receive funding? Vice Mayor brings up the City of Orlando and entities that receive TDT funds without partnering with the City. Councilwoman Jordan asks for the CAO or Attorney Shepard's recommendation. Mr. Daniels recommends going over the process, putting a timeline together, and making sure they have all of the parameters that are needed before the proposal is submitted. Councilwoman Jordan – I understand what the Vice Mayor is saying, but is it possible for the Town to seek their own funding? Mr. Daniels states that the Town will need to analyze projects that take place in the Town and we cannot duplicate data. Councilwoman Randolph – One of the things to consider, which will determine TDT, is if there is an economic impact within the Town in order to receive TDT funds? Councilwoman Randolph encourages collaboration with P.E.C, Chamber of Commerce, and another entity. Mr. Daniels states that he spoke with Mr. Johnson (CRA) and suggested that it should be a collaborative approach. Vice Mayor Washington states that it is included as part of the inventory and what is needed in the report. It will not separate those entities out; it is part of the plan. Mr. Daniels – My suggestion would be to look at a template submitted by P.E.C. which could be used as a

framework to figure out what we need. The Vice Mayor states that the Town has the inventory to start planning. Councilman Mack states that he understands what the Vice Mayor is suggesting, but he believes the Town needs to make a more collaborative effort to team up with entities active in the community. He recommends tabling the item. Mr. Daniels states that if it is the Council's desire, he can plan a workshop and invite experts in to help facilitate the plan. Mayor Gardner states that a decision can be made once they enter Council Decisions, since the resolution is set to be voted on. **Mayor Gardner closes the public hearing for Resolution 2026-1.**

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

Mayor Gardner **MOTIONS to APPROVE the Consent Agenda; moved** by Vice Mayor Washington, **second** by Councilman Mack. **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES.**

COUNCIL DISCUSSIONS:

Discussion of Ordinance 2025-7 Amending Subpart B, "Land Development Code," Chapter 64, "Zoning," Article III "Zoning District Regulations," Chapter 65 "Use Regulations", Section 65- 1 to Permit Duplexes in R- 2 Single Family Residential Zoning Districts – Councilman Mack requests that the item be moved to the next regular Council meeting for decision. He states that there is no need for a discussion because the Council previously did so with the Town Planner. Town Planner, Tara Salmieri – I would ask that the Town Attorney weigh in on this item. I do not know the legal way to bring it back because you have already made the motions, denied it, and then the ordinance did not pass. Attorney Shepard affirms Ms. Salmieri's statement. The Council has already been through the process for getting an ordinance considered and passed, or not passed, and it did not pass. Now, you are asking, how do we proceed if we want to undo what we did? You would have to have the councilperson who voted in favor, make a motion for reconsideration of the matter, which is usually based on new information. I have not heard any new information so far. There could be a drafting of a new ordinance with changes, but to bring back the identical ordinance that has already failed is not appropriate because, if that were the case, every time someone was on the losing end of something, they would try to bring it back. Councilman Mack states that in government, things that have failed before can be brought back and passed. He states that he trusts their instincts, but in this particular situation, he does not. Mrs. King clarifies that the motion was to approve the first reading of Ordinance 2025-7. Attorney Shepard states to bring the ordinance back, there will need to be new information, but there is none. Councilman Mack states that there was confusion regarding Ms. Salmieri's presentation of the ordinance. He states it should have been something that was tabled, but it was the first reading and he was optimistic. He would have liked to give the Council an opportunity to evaluate the information. Attorney Shepard states if it has enough support, Councilman Mack could make a motion to reconsider the action. He states that Ms. Salmieri presented a clear table of what the uses were and availability. He also cautions that a motion to reconsider without new information should not be the decision-making process of the Council. Mrs. King references the first reading and the vote which was a unanimous no. Mr. Daniels informs Councilman Mack that he will need to make a substantive change and submit the ordinance to the Clerk. It will not remain as Ordinance 2025-7 but instead a new ordinance. Attorney Shepard – The ordinance does not have to change, although it does need a new number. You usually do not reconsider something that was fully vetted at a hearing with discussion unless there is new information. Councilman Mack asks Attorney Shepard to look at the Town's charter to see if they are allowed to reconsider an ordinance without new information. Attorney Shepard states that he will. He also states that he wants the Council to understand that rezoning is a quasi-judicial matter, which is different from a legislative one, where you are making decisions on changing the law, which is exactly what you are (Council) doing in this case. You are not applying the existing law to a given set of facts. If there are three votes to bring back the ordinance as it was, it will need a new number and go through the process of being put on the agenda. The appropriate action to do now would be to make the motion to bring it back again and see if you can get three votes to do so. Mrs. King states following the first hearing, at the next meeting, Councilman Mack put a motion on the floor to

rescind the vote, and it died for lack of a second. Mrs. King asks if they were to bring the ordinance back, would it have to go to the Planning and Zoning Board first? Attorney Shepard – If it is the same ordinance, no. **Councilman Mack MOTIONS to RECONSIDER Ordinance 2025-7; MOTION FAILS.**

Discussion of Establishing A Zoning Classification For Building Town Homes Within The Town Of

Eatonville – Councilman Mack – This was something that was supposed to be put on Council Decisions and I would like it to be put on the next agenda. Town Planner, Tara Salmieri – There has not been an item or ordinance under consideration. I have met with Council twice to discuss townhomes, with the last discussion taking place in August. Ms. Salmieri states since then she has an update: townhomes can be in R3 Zoning and in PD. This Council discussed the pros and cons of both and there was not a majority decision. Everybody on the Board wanted the PD process which is in place. It requires you to have 2 acres of land. Salmieri states that Councilman Mack wanted to remove the acre requirement, but no one else agreed to it. The majority of the Board was comfortable keeping the acre requirement. Councilman Mack – I would like to put a motion on the floor to put this item on the next agenda for decision. Ms. Salmieri – Before we get into a motion because it was not an ordinance and I was seeking direction, first, I would have to create the ordinance how you all would like and then it would go to the Planning and Zoning Board for recommendation, then Council. Councilwoman Randolph asks for clarification on what they are discussing regarding town homes. Ms. Salmieri discusses changing the development code. She states that discussion tonight is about removing acreage requirements. Councilman Mack states that he would like to move forward with putting this on the next agenda and having Ms. Salmieri evaluate it. Mr. Daniels suggests that Councilman Mack provide Ms. Salmieri with scope and recommendations. Mayor Gardner states in the \$4.1 million grant the Town received for affordable housing, the renderings were town homes. She requests that Ms. Salmieri review the different scenarios that fit the Town, and what she believes would work best for the Council to consider. For example, if Salmieri believes the acreage needs to remain at two, or she finds something that may work which reduces the size, the Council would like to review and consider it. Councilman Mack asks Ms. Salmieri about the timeline. Mrs. King proposes a meeting date in February. Mayor Gardner asks if Ms. Salmieri could meet with Mr. Daniels and come up with a realistic timeline. Ms. Salmieri states that she has a concern about going to the Planning and Zoning Board with the Council's input to have an ordinance presented when they have not been presented options. She would like to have until tomorrow to come up with a schedule (with Mr. Daniels).

COUNCIL DECISIONS:

Approval To Freeze the HUD Disaster Recovery - Community Planning & Development Grants – Mrs. King reads the preamble for Resolution 2026-3. **Mayor Gardner MOTIONS to APPROVE; moved by Councilwoman Randolph, second by Councilman Mack. Questions/comments: Councilwoman Randolph** states that she realized there was \$2 million awarded to the Town for the HUD housing project for the funding of purchase land acquisition. The \$4 million grant is for construction. This freeze is to protect the Town of Eatonville and to ensure these funds are protected and used for what they were given for. Councilman Mack asks what the deadlines are for the grants? Councilwoman Randolph references the grant information. The \$2 million grant ends in 2031 and the \$4 million is 2032. Mayor Gardner states that she is not understanding the process since no purchase of land can be made without coming to Council. Councilwoman Jordan – Why would we freeze the funds if they have already been allocated? Mr. Daniels states the grant funds are not in the Town's bank account. Councilman Mack states that he wants to be able to protect the Town and their interests moving forward, with any funds that are available. Mr. Daniels (to Attorney Shepard) – If we freeze the funds, are we not allowed to continue the process? Councilman Mack – What are we processing? Mayor Gardner – The grants are being monitored. The grant writer has been in contact with the grantee. We are waiting for an update or report. Councilman Mack states that the Town could have used the \$2 million grant to purchase the Hungerford property. Mayor Gardner – But, once it is sold, what do you do? Councilman Mack – We had the first option, is that correct, Mayor? Mayor Gardner – If you give the Town first option, but it is

sold before we can get everything together, what do we do? I believe there is some misinformation. Councilman Mack believes it was a lack of communication. He was in the audience during Council meetings when they had the opportunity to purchase the property and they chose not to. We are monitoring the grant funds, but we are not processing anything. **Mayor Gardner calls for question. AYE:** Councilwoman Randolph, Councilman Mack, Vice Mayor Washington. **NAY:** Mayor Gardner, Councilwoman Jordan. **MOTION PASSES, 3/2.**

Approval of Resolution 2026-1 – Adopting A Tourism Master Plan – Mayor Gardner MOTIONS to TABLE the Approval of Resolution 2026-1; **moved** by Councilman Mack, **second** by Councilwoman Randolph. **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES.**

REPORTS:

Chief Administrative Officer - Marlin Daniels – Thank you everyone for coming out tonight. Kudos to the staff for the MLK parade. Thank you to the Eatonville Police Department for safety. There have been updates to Town Hall: security doors have been installed. The Council will be receiving their cards tomorrow. We have had some issues with permitting, but we have been in contact with UES, which will be our outside source that will assist with permits. A lot of our permitting forms were not conforming, so we are working on that. We are also trying to get an online portal. We are beginning to analyze the budgets with staff. I told Ms. Gibson that we will be analyzing budgets every quarter to be able to give updates to the Council. The sidewalks that were just completed were instructed by the previous CAO and Orange County. We (Ms. Mundy) are working on getting other sidewalks completed. Our staff is also working on fee schedules. I need the Council's next quarter schedules and objectives (community). I will also be talking to the Council regarding a meeting I had with the county in reference to a potential infrastructure tax that may be coming and could add about a million dollars to our budget. Lastly, we have a cleanup this Saturday with Representative Anna Eskamani and LaVon Bracy Davis.

Town Attorney - Cliff Shepard – I want to mention something that came up during the Dr. Phillips presentation. I appreciated what we heard from them. One question that has not been answered is what acreage they believe would be left over, if the five projects get built, for things that would generate tax revenue? They are saying that they want our input, and I think that is wise, but I also think it is important that we get a number. The second question is they said that the Town is going to get substantial impact fees, but to my knowledge, the Town does not have impact fees for stormwater, water, or wastewater, and those are potentially huge. What I believe we do have is increased water rates which has created some controversy, but the big picture is we wanted to do impact fees so that we could have development pay its own way, and we cannot do that if we do not have them for everything. I believe the Florida Rural Water Association, we did the water rate study, was going to do the impact fee study that the Town needed to create water, stormwater, and wastewater impact fees. This needs to become a top priority before development begins on the Hungerford property.

TOWN COUNCIL REPORT/DISCUSSION ITEMS -

Vice Mayor Theo Washington – The Vice Mayor begins by asking about the impact fees? Mr. Daniels states that he will follow up on fees tomorrow. The Vice Mayor continues his report by stating there are people lingering on Town streets after being released. Chief Murray states that they have a meeting at the end of the month and he will ensure that it is brought up. The Vice Mayor states that the MLK parade went very well.

Councilwoman Wanda Randolph – I am glad that the impact fees were brought up because that is a very high priority. If I remember correctly, was there a stormwater impact fee at some point? Mr. Daniels – The last time I spoke with someone, our contact was going to see how far along it is, but I will make sure to follow up. Councilwoman Randolph – Are the water rates being increased? And will there be a reimbursement for

residents? Mr. Daniels – We have pulled the data and we still have not finished it. I have been working with Ms. Gibson, but she has been out for the last two weeks due to a family emergency. Councilwoman Randolph – Is there any way we can resolve this by the next meeting? Mr. Daniels – Can you give me the second meeting in February? If we can get it in early, I will make sure to share it. Councilwoman Randolph – The resolution that was submitted for the salary increases for EPD employees, when does that take effect? Mr. Daniels – The EPD recently had an audit and there is going to have to be another change done before we can actually increase. Chief Murray – During our evidence audit, we were recommended to split the evidence and records positions, because they should not be the same person. I made a suggestion to Mr. Daniels that we find a way to allocate a salary for a full-time position. Councilwoman Randolph continues her report by congratulating the administration and EPD for a great job on the MLK parade. She asks where they are at regarding hiring a developer consultant? Mr. Daniels – Attorney Shepard will be writing a legal opinion for the Council on the consultant. He wants to ensure it aligns with our procurement policy. Attorney Shepard – I got the procurement policy this afternoon and I will probably have an answer for you tomorrow.

Councilwoman LaDwyana Jordan – It was a very good presentation tonight by Dr. Phillips. I hope that we have people that will step forward for the advisory board. The MLK parade was successful, but I would just ask that we get things done in more of a timely manner. I received the information a day before. In terms of Catalina Park, I know we voted to have the prefabricated building, is there an update on that? Mr. Daniels states that it should be done by January 29th.

Councilman Tarus Mack – My condolences to anyone who has suffered a loss in the community. Thank you to Dr. Phillips for giving a great presentation. We definitely need to move forward collectively and collaboratively with something that is going to make sense for the community. The MLK parade was terrific and kudos to everyone involved. I am looking forward to the Zora Neale Hurston festival which will be taking place from January 30th to February 1st. Where are we at with HostDime? Mr. Daniels states that they have been communicating with HostDime and there will be a meeting soon with an update. Councilman Mack continues his report by thanking Ms. Mundy for her work on making sure sidewalks have been installed. He asks Attorney Shepard if there are any pending lawsuits? Attorney Shepard responds no.

MAYOR’S REPORT - Mayor Angie Gardner – I want to thank the staff as well for the MLK parade and Chief Murray. I wanted to extend prayers for Ms. Gibson’s family. Mayor Gardner asks Attorney Shepard a question regarding grants: we do not have grant money, so we have not made any requests on it. Do you know if it is better to forfeit an award versus missing a date? Attorney Shepard – Grants are not my specialty, so this is a better question for the grant writer, who may have a better idea. From my understanding, the thing that you never want to do, if you ever want additional grants, is to forfeit a grant. Mayor Gardner continues her report by stating that she will make certain Dr. Johnson (grant writer) continues to monitor and process any updates that are needed on those grants, because we do not want it to just sit.

ADJOURNMENT Mayor Gardner Motions for Adjournment of Meeting; **moved** by Councilman Mack; **second** by Vice Mayor Washington; **AYE: ALL, MOTION PASSES. Meeting Adjourned at 9:14pm.**

DS
Respectfully Submitted by:



Signed by:
Veronica King

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Veronica L King, Town Clerk

APPROVED

Signed by:
Angie Gardner

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Angie Gardner, Mayor