



CITY COUNCIL MEETING & FINAL BUDGET HEARING FY 2025/2026

City Hall – Council Chamber
405 Bagshaw Way, Edgewood, Florida
Tuesday, September 16, 2025 at 6:30 PM

MINUTES

A. CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION, & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council President Horn called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. He gave an invocation and then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. ROLL CALL & DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

City Clerk Riffle confirmed a quorum with Mayor Dowless and all Councilmembers present.

Elected Officials Present:

John Dowless, Mayor
Richard A. Horn, Council President
Chris Rader, Council President Pro-Tem
Susan Lomas, Councilmember
Casey McElroy, Councilmember
Beth Steele, Councilmember

Staff Present:

Sandra Riffle, City Clerk
Dean DeSchryver, Police Chief
Miguel Garcia, Deputy Police Chief
Ellen Hardgrove, City Planner
Drew Smith, City Attorney

C. FINAL BUDGET HEARING FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026

Attorney Smith read Ordinance 2025-10 in title only.

Due to a typographical error in the TRIM advertisement, the final budget hearing was tabled to Monday, September 22, 2025, at 6:00 pm.

Council President Horn made a motion to table the final budget hearing for fiscal year 2025-2026 until Monday, September 22, 2025, at 6:00 pm. Seconded by Councilmember Rader. The motion was approved by roll call vote (5/0).

Councilmember McElroy	Favor
Councilmember Steele	Favor
Councilmember Lomas	Favor
Councilmember Rader	Favor
Council President Horn	Favor

D. CONSENT AGENDA

1. August 12, 2025 2nd Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes

2. August 19, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes

Clerk Riffle said that Councilmember Lomas requested a correction to her report in the August 19, 2025, regular meeting minutes. The amended minutes will reflect that the information was reported by DOGE rather than that DOGE attended the Community Action Board meeting.

Councilmember Rader made a motion to approve the consent agenda with corrections; seconded by Councilmember Lomas. The motion was approved by voice vote (5/0).

E. ORDINANCES (FIRST READING)**1. Ordinance 2025-06: Small Scale Comp Plan Amendment Waterwitch**

Attorney Smith read Ordinance 2025-06 in title only.

Planner Hardgrove reported an error in the original Future Land Use Map designation for the Waterwitch subdivision. The subdivision was incorrectly marked as Medium Density Residential and should have been designated as Low Density. The Local Planning Authority recommended approval for the change from Medium to Low Density Residential.

There was no public comment.

Councilmember Rader made a motion to approve Ordinance 20205-06; seconded by Councilmember McElroy. The motion was approved by roll call vote (5/0).

Councilmember Rader	Favor
Councilmember Lomas	Favor
Councilmember Steele	Favor
Councilmember McElroy	Favor
Council President Horn	Favor

2. Ordinance 2025-08: ECD Mixed Use & Activity Node Bonus

Attorney Smith read Ordinance 2025-08 in title only.

Planner Hardgrove said the proposed ordinance is intended to accomplish two key goals: To clarify the ECD Mixed Use Residential permitted use and to clarify the standards for an ECD Activity Node Bonus. The requirements are not clear in the current code. The activity nodes are intended to be dynamic, mixed-use centers that promote transit-oriented, pedestrian-friendly environments.

Per the proposed ordinance Mixed Use for a non-activity center, would be residential at a maximum of 25 units per acre, plus at least one of the following uses: retail, non-drive-through casual, sit-down restaurant, personal services, movie or live theaters, offices, and live-work units.

The total minimum building square footage for non-residential uses must be equal to 6% of the total site area. Each of the types of nonresidential uses must have a minimum of 2,000 square.

The restaurant space must be restaurant-tenant-ready, including necessary utility connections (water, gas, electricity), proper infrastructure for commercial kitchen ventilation (hood systems) and grease trap.

The nonresidential space must be located on the ground floor, or the business owner can come before the Council and request to locate on the plaza. The plaza must be designed to further the ECD Vision, be a minimum of 0.30 acre, have at least 50 feet of frontage on Orange Avenue and designed to interconnect with residential.

There was discussion related to clarification of the required minimum square footage. It was clarified that any single non-residential use, such as retail, may be met through one or more tenants, with the total cumulative square footage of that use type satisfying the minimum requirement.

Also discussed was the type of restaurant and minimum size that would qualify. The restaurant cannot be a drive through. Minimum 2,500 square feet was a consensus.

Planner Hardgrove provided details on the Live-Work unit land use. In the live-work units, the front is commercial with a residence in the back or downstairs commercial and upstairs residential. A physical separation is required between the two uses, and an ADA compliant restroom must be included in the commercial space.

Planner Hardgrove's initial recommendation was to allow the Live-Work uses to account for up to 65% of the required non-residential square footage; however, P&Z recommended 35% so that the commercial would be more likely to be active.

Responding to Councilmember Steele, Planner Hardgrove said developers would have to submit a parking management plan when they come in for site plan approval and they will provide both commercial and residential parking.

If a developer creates an Activity Node, they are allowed up to 80 units per acre. The development must be designed as a diverse and vibrant node of mixed uses. The nonresidential use is intended to be a destination, not just a residential building with some nonresidential. The development mix of uses is to provide an engaging streetscape and include an urban plaza where people can gather, relax, and connect. In addition, the development is to contribute to the vision of being less reliant on the automobile by prioritizing walkability, bike-friendly infrastructure, and seamless connections to public transit. The amount of nonresidential is based on the proposed residential density. For 26-60 units per acre, the nonresidential square footage must equal 8% of the development tract size. For 61 to 80 units per acre, the nonresidential square footage must equal 10% of the development gross acreage. 50% of the non-residential uses must face along the arterial

road, and at least 25% of the plaza's non-arterial frontage perimeter must be non-residential facades.

The Planner explained that including a restaurant is the single most effective way to generate the kind of activity envisioned in the ECD. Discussion ensued as to if restaurant space should be a requirement or an incentive.

Currently, the proposed regulation does not require the restaurant, but does require if a restaurant is part of the required non-residential it must be "tenant-ready."

Councilmember Steele commented that payment of impact fees needs to be included as part of "tenant ready."

Councilmember Rader said he supports a combination concept such as The Yard development has.

There was significant discussion related to the Live-Work unit including the requirements for such use. Planner Hardgrove said the Live-Work unit may be attractive for a developer since a property manager is not responsible for managing the commercial part of a live-work space. Attorney Smith said it is important that the live portion cannot take over the commercial space, circumventing the intent of nonresidential use requirement. Discussion ensued related to if the nonresidential use could take over the live space. Consensus was that the business owner or operator must also reside in the unit should be eliminated and the entire unit could be used for nonresidential since the objective is to integrate nonresidential into the development.

Council President Horn clarified that the live-work space is an option, not a requirement. Planner Hardgrove confirmed that it is one of the choices the developer has to meet the nonresidential requirement.

Councilmember Steele said hours of operation should be required for the Live-Work units. The consensus of hours of operation was the business must be open to the public and serve customers during regular business hours, defined as a minimum of 20 hours per week between 9:00 AM and 8:00 PM, Monday through Saturday. She also recommended adding to the list of prohibited uses in the Live Work Unit storage facilities, and staffing agency that recruits and hires employees to work for other companies on a temporary, temporary-to-hire, or permanent basis in the Live-Work units.

Timing of Nonresidential Square Footage was discussed with the consensus being all required non-residential square footage must be constructed and completed prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for any residential unit, with the restaurant tenant-ready and the other non-residential in a finished shell.

Public Comment

John Moccio, an Edgewood business owner, stated his concerns. City is making changes with new criteria that will affect property owner and devalue his property.

Planner Hardgrove stated the proposed regulation does not limit development in the ECD; it is actually providing more choices and certainty for the developer (build as a right). She said the vision for the ECD has not changed.

Councilmember Rader said this actually lowers the threshold for an Activity Node, allowing a higher density on less acreage. It allows for increased density on a property to overcome the cost of the form of development. He said uses are not being removed.

Mr. Moccio said this seems unachievable and Edgewood will have status quo because people don't want to pay to develop the properties.

Attorney Smith responded that the City is increasing the marketability of the lots, and the regulation is intended to overcome ambiguity.

Mayor Dowless said he has started to meet with consultants to market property in Edgewood to bring in better and more potential business and clients.

Councilmember Rader made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-08 with amendments to be included in the second reading of the proposed ordinance; seconded by Councilmember Steele. The motion was approved by roll call vote (5/0).

Councilmember Lomas	Favor
Councilmember Steele	Favor
Councilmember McElroy	Favor
Councilmember Rader	Favor
Council President Horn	Favor

F. PUBLIC HEARINGS (ORDINANCES – SECOND READINGS & RELATED ACTION)**1. Ordinance 2025-07 Live Local Act**

Attorney Smith read Ordinance 2025-07 in title only. He said the Ordinance is for the City to be in conformance with State Statutes on Live Local.

Councilmember McElroy stated that it is required that mortgage holder execute and record a subordination of their lien interest. He sees that it will be an issue.

Attorney Smith responded that the lien interest is subordinate to the declaration so that the declaration survives if a property is foreclosed and does not impair the ability to collect.

There was no public comment.

Councilmember Lomas made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-07; seconded by Councilmember Steele. The motion was approved by roll call vote (5/0).

Councilmember Steele	Favor
Councilmember McElroy	Favor
Councilmember Rader	Favor
Councilmember Lomas	Favor
Council President Horn	Favor

2. Ordinance 2025-09 Platting Amendment

Attorney Smith read Ordinance 2025-09 in title only.

This Ordinance is in response to legislation from the last State legislative session that changed platting from the public hearing process to an administrative process. City Council will still hold a public hearing for the subdivision approval; the platting process is essentially a check to ensure that the plat document is consistent with the approved subdivision.

There were no public comment.

Councilmember Rader made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-09; seconded by Councilmember Lomas. The motion was approved by roll call vote (5/0).

Councilmember McElroy	Favor
Councilmember Rader	Favor
Councilmember Lomas	Favor
Councilmember Steele	Favor
Council President Horn	Favor

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

H. NEW BUSINESS

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

J. CITIZEN COMMENTS - none

K. BOARDS & COMMITTEES

L. STAFF REPORTS

City Attorney Smith

Attorney Smith stated that the District Court of Appeals issued a ruling declaring the state's open carry ban unconstitutional. Business owners still have the right to prohibit firearms on their property, but there is now no prohibition on government property from open carrying long guns. Local governments are completely preempted by this ruling.

Chief DeSchryver read from the Daniels decision on firearms and said the police can arrest those who handle weapons inconsiderately or dangerously, or while intoxicated, but may not arrest based solely upon a past history of illegal drug use.

Police Chief DeSchryver**1. Chief's Report August 2025**

Chief DeSchryver reviewed his report.

- He said EPD has transitioned to the new weapons.
- Officer White returned from deployment and has undergone retraining with Officer Lafan.
- EPD hired a new officer, Abe Class, who also attended the training.
- At a traffic stop, Officer Barretto found about 600 grams of cannabis.
- Officer Tejada arrested a driver who was driving 102 mph on Orange Avenue. Chief DeSchryver stated that any speed exceeding 50 mph over the speed limit is now considered a misdemeanor.
- He passed out new challenge coins designed by Officer Lafan.

City Clerk Riffle**1. Clerk Riffle's Report 8-19 through 9-12-2025**

Clerk Riffle reviewed her report with City Council:

- The City has completed all FEMA requirements and submitted the necessary documentation for Hurricane Milton. Staff are waiting for FEMA's decision regarding reimbursement for debris hauling.
- To date, 186 businesses (almost 50% of all registered) have renewed BTRs. Renewal notices were sent by email and USPS.
- City staff have confirmed the dates for our upcoming events.
- During Clerk Riffle's intermittent absences in September, due to a personal emergency, Brett and Ashley successfully managed daily operations at City Hall and effectively handled urgent business matters.

M. MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL REPORTS**Mayor Dowless**

- Mayor Dowless and Clerk Riffle met with Duke about the stub poles remaining on the public rights of way (ROWs). The remaining poles are those occupied by MCI and Spectrum, who have yet to vacate the old poles.
- Changing LED lighting will save the City a small amount per month. There are still several sodium vapor lights that need to be converted to LED lights.
- The tri-county FLC event scheduled for Thursday, September 18th, was cancelled.

Council Member Lomas – no report

Council Member McElroy – no report

Council Member Rader

- Councilmember Rader reported a sign spinner on the sidewalk to which Attorney Smith said a sidewalk is a free speech zone and a commercial business has the same rights as everybody else.
- Related to the whether tobacco shops are a permitted use, Attorney Smith said there are definitions for uses and Planner Hardgrove confirmed that tobacco, e-cigarette and vape shops are prohibited.
- Councilmember Rader updated the Council on the GIS project. The Regional Planning Council may have an offer of \$1,000 a year to cover storage and use. He also noted the GIS map will have a public fronting use.

Council Member Steele – no report

Council President Horn - no report

N. ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Lomas made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 am.


Richard A. Horn, Council President

Attest:


Sandra Riffle, City Clerk