



# MINUTES

## City Commission Special Meeting

5:30 PM – Wednesday, September 11, 2024 – City Hall

APPROVED 10/3/2024

**Invocation: Pastor Bobby Rowe, North Lake Fellowship of Christian Athletes**

**Pledge of Allegiance: Commissioner Willie Hawkins**

**Call to Order: 5:32 P.M.**

### **Acknowledge of Quorum and Proper Notice**

**PRESENT:** Commissioner Gary Ashcraft, Commissioner Willie Hawkins, Vice Mayor Emily Lee and Mayor Michael Holland

- 1. Agenda Update: None**
- 2. Appointment of Interim City Commissioner for Seat #4**

Mayor Michael Holland reviewed the process and introduced the candidates - Christine Cruz and Randy Glisson. He requested that Dr. Glisson step out of the room while Ms. Cruz gave her presentation and answered questions from the Commission. He noted that Ms. Cruz would be participating remotely via Teams.

Christine Cruz, candidate for Seat #4, addressed the Commission regarding her work experience, her participation on various City boards and committees including the CRA Review Committee, her volunteer work and various awards she has received based on her volunteer service. She thanked the Commission for allowing her to participate remotely due to being out of town.

Commissioner Hawkins asked Ms. Cruz what she felt is the most important duty of a Commissioner.

Ms. Cruz responded that it is to strengthen the community and promote sustainable growth.

Commissioner Hawkins commented that, as the City grows, so do the demands on items such as public safety and housing. He asked her thoughts on that.

Ms. Cruz responded she is very aware of the Live Local Act and acknowledged there are limitations in what the City can do. She stated she would promote responsible growth and encourage any initiative that respects and preserves the City's natural beauty while trying to embrace opportunities that align with the City's values and character. She cited prioritizing development projects that align with the City's historical and cultural values and indicated she would support design standards and zoning policies that preserve the community. She commented on concerns regarding utilities, roads and infrastructures and expressed the need to support staff with thoughtful, considerate and well-planned decisions.

Commissioner Ashcraft had no questions for Ms. Cruz.

Vice Mayor Lee asked if there is anything in the City she is concerned about and that she would change.

Ms. Cruz expressed support for conducting more forums to increase dialogues with the community and local businesses. She commented on the need to show the community the City understands their needs and to show they are heard and valued.

Commissioner Ashcraft asked Ms. Cruz to discuss a couple of her strengths and areas that she may need to improve on.

Ms. Cruz cited her various volunteer efforts with the City over the past 17 years and stated she has the background to provide continuity of service for the limited time of the appointment.

Commissioner Hawkins asked if she has a weakness she needs to work on with Ms. Cruz responding that she talks too much and would work on making that more of an asset and take a slower approach.

Mayor Holland asked when she would return with Ms. Cruz confirming she would be back on Tuesday and had no plans to go anywhere else for the rest of the year.

Mayor Holland welcomed Randy Glisson and asked him to tell them why he wants to be a Commissioner. He explained after that the Commission would ask him questions.

Randy Glisson thanked the Commission for the opportunity. He provided an overview of his and his family's history. He noted his family moved to Eustis in 1963 and his fond memories of growing up in the City. He cited his various professional accomplishments and his involvement with the Waterman Hospital Foundation Board and the North Lake County Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He indicated his intent to help make the Commission whole and stated he would put in the time and preparation to get up to speed. He commented on his contacts in Tallahassee and his desire to try and bring more state revenue back to the City.

Commissioner Hawkins asked what he views as the most important issue facing Eustis.

Dr. Glisson cited growth and commented on Strong Towns and Lake 100 and their discussion on growth and development. He stated that growth needs to be considered on a case by case basis. He added that for high density housing developments, the City needs to obtain feedback from the citizens before moving forward. He emphasized the need to manage growth but not kill growth. He further stated that public safety is an important issue for the City. He indicated his two passions would be to move forward with sustainable growth and make sure public safety is in place.

Commissioner Hawkins asked, if he could wave a wand and go back to 1963, would he go back.

Dr. Glisson responded that there was not the same divisiveness then. He indicated he would not want to go back to 1963 but would want to work to make the community more like 1963.

Commissioner Ashcraft asked for him to provide examples of his more recent community involvement.

Dr. Glisson responded that he attends the "huddles" at Eustis High School through the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He commented on how he provides support for candidates that represent the community and cited how he enjoys supporting other candidates. He commented on how he cares for his medically challenged grandson and enjoys attending events with him. He stated he looks forward to serving the community for the next four months and complimented the City on the Carla Mitchell event and 9-11 ceremony. He asserted that, if he has not been as active in recent years, he will make up for it while Commissioner.

Commissioner Hawkins asked what he thinks the job of a Eustis Commissioner is.

Dr. Glisson responded that it is being a representative for the City and the voting they do to determine the outcomes. He cited a recent decision regarding a high density storage facility proposed for the shopping center. He stated the Commission is representative of the community while trying to look out for its citizens.

Vice Mayor Lee noted he once said at a candidate meet and greet that his goal was to find and support the right candidates for the City. She added he had said that he has "a passion for helping people. I am retired. I will use civil discussion when my opinion is required and understand the importance of working together." She asked him to elaborate on that.

Dr. Glisson responded that he means that there needs to be civil discussion between the Commissioners and that it is not beneficial to the process if the discussion gets out of hand.

Vice Mayor Lee asked if he has any concerns in the City and what would he focus on changing.

Dr. Glisson cited the need to beautify the City and commented on his involvement with the First Baptist Church and their meetings with the City to beautify their entrance.

Mayor Holland thanked Mr. Glisson and explained he is very familiar with both of the applicants. He stated that, whichever candidate is selected, the City will be well served over the next four months.

Sasha Garcia, City Attorney, stated her recommendation that, in the event of a tie vote, the City follow FSS 100.181 and ask the candidates to draw lots with numbers 1-20. She indicated that Ms. Cruz may nominate a proxy to draw for her and the person drawing the highest number would receive the appointment. It was a consensus of the Commission to follow Attorney Garcia's recommendation.

Discussion was held regarding whether or not to allow additional discussion if there is a 2 to 2 vote. It was agreed that, if there is a tie vote, they will allow one additional discussion period before taking a final vote.

Mayor Holland opened the floor to nominations for Interim Commissioner at 6:05 p.m.

Vice Mayor Lee nominated Randy Glisson.

Commissioner Ashcraft nominated Christine Cruz.

Mayor Holland asked for a motion to close the nominations. Vice Mayor Lee moved to close, Seconded by Commissioner Holland. On a roll call vote, the nominations were closed.

Mayor Holland opened the floor to discussion on the nominees.

Commissioner Hawkins acknowledged that it is a difficult decision between the two candidates.

Commissioner Ashcraft expressed support for Christine Cruz due to her recent involvement with the City and the large number of volunteer hours she has provided.

Vice Mayor Lee cited what Dr. Glisson had written on his application and commented on how well the existing Commission has worked together. She noted he is also concerned about the beautification of the City and cited his experience with budgets.

Commissioner Hawkins noted that Ms. Cruz did mention budget experience in her application. He indicated that Dr. Glisson did express his love for the City.

Vice Mayor Lee cited Dr. Glisson's connections in Tallahassee and stated the City needs help with that.

Mayor Holland expressed concern regarding the nation's economy and stated that the City needs all the help it can get with obtaining additional funding from Tallahassee.

Commissioner Hawkins questioned if Dr. Glisson's connections would serve the City within the next four months with Mayor Holland expressing the hope that, even if he is not selected, that Dr. Glisson may be willing to assist the City with his Tallahassee contacts. He commented on all of the programs that the City needs help with.

Commissioner Ashcraft indicated that Dr. Glisson has lived in the City for many years and has not yet brought state monies to the City. He questioned why would now be any different. He indicated that, if he wanted to, Dr. Glisson could have done more for the City previously.

Vice Mayor Lee stated that an individual would carry more weight in Tallahassee as a Commissioner than as an individual. She noted that the City has probably not asked for his assistance in the past.

Mayor Holland asked former City Clerk Mary Montez how they should proceed at that time.

Assistant Clerk Montez responded that for interim commissioner selections in the past they had taken the vote in alphabetical order; however, on the votes for Mayor and Vice Mayor they have done the votes in the order the nominations were submitted. She indicated that either way would be permissible.

Mayor Holland asked for a vote on Christine Cruz as interim commissioner.

On a roll call vote, the motion for Christine Cruz tied 2 to 2 with Commissioner Ashcraft and Commissioner Hawkins voting for Aye and Vice Mayor Lee and Mayor Holland voting Nay.

On a roll call vote, the motion for Randy Glisson tied 2 to 2 with Commissioner Ashcraft and Commissioner Hawkins voting Nay and Vice Mayor Lee and Mayor Holland voting Aye.

Further discussion was held, it was agreed that there was no need for an additional vote as no one was going to change their vote.

Attorney Garcia proceeded to the floor to oversee the drawing of lots for the position.

Ms. Cruz selected City Clerk Christine Halloran to serve as her proxy to draw the number.

Ms. Halloran selected Number 17 and Dr. Glisson selected Number 13.

Mayor Holland declared Christine Cruz as the winner. He announced that Ms. Cruz would be sworn in immediately prior to the City Commission meeting on September 19th.

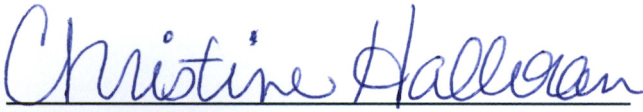
### Consideration of Resolution Number 24-76 appointing Christine Cruz as Interim Commissioner

Motion made by Commissioner Ashcraft, Seconded by Commissioner Hawkins, to approve Resolution Number 24-76 appointing Christine Cruz as Interim Commissioner. The motion passed on the following vote:

Voting Yea: Commissioner Ashcraft, Commissioner Hawkins, Vice Mayor Lee, Mayor Holland

### **3. Adjournment: 6:22 P.M.**

*\*These minutes reflect the actions taken and portions of the discussion during the meeting. To review the entire discussion concerning any agenda item, go to [www.eustis.org](http://www.eustis.org) and click on the video for the meeting in question. A DVD of the entire meeting or CD of the entire audio recording of the meeting can be obtained from the office of the City Clerk for a fee.*



CHRISTINE HALLORAN  
City Clerk



MICHAEL L. HOLLAND  
Mayor/Commissioner