



AGENDA

Special City Commission Meeting

5:30 PM – Tuesday, February 11, 2025 – City Hall

Invocation: Moment of Silence

Pledge of Allegiance: Commissioner Michael Holland

Call to Order

Acknowledge of Quorum and Proper Notice

1. Agenda Update

2. Approval of Minutes

2.1 Approval of Minutes

January 13, 2025 City Commission Workshop

January 16, 2025 City Commission Meeting

3. Presentations

3.1 Proclamation declaring February Black History Month and recognizing 31st Annual African American Heritage Celebration

4. Audience to be Heard

5. Consent Agenda

5.1 Resolution Number 25-02: Appointing and Designating a Special Magistrate as City's Local Hearing Officer pursuant to Ordinance 24-11 and Chapter 316, Florida Statutes for school zone speed infraction hearings

5.2 Resolution Number 25-14: Parks & Rec: Pickleball Courts and Basketball Courts

6. Future Agenda Items and Comments

6.1 City Commission

6.2 City Manager

6.3 City Attorney

6.4 Mayor

7. Adjournment

This Agenda is provided to the Commission only as a guide, and in no way limits their consideration to the items contained hereon. The Commission has the sole right to determine those items they will discuss, consider, act upon, or fail to act upon. Changes or amendments to this Agenda may occur at any time prior to, or during the scheduled meeting. It is recommended that if you have an interest in the meeting, you make every attempt to attend the meeting. This Agenda is provided only as a courtesy, and such provision in no way infers or conveys that the Agenda appearing here is, or will be the Agenda considered at the meeting.

If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the board, agency or commission with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, he or she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based (Florida Statutes, 286.0105). In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, persons needing a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact the City Clerk 48 hours prior to any meeting so arrangements can be made. Telephone (352) 483-5430 for assistance.



City of Eustis

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TO: EUSTIS CITY COMMISSION

FROM: Tom Carrino, City Manager

DATE: February 11, 2025

RE: Approval of Minutes

January 13, 2025 City Commission Workshop

January 16, 2025 City Commission Meeting

Introduction:

This item is for consideration of the minutes of the Eustis City Commission.

Recommended Action:

Approval of the minutes as submitted.

Prepared By:

Mary C. Montez, Deputy City Clerk

Reviewed By:

Christine Halloran, City Clerk



MINUTES

City Commission Workshop: Downtown Redevelopment Project

10:00 AM – Monday, January 13, 2025 – City Hall

Call to Order: 10:00 a.m.

Acknowledgement of Quorum and Proper Notice

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

1. Workshop Item with Discussion and Direction

1.1 Introductions

Tom Carrino, City Manager, explained the plans for the day. He indicated they would discuss the master plan and downtown redevelopment in the morning with the departmental reports in the afternoon. He announced that Mike Goman with Goman and York would provide a presentation as part of the morning session.

1.2 Presentation by Mike Goman with Goman + York

Michael Goman, Principal, Goman + York Property Advisors, LLC, provided an overview of his personal background and experience as well as that of his company. He commented on commercial real estate investment and development. He reviewed Goman & York's types of clients and the services they typically provide for each type of client. He explained they are typically brought in to consult on large, complex projects and cited the work products they provide including RFP's, RFQ's, development agreements and public participation. He cited examples of stalled or failed projects due to market and functional obsolescence and highlighted issues with eminent domain and contentious land-use issues.

Mr. Goman provided an overview of the industry sector, including central business districts, remote working, conversions of existing buildings and issues with aging buildings. He commented on vacancy rates, leases, the number of government owned buildings and reduced property values. He noted the number of government employees now working primarily from home resulting in a reduction in the required office space. He commented on reduced retail activity and e-commerce noting that shoppers still prefer physical stores. He cited changes in the Florida retail industry noting retail sales, average wages, reduction in the shopping centers, and food and beverage industries. He commented on the changes in regional and community malls. He cited some of the pressures including pricing, staffing shortages, increased costs and reduced operating hours.

Mr. Goman reported on the single family residential market and single family build for rent growth. He commented on the supply and demand with a focus on affordability and outgrowing apartment style living. He cited multi-family development with apartments and commented on affordability and construction costs. He discussed the growth in the self-storage and issues in the warehouse industry. He reviewed his "watch list" including offices, malls, dining, and issues with older hotels and apartments. He commented on

projects with inexperienced sponsors and questionable market dynamics or projections. He explained how they can assist with these situations. He stated cities need to pay attention to older assets and their decreasing values. He reviewed how the current conditions reached where they are now, including trends starting in the 1990's with older properties in trouble, Covid-19 contributing to worsening conditions, tech driving remote working resulting in too much office space. He commented on the renovation of existing office buildings where possible and stated "We're not overbuilt; we're under-demolished."

Mr. Goman reviewed some predictions, including end of a short and shallow slowdown, growth in sunbelt markets, narrowed availability, market uncertainty, cost volatility, interest rates, cost of debt/equity, and flight to quality of markets and products. He explained the moderating of the financing environment with focus on conversions of obsolete properties, increased interest in suburban and low interest in urban, improved market for project financing, and possible reduction in interest rates in 2025. He commented on additional changes to finance. He noted changes expected with retail and restaurants with a greater focus on free-standing retail and curbside pickup. He commented on the investor's view of Florida and stated the market is perceived as a competitive environment.

Mr. Goman reviewed development and redevelopment opportunities. He indicated the following as fundamentals: 1) Need for research with a thorough and supportable understanding of the market; 2) Careful conceptual planning; 3) Need for community engagement; 4) Mitigation of risk; and 5) Access to debt/equity. With redevelopment, he noted the importance of buying at low cost per square foot and mitigation of risk. He highlighted opportunities in Florida with retail/food and beverage, jobs and population growth; apartments with substantial demand for upscale, amenity-rich projects with job growth and locations near highway/transit corridors; and industrial options driven by available labor and near similar uses with highway and transportation nodes. He also commented on conversions of existing malls and office campuses to other uses and construction of new hotels and the conversion of older assets to affordable residential.

Mr. Goman discussed the market profile for the City of Eustis with community profile and trends. He noted access to market data and tools important to communities and businesses. He highlighted the value of these tools to mitigate risk and determine what the market will and will not support. He commented the use of drive time analysis to determine trends and activity. He stated that Eustis uses ESRI to show the retail activity of stores. He noted a Tapestry Segmentation analysis of the N. Eustis Street area, Drive-Time, and LifeModes to identify the market in specific areas. Mr. Gorman noted the accuracy of data with five, ten and fifteen minute drive-time descriptions with Tapestry. He commented on traffic counts and stated that traffic counts are critically important in the analysis particularly from a retail standpoint to predict the sales profitability. He indicated a lot of businesses are only interested if the traffic counts are over 20,000 per day.

Mr. Goman reviewed the importance of data and the basics of attracting CRE investment which is analytical and data driven, including avoiding faulty assumptions. He highlighted being prepared to be pro-active, knowing the market, anticipating the response, barriers both financial and regulatory, updating zoning and permitting criteria to be swift, simple and certain, and telling an investment story.

Mr. Goman reviewed the process of understanding the industry and the disparate views of the community vs the developer's goals. He noted community lifestyle concerns with

traffic, fit with "character of the community," and fiscal and economic impact. He reviewed developer goals and opportunities that are primarily quantitative with acceptable returns measured against other investments and including aggressive solicitation by communities. He indicated that developers get presented many projects each year but they only build one or two a year. He stated that from the developer perspective, "What Makes Financial Sense Gets Built and What Doesn't, Doesn't."

Mr. Goman explained the need to understand the industry and the long timelines. He stated that the industry is highly competitive, highlighted the need to mitigate risk and added that public incentives are a competitive tool. He reviewed the process beginning with the RFQ/RFP. He cited the key issues involved with the interviews, negotiations, legal counsel, development agreement considerations, negotiation of incentives such as sale of land, TIF/CEA, tax abatement, reductions in permitting fees, and sharing of infrastructure costs.

In summary, Mr. Goman stated record activity is expected in 2025-2026 with capital investors looking for opportunities and ideas, redevelopment opportunities, and emerging demand for new products and services. He commented on topics for discussion including the Downtown Master Plan, options for today's apartment residents and ground lease alternative options.

Mr. Goman complimented the City on the downtown master plan. He stated most apartment residents are DINK's (double income no kids), recently divorced (about 25% of renters), working empty nesters, and retired empty nesters. He commented on ground leases which are usually in more urban environments and most developers will not do them. He stated that developers and lenders want to own the land and explained why.

1.3 Downtown Project Discussion, Question and Answer

Vice Mayor Ashcraft asked why he indicated the Master Plan is too generic with Mr. Goman responding that there needs to be another level of detail. He added that the current plan was appropriate for the assignment provided to the consultant but a developer would need to develop more detail in order to obtain financing.

Mayor Hawkins thanked Mr. Goman and stated his presentation was a wake up call for the Commission.

Vice Mayor Ashcraft commented that the City's consultant should have also done that with Mr. Goman indicating the City could ask the consultant to do a full market study once they have a specific plan. He stated that the next step would be to have some take on the financial information and develop detailed pro formas. He commented on how a consultant would be tasked with looking at the pro formas to see that the developer's figures are accurate and substantiate any request for abatements or incentives. He explained how his company would look at a developer's information to confirm that it is appropriate for a given site.

Mr. Carrino explained MIG completed the City's master plan and stated they were hired to collect public input and develop a shared vision. They had a subconsultant, Johnson Consulting, who was supposed to look at the financials and the market which showed information such as the recommended number of residential units and commercial square footage. He stated that MIG has laid the groundwork and done some basic analysis for a shared vision. The developer has to take the information and move forward with that. He stated his opinion the City has a good master plan but there is

more work to be done and that is where they are now. Mr. Goman agreed with Mr. Carrino's statement.

Mayor Hawkins echoed the comments of Mr. Carrino and Mr. Goman with Mr. Goman stating his job is to mitigate risk to the community and not to protect the developer.

Vice Mayor Ashcraft asked if the City should have a land use attorney with Mr. Goman responding not a land use attorney but a development attorney. He explained the agreement should show that the land is not transferred to the developer until certain criteria are met and that the agreement also provides remedies in case something goes wrong. He indicated they work alongside the community's legal counsel to protect the community.

Commissioner Asbate commented that the attorney he previously mentioned was intended more for in-house negotiations for developments. He stated he struggles with how to get the ball rolling the right way and he expressed support for getting the building and architectural standards improved prior to more development.

Mr. Goman responded that would be the ideal way to do it; however, the process can be on a concurrent path. He explained that development is based on timing and capital availability. He commented on the need to work with the developers without delaying due to desire to improve the standards.

Vice Mayor Ashcraft asked if that could be incorporated into the development agreement with Mr. Goman responding that review of architectural criteria could be included in a development agreement.

Mr. Goman cited the lakefront as a jewel for the City. He commented on the City's growth potential. He indicated Eustis should not be Mount Dora but should be a good alternative. He said the comprehensive nature of the master plan is a good thing but the City needs to pursue development opportunities when the opportunity presents itself.

Commissioner Asbate asked Mr. Goman's opinion about the recommendations included in the master plan.

Mr. Goman responded that he did not see anything in the master plan that caused concern. He stated he thought it is an excellent master plan but it is only a piece of the puzzle.

Mayor Hawkins asked how many master plans he has reviewed with Mr. Goman indicating he reviews 30 to 40 per year; however, his company also prepares master plans. He explained the purpose of a master plan is to attract investment capital. He stated that his company focuses on a data driven plan. He provided a number of examples. He added that the City has some momentum and a workable document and they need to keep moving forward with it. He explained that they do not put out an RFP/RFQ but instead personally contact principals of a development company and present their ideas.

Commissioner Lee asked what he would suggest they need to do to get to the next level from the master plan.

Mr. Goman responded he would talk with staff about where they are with any updates. You need to see what you have in place regarding architectural standards and design standards and then look for ways to modernize that.

Mr. Carrino asked if it would be reasonable to secure the services of a consultant specialized legal assistance to move forward to the next stages with Mr. Goman indicating that would be a good next step. He commented on communities who had projects that stalled and how his company had helped them.

Mayor Hawkins expressed support for moving forward and hiring a consultant.

Commissioner Lee commented on the upcoming approval of the master plan at the next CRA meeting.

Mr. Carrino noted that they will also have to incorporate the master plan into the CRA redevelopment plan. He indicated the City Commission actually has to approve the CRA redevelopment plan. The CRA will consider a recommendation to approve and incorporate the master plan into the CRA redevelopment plan at their January 16th meeting and then it will go to the City Commission on February 6, 2025, to be incorporated into the CRA redevelopment plan.

Discussion was held regarding holding a workshop to review the master plan.

Mr. Carrino asked for consensus to hold a workshop to review the master plan prior to approval by the Commission. It was a consensus to hold the workshop with Mr. Carrino indicating he would discuss the procurement process with purchasing. He indicated the City has used Guenster and Associates for land use issues, not redevelopment.

Mr. Carrino indicated that staff can identify a real estate consultant who can paraphrase the protections the City needs in an agreement and they can then work with the City Attorney on executing that language. He added that they may not identify specialized legal help if a real estate consultant can explain what they want in an agreement.

Commissioner Asbate asked for a prospective timeline with Mr. Goman estimating they are approximately three to four years away from the first occupants for the residential units.

Commissioner Asbate noted the master plan has eight targets and the Waterman site is only one of eight. He asked for a timeline to implement the entire Master plan.

Mr. Goman stated it would probably be 15-20 years for the whole master plan.

Mayor Hawkins stated his desire to see movement on the downtown area to encourage interest with Mr. Goman commenting that when developers see other projects underway it helps to encourage additional development.

Commissioner Asbate cautioned that the City needs to make sure they have all of their staff and consultants in place and their vision for moving forward.

The Commission thanked Mr. Goman for his presentation and Mr. Carrino indicated that staff would distribute Mr. Goman's presentation to all of the Commissioners.

RECESS: 12:11 P.M. RECONVENE: 1:16 P.M.

1.4 Department Updates:

Commissioner Holland announced he would need to leave before 2:00 p.m. He thanked staff for their participation.

City Manager

Mr. Carrino provided an overview of all the divisions included under the City Manager including City Clerk. He noted that Events and Tourism was separated into a new department which also includes Communications.

Mr. Carrino highlighted a number of areas of focus including the following: 1) Revision of the Land Development Regulations specifically improving the quality of single family subdivisions. This would include working on regulations and guidelines to improve that quality. He cited the direction from Kimley-Horn and noted they are working with one major property owner. 2) Implementation of the downtown master plan, redevelopment of the downtown and development of the former Waterman site; and 3) Addressing the outdated strategic plan. He indicated a consultant was engaged; however, due to departure of former Commissioner Nan Cobb and three seats being up for election, staff had opted to postpone work on the strategic plan until the swearing in of any new Commissioners. He stated that now staff would re-engage the consultant and begin work on the strategic plan.

Mr. Carrino explained that he asked each department to provide a five and ten minute presentation regarding the organization of their department and some of their goals and issues.

Mayor Hawkins asked if there is anything the Commission needs to be concern about in developing the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Carrino stated a municipality will always be somewhat reactive due to changing priorities within the community. He indicated they need to continue to be flexible while also working on the Strategic Plan. He explained the existing plan was prepared in 2012 and reviewed the history of updating the plan stating they have been working on that for about three years. He indicated he would need to reengage with the former consultant to determine the cost for the plan.

Mr. Carrino explained the review process in selecting Wildan as their strategic plan consultant.

The Commission asked for an estimated time for completion with Mr. Carrino estimating nine months.

Discussion was held regarding the need to move faster and where they were in the process prior to putting it on hold.

City Clerk

Christine Halloran, City Clerk, provided an overview of the Clerk's Office accomplishments in 2024 and plans for 2025. She provided an update on their scan project and implementation of new Laserfiche software and explained how that would be utilized.

Events, Tourism and Communication

Miranda Muir, Director, reviewed their staff roles and responsibilities. She provided an overview of all the events held in 2024. She commented on the number of new vendors and partnerships with school groups and organizations which helped with volunteers. She commented on the inaugural Miss Georgefest as part of Miss

Florida. She noted that the City's representatives received \$5,000 in scholarships earned another \$5,000 in scholarships at the Miss Florida pageant. She reported on the opening of the Clifford House and how well the tours are going on.

Discussion was held regarding what could be done to improve security for the Clifford House.

Ms. Muir commented on the hiring of the new Public Relations Manager - Jaime Lanford and how well Marissa Cella filled in during the lapse. She noted that Marissa had initiated a weekly email to residents and downtown businesses. She stated that for 2025 they want to focus on expanding events such as Georgefest and the boat races into regional events. She indicated they would expand advertising and offerings to do that. She noted the department has taken over the Amazing Race event. She commented on how she intends to work on the growth and development of her team. She noted that they have rebranded the Georgefest logo to increase recognition of the event and provide consistent messaging.

Ms. Muir commented on getting the Communications team in place with the hiring of Ms. Lanford. She stated that the City needs to get more messages out to the public about the City, its staff and events. They also need to develop media relationships with TV, radio and newspapers. She noted that they invited some social media influencers to the snow event and the benefit to getting them to post about the City. She stated she will be evaluating what the City is currently doing and reviewing its methods of communication. She indicated they need to determine the best methods to communicate so they get the best bang for the buck. She emphasized encouraging her staff to think outside of the box and to try new things.

Vice Mayor Ashcraft asked about the weekly updates with Ms. Muir indicating they come from Nichole Jenkins in Water Customer Service. She indicated residents can also sign up on the City's website to subscribe to the updates.

Mayor Hawkins noted he has friends in Orlando who knew about Georgefest. He asked how they plan to make them better.

Ms. Muir responded she was asked to make Georgefest bigger and longer and explained how she has worked to do that. She commented on the better entertainment she has been able to attract to the City. She explained why she encourages everyone to follow all the safety measures surrounding the entertainment. She added that building the relationships with groups such as the high school drama club and the American Girls group from Lifepointe Church has provided a group of volunteers they can utilize.

Mayor Hawkins asked about their relationship with the downtown businesses with Ms. Muir responding that some are very supportive and others not as much. She cited things the businesses could do to help improve their foot traffic during events.

Commissioner Asbate asked about doing some video for commercials to attract out of town people with Ms. Muir responding that commercials are expensive. However, they are having someone shoot some quality video that could be used for either commercials or social media.

Commissioner Asbate asked what she thinks about putting a small band in pocket park to try and give a little push to the downtown and how long it would take to get a return.

Ms. Muir responded that for larger events they say to usually give it three years. She said that adding entertainment will add some liveliness to the downtown. She indicated

that encouraging people to wander about the downtown would be a good thing whether or not people are sitting in front of the band.

Commissioner Asbate commented on the need for the downtown businesses to help promote those events.

Mayor Hawkins asked what Georgefest will look like when work begins on the downtown project with Ms. Muir responding that parking will probably be the biggest issue. She suggested it might be possible to reserve the fairgrounds to use for parking and offer shuttle service.

Commissioner Lee suggested that a porch band be placed at the Clifford House with Ms. Muir noting that the world's largest rubber duck will be located in Ferran Park during this year's Georgefest. She announced that Duke Energy donated \$10,000 towards Georgefest. She commented on plans to place other events at the Clifford House but it would be difficult to move the Georgefest activities there due to the presence of the giant rubber duck.

Mayor Hawkins asked about possibly expanding the Light Up event with Ms. Muir noting there was some expansion in 2024 into Fountain Green. She stated they had some photo ops and bounce houses for the kids. She added they also had an antique car that drove around playing Christmas carols during the event. She cited other kid-oriented vendors there as well. She stated they are almost outgrowing the park.

Economic Development

Al Latimer, Economic Development Director, announced Grant writer Nadine Mann would be leaving the City to work for Lake County. He indicated they would be looking for a new grant writer in the near future. He added that the president of the Ocala Chamber of Commerce, who houses LEAD (Lake Area Economic Development Marketing and Facilitation Organization) is leaving to go to Charleston, South Carolina. He stated they would continue to work with them as normal.

Mr. Latimer reviewed the Economic Development activities and benefits of each and commented on the need to diversify businesses within the City. He cited the downtown revitalization and commented on how the Coolidge project helped the City to take on more waste from Florida Foods which enabled them to expand. He cited the City's demographics and changes.

Mayor Hawkins questioned the accuracy of the median household income with Mr. Latimer assuring him it was accurate. He then stated that 70% of the City's homes are owner occupied. He cited the Golden Triangle GDP is \$2.5 billion. He stated the leading industries are manufacturing, construction, retail, health care, education, tourism and agriculture. He commented that there are strong companies within the community that have the strength to grow. He commented on Economic Development's efforts to assist those companies. He cited the following economic development activities performed on a regular basis: 1) Research and due diligence; 2) Business development; 3) Business assistance to identify resources to assist with specific issues; 4) Redevelopment; 5) Small business and entrepreneurial hub; 6) Engaging with partners such as Lake Sumter State College and Lake Tech; and 7) Grants development.

Mr. Latimer cited the economic development marketing study which should conclude within the next two months and is being funded by a \$30,000 grant from Duke Energy. He noted that G3 C2 also provided \$10,000 towards that study. He then noted

the targeted industry study which will help identify businesses and assist with diversification of businesses. He then reviewed the land analysis which will consist of reviewing the City-owned properties and providing some recommendations regarding what those properties may be utilized for. He indicated that would be brought to the Commission later in the year.

Mr. Latimer then cited Trident Boats who will begin tour boat operations toward the end of 2025 if all of the infrastructure is in place. He commented on how that will further distinguish the City. He commented on how the City provided assistance to various businesses including RCM Utilities, Florida Food Products, and Quest Fuel.

Mr. Latimer then discussed their redevelopment activities including the former Waterman site, gateway grants, and development of a business growth and sustainability incentive program. He reviewed the benefits being derived from the UCF Business Incubator program. He commented on the City's partnerships with Lake Sumter State College and Lake Tech. He reported on the City's grant development stating that in 2024 the City applied for 16 grants and were awarded half of those for a total of \$563,449. He stated that, additionally, the grants staff also assists with the preparation of the City's legislative appropriation requests which resulted in \$1.5 million awarded for the Coolidge infrastructure project.

Commissioner Asbate requested a breakdown of the grant funds received with Mr. Latimer indicating he could provide that.

Commissioner Lee confirmed the total includes the JAG grants received for the Police Department with Mr. Latimer stating those are applied for every year and then there are cycle grants such as Firehouse Subs that are quarterly. He indicated the City would submit at least for two quarters. He noted they had submitted for a T-Mobile grant last year which they did not receive but they came close so they would be applying again.

The Commission asked if the total included the public safety grant with Mr. Latimer responding affirmatively. He explained that Nadine Mann collaborated with the police and fire personnel to complete the grants. The Commission questioned the next step after Ms. Mann leaves with Mr. Latimer stating they will be rehiring for the position. He explained that Ms. Mann has also been assisting with compliance as well as the submittals.

Mr. Carrino explained there is a difference between grant writing and grant administration. He stated they need to determine what is most appropriate to be done inhouse and what could be outsourced. He noted a company that proposed a retainer relationship. He commented on the state appropriations and stated those have a lot of reporting requirements.

Commissioner Ashcraft noted that the Florida League of Cities has an arm that can assist with grant administration. He commented that the City needs to make sure they have the tools on hand to take advantage of grant opportunities.

Mr. Carrino stated that the City has not been including in their grant submittals any funding for grant administration. He indicated that may help the City get grants but then the City has to absorb that cost.

Commissioner Lee asked if the grant writer also receives a portion of any grant that is awarded or do they only received a salary. It was confirmed that they have a set salary.

Discussion was held regarding whether or not it would be cost effective to outsource grant writing with Mr. Latimer indicating the cost to outsource is more than what would be cost effective. He indicated the salary is currently in the mid-\$40,000 range.

Discussion was held regarding whether or not \$40,000 is sufficient for the position in order to get someone with experience. Discussion was also held regarding hiring a grant administrator or outsourcing the grant writing and the possibility of utilizing more than one company to do the grant writing.

Mr. Carrino explained the City periodically advertises for professional companies for various services. He stated they previously included grant writing in those ads but did not receive any responses. He indicated staff will be reissuing that advertisement specifically for grant services. He noted that most companies specialize in certain types of grants so they may need to obtain multiple companies. He stated that grants administration is different and they could possibly only use one company for that. He indicated staff will need to do some research to identify how to secure the grants and then how to administer them.

Commissioner Ashcraft suggested reaching out to the City's lobbyist with Mr. Carrino noting that they have utilized Fred Fox in the past who helped the City obtain FRDAP and CDBG grants. He explained that he does it at risk with the hope the City would hire him to administer the grants. He added that Sam Brinson has a relationship with the South Florida company.

Further discussion was held regarding how fast they need to move and the benefit to having someone inhouse.

Mr. Latimer reviewed the Downtown and East Town CRA activities including redevelopment agreements and updating the redevelopment plan. He added they continue to work on infrastructure improvements including the seawall, street improvements and wayfinding.

The Commission asked what he needs that he doesn't have, besides a grant writer, with Mr. Latimer responding that he could use some temporary administrative support as he will have to take over the grant writer function until that position is filled. He cited specific activities that would include such as the gateway grants and the downtown incentive program.

Mayor Hawkins asked how long does it take to go through the hiring process once someone is identified with Karen Crouch responding, once identified, about two weeks. The problem is finding the right person.

Mayor Hawkins asked about the salary matrix with Ms. Crouch responding that they have a company that does the salary comparison and indicated they now may have a better idea of what is needed for the grant writer position.

Commissioner Asbate expressed support for outsourcing but noted that companies often want their payment upfront instead of waiting for payment from the grant proceeds.

Development Services

Mike Lane, Development Services Director, explained what the department oversees and provided statistics for the current fiscal year versus previous years. He noted that Eustis is the third largest city in Lake County. He cited the Eustis Village visitors per

year as compared to other areas. He reviewed the City of Eustis retail rankings identified through Placer. He indicated that the area around Eustis Village is underutilized. He commented on the need to get the word out about the City's retail statistics.

Mr. Lane reviewed some of the department's activities and plans for improvement including the implementation of a software program such as GovWell which will streamline the department and make it more efficient. He cited the department's work with Kimley-Horn for revision of the land development regulations and architectural design guidelines. He commented on recommended changes to the landscape requirements including caliper vs. canopy, addition of shrub requirements, tree bank and tree mitigation fund. He cited the need for buffer requirements between buildings and how that could supplement the America in Bloom activities.

Mr. Lane reported on the need for the City to complete the Evaluation and Appraisal Report for the Comprehensive Plan pursuant to state statute. He then reviewed the recommended changes to the "table of uses" and cited recommended changes pertaining to hookah/vapor bar taverns and self-service storage facilities.

Vice Mayor Ashcraft asked about code requirements for maintenance of landscaping with Mr. Lane confirming there are requirements for irrigation and explained why the retailers don't always use or maintain the irrigation.

Commissioner Asbate commented on several code enforcement issues regarding failure to maintain their landscaping. He cited the need to make sure building plans are archived digitally. He then asked Mr. Lane's feelings about the presentation by Mike Goman

Mr. Lane responded that Mr. Goman was on point and agreed there are companies that could be hired to assist City staff. He indicated they would probably have to go through a procurement process which would help get it right.

RECESS: 2:57 P.M. RECONVENE: 3:06 P.M.

Library

Ann Ivey, Library Director, commented on the improvements to the library since joining the Lake County Library System. She announced the library's implementation of an e-book app. She cited the various notices they send out and their new website. She commented on their newest data base of Peterson which provides online practice testing and the positive feedback they have received. She noted there is also an online resume builder as part of it. She indicated they are going to be setting up an AI dedicated computer as well. She commented on how all the new activities are increasing the library's membership.

Ms. Ivey then reviewed plans for upcoming programs including a grant to expand the meeting room space which was awarded to the library. She explained that once the plans are done they will be eligible for two other grants that would award \$1 million for construction. She further explained what those plans would entail.

Ms. Ivey then reported on the revision of the interlocal agreement for the library system and commented on her involvement in that revision. She cited upcoming activities and noted they are publicized through Facebook and Instagram. She stated their circulation was up to 100,000 per year. She emphasized activities they are doing through a variety of partnerships.

Vice Mayor Ashcraft asked if Eustis has the largest circulation in the County with Ms. Ivey indicating that the City ranks 4th but they do have the most available materials. He asked about additional marketing with Ms. Ivey indicating they are also sending flyers to local churches to get circulated to their parishioners. She noted that is only for the bigger events. She indicated they have started using social media blasts as well and added they are working with the new Communications Manager to see how they can make the library more visible.

Mayor Hawkins asked if the City could put a department spotlight in each month's water bill or online.

Commissioner Lee complimented Ms. Ivey on their America in Bloom activities who noted that is part of their partnership with the Ag program. She noted they are hoping to bring back the Wills and Trusts program. She indicated they won't be having tax preparation in 2025 due to the lack of space.

Finance

Lori Carr, Finance Director, explained that Finance is over four divisions: Finance and Accounting, Purchasing, Water Customer Service and Information Technology (IT). She invited Bryce Hale to come up first to discuss IT.

Mr. Hale, IT Director, noted they have doubled the City Hall internet speed and they are moving to eustis.gov at no cost. He announced that IT has moved to the second floor at the Annex. He commented on the installation of three interactive white boards that will be installed at the Police Department, Fire Department and City Hall. He stated they have purchased 55 Toughbooks for PD and EFD. He noted are selling outdated computers to employees for \$10. He announced they have fifty new security cameras being ordered. He stated the purchase order is in process. He indicated they will be installed at Ferran Park, Sunset Park, Eustis PD, Evidence Barn, Community Center, Rec Center, Water Plant, Women's Club and Clifford House.

Mayor Hawkins asked how soon the cameras will be installed with Mr. Hale responding the vendor will begin installation as soon as the check is in their hand. He expressed support for getting the cameras in the park installed prior to Georgefest. He then commented on his five-year dream list. He indicated the City has 30 switches with a third of them needing to be replaced in the next five years. He commented on the possibility of obtaining grants to assist with that. He stated that his five year plan is to get cameras installed at Wastewater, Police Department and the exterior of all City buildings. He then commented on the need for more wireless access points and the need to improve the sound in the Commission Room, Community Building and Women's Club.

Mr. Hale then cited the following needs: 1) upgrading the phone handsets; 2) new servers for City Hall, EPD and the Water Department; 3) upgrade PC's and laptops; 4) upgrade all monitors so all have a minimum of 27" monitors; 5) cleanup wiring closets; and 6) hiring a network administrator. He confirmed they would be addressing the Commission Room sound and would be doing additional training for running the sound system and livestreaming.

Ms. Carr reviewed the Purchasing Division responsibilities and noted that they are working on a succession plan for the division due to the eventual retirement of the current Purchasing Director. She then commented on Water Customer Service and cited their responsibilities including the implementation of the new incentive for utilizing

the electronic billing and online payment. She noted they would have a table at Georgefest to try and publicize that program. She stated they would be implementing new credit card scanners which would allow them to accept payments from ApplePay, GooglePay and the chip reader. She stated they are working with Edmunds to allow online applications.

Mr. Hale explained the new credit card readers would have to be installed wherever they process payments.

Ms. Carr explained they are planning to revise the utility routes to make them more efficient. She stated they are going to discuss with Waste Management them using the same revised utility routes to make the garbage pickup more efficient as well. She indicated they also want to update the utility rates so that they encompass all of the peripheral services as well.

Commissioner Lee asked about credit card surcharges with Ms. Carr indicating there will be a discussion at the first Commission meeting in February. She stated they currently pay a 3% credit card fee which is absorbed for any payments made at Customer Service but it is added at any of the remote locations.

Ms. Carr stated that the City is very fiscally sound with very little debt. She indicated Finance is currently fully staffed. She stated they are looking to revamp the entire budget and streamlining several processes. She noted that the new Asst. Finance Director has found a number of discrepancies in the City's accounting software system; however, they are being resolved. She indicated that the problem seemed to occur when Edmunds reports were dumped into their other accounting system.

Mayor Hawkins asked how long the City has been relying on inaccurate figures with Ms. Carr indicating probably since the program was implemented ten years ago. She explained where the issues were occurring.

Mari Leisen, Assistant Finance Director, explained mostly it was some of the expenditures not tying to the proper department.

Mr. Carrino explained that Edmunds and Gravity do not communicate well. The City has had Edmunds for ten years but Gravity only a few years. He stated they are not continuing with Gravity.

Ms. Carr explained there were no material errors. She commented on how they are trying resolve a number of issues and become more efficient. She then reviewed the other responsibilities within the department including Accounts Payable, Payroll, Budgeting, Risk Management (excluding Workers Comp.). She cited their plans for the next five years including replacing the ERP system or revamp the existing one. She provided a rough estimate of \$1 million for that. She noted there are a number of systems in use throughout the City and stated she would like to bring everything into one system.

Commissioner Asbate asked if there are grants for that with Mr. Hale indicating there is.

Ms. Carr further commented on their work on succession planning, revising the financial policies and documentation of all processes and procedures. She commented on her efforts to get all of the staff more aware of each other's duties and doing more cross training. She indicated one of her staff members is trying to get CGFO certification. She stated her interest in adding a grants compliance and reporting

position. She commented on the amount of paperwork required for a number of the grants and FEMA funding.

Ms. Carr commented on the availability of cybersecurity grants. She noted the ability to seek grants ahead of time based on the five-year CIP. She added that the amount of allowed administrative cost has been increased to 15% for FEMA awards although they are currently 10%. She cited the amount of paperwork required for state and federal awards.

Discussion was held regarding the need for a more comprehensive grants process and how that is being developed.

Human Resources

Karen Crouch, Human Resources Director, noted she was the Benefits Administrator for the first part of the year and cited other issues during the previous fiscal year including the retirement of the previous HR Director. She noted that Jamie Tusing was promoted to HR Coordinator when she was promoted to HR Director. She cited the hiring of Molly Schmidt and Sally Alford.

Ms. Crouch commented on the complexity of the hiring process and reported that in 2024 the City hired 56 fulltime employees, 32 part-time, 17 volunteers and one Commissioner. She cited the costs of hiring new employees. She stated the City has approximately 244 employees. She commented on the amount of paperwork involved whenever there is turnover. She then explained they also maintain the employee benefits, union negotiations, budgeting, ensure the City meets all federal labor requirements, provide employee training, fulfill public records requests, track family medical leave and stage two employee events each year.

Ms. Crouch commented on their goals for 2025 including revising the City's Personnel Rules and Regulations. She noted the need for some new policies to be written and indicated they are currently in negotiations with both labor unions. She indicated they are working with the City Clerk's office regarding the City's board and committee volunteers. She stated their intent to implement local GovU training program provided by Public Risk Management. She commented on the need for additional training for new supervisors including creating a supervisory manual regarding processes and procedures. She stated they want to encourage staff members to take advantage of the Feeling Fit program. She concluded noting they are working to reduce worker's comp. injuries.

Mayor Hawkins asked about the use of interns with Ms. Crouch noting the use of a high school intern by Public Works to do scanning.

Mayor Hawkins asked if the City could expand on the intern program with Ms. Crouch noting the City does have volunteers including those at Parks and Recreation and the Library as well as board members. She indicated they hired 17 volunteers in 2024. She commented they could possibly expand the intern program through UCF. She cited an intern in Development Services and some at the Police Department.

Ms. Crouch commented on the reason for most of the turnovers due to low salaries. She stated most of the City's salaries are not very competitive.

Discussion was held regarding turnover and how competitive the City's total benefit package is.

Mayor Hawkins asked about whether or not the City has a discussion with new employees about financial planning with Ms. Crouch indicating the City has a company it contracts with that does provide financial planning advice.

Ms. Crouch noted that the City does send out benefit summaries annually. She explained you can't really do it for brand new employees due to the need for them to select different benefits regarding insurance.

Discussion was held regarding salary comparison studies and how salaries are determined.

Commissioner Asbate commented on the anticipated salary for a grant writer with Ms. Crouch commenting that the previously cited \$110,000 is more than many of the City's department directors are paid. She indicated that most people that want to work in the public sector know that the salaries aren't as high as the private sector. She indicated that the salary survey that's mailed out may have that position but expressed concern that the City can't compete with the larger cities in south Florida or north Florida.

Mr. Carrino commented on the City's outsourcing of the Building Official position due to not being able to meet the salary expectations. He commented on the need to balance internal equity versus external comparison. He explained the point system only deals with internal equity.

Discussion was held regarding the grant writer position and salary and upcoming projects that would require some grant funding.

Ms. Crouch commented on the need to rework the grant writer job description for point factoring.

Discussion was held regarding the need for two actual positions - one grant writer and one grants administrator and the possibility of outsourcing.

Parks and Recreation

Sam Brinson, Parks and Recreation Director, reviewed the department responsibilities. He commented on his efforts to improve the customer service and teamwork aspects of the department and how he worked to get more buy-in from his staff. He then cited other changes to the department including increasing the summer camp registration, changed the senior program breakfast to include foods beside doughnuts, and implemented a teen program.

Mr. Brinson noted he hired a new Teen Coordinator to facilitate that program. He then cited a number of new athletic programs implemented and various new events. He commented on improvements being made to the City's parks and various buildings. He stated he would like to expand the department to include maintenance of all the City's parks. He confirmed they utilize a checklist for maintenance of all the parks and facilities. He indicated that they would put in a work order for some repairs on the boardwalk and stated he would like to replace the entire boardwalk.

Mr. Brinson stated they have the master plan done for Carver Park which is being reviewed by the City Manager. He added they are still waiting on the cost estimate. He announced he would like to create a Parks and Rec Board. He noted a resident had informed him how they could get inexpensive pole lights for one of the soccer fields. He expressed support for getting community members involved as part of a board. He stated that part of their problem is lack of space and expressed support for the Service

Center being placed back under Parks and Recreation. He indicated he would like to move the youth program to the Service Center and then operate the teen program out of the current space. He commented on the need to improve the community building.

Mr. Brinson indicated he would like to seek accreditation through the National Parks and Recreation Association which will assist them with obtaining additional grants. He explained it does not cost; however, there is a list of things they have to do. He explained representatives from other accredited programs will come to the City and provide advice about what needs to be done before applying for the accreditation. He then commented on the part-time Recreation Aides. He stated he would like to expand the staff to more fulltime positions which would make them more dependable. He commented on the need for more lifeguards. He indicated they can't keep the pool open year round due to the lack of lifeguards. He noted they do have a pool heater which would allow them to keep it open.

Discussion was held regarding pool hours, the lack of sufficient lifeguards and how much the lifeguards are paid.

Mr. Brinson discussed the need for a Parks and Recreation master plan which would be needed for the accreditation. He explained that the only master plan they have is for Carver Park alone.

Discussion was held regarding the cost for a Parks and Recreation master plan with Mr. Brinson indicating that Kimley-Horn quoted \$160,000 for such a plan.

Mr. Brinson commented on the benefits to becoming accredited and the need for regional events.

Discussion was held regarding installing a greenhouse at the community garden and utilization of hydroponics.

Mr. Brinson commented on the possibility of placing a pickleball court where the tennis court is at Carver Park with the addition of lighting. He noted they also are looking at the Service Center for a pickleball court. He indicated that Umatilla is helping with the maintenance of the skate park. He indicated they need to add lights there with him planning to install solar lighting. He added that quotes have already been received and they are going through the purchasing process.

Commissioner Lee asked what he would do with the service center with Mr. Brinson indicating he would put the 5 to 12-year-olds there, which would be closer to the elementary school, and he would build a playground in the open grass area in the back.

Discussion was held regarding whether or not the facility would still be available for rentals. Discussion was held regarding the former American Legion building which was demolished.

Public Works

Rick Gierok, Public Works Director, provided an overview of the responsibilities of the Public Works and Utilities departments. He indicated he has 97 employees and noted that Greg Dobbins is over Utilities. He provided a breakdown of all of his divisions and staff members over each division. He commented on how they have improved the City's fleet of vehicles. He stated they have moved some equipment and people to Parks and Recreation.

Mr. Gierok reported on information received from Rotellus regarding the eastern wastewater plant and how to break out the costs between the plants. He indicated that they will be coming back before the Commission and stated they do not see the losses from the eastern plant as being the same as what was presented during the rate study.

Mr. Gierok reviewed the status of the various capital projects and upcoming projects. He commented on the good models they now have for all of their lines and explained that will facilitate the projects. He reported on the inspections on the various tanks and the infiltration and intrusion testing and repairs. He explained challenges facing Utilities, including PFOS testing, water initiatives, and fluoride treatment. He stated that the City's current water permit requires the fluoridation. He indicated that would remain the same until the Commission directs him to change the permit. He reviewed the status of sidewalks and paving projects, including issues with the concrete-based roads. He commented on the increase in cost for the paving. He explained that they are doing a new PCI study being done that will reprioritize the roads. He cited the Clifford House and America In Bloom projects. He reviewed the planned roadway improvements for 2024-25. He stated the seawall construction would be after Georgefest but before 4th of July.

Mr. Gierok reported on the paving of dirt roads in the City. He explained that the problem with just paving them is they need property for the stormwater ponds to do flood attenuation. He reported on the Corey Rolle Field project. He indicated the stairs would be in the next phase which is in the current fiscal year. He then reviewed some of the future plans including the re-organization of Public Works and succession planning. He explained how he wants to re-organize. He cited the issues with the poured concrete road base streets. He explained what needs to be done on those streets and how it needs to be funded.

Mr. Gierok commented on the aging of his street workforce and cited the number of key employees that will be leaving. He indicated that the City only pays equipment operators \$18.93 per hour and elsewhere they are making over \$30 per hour. He expressed concern regarding how the City will function when they leave and how those positions will be filled.

Commissioner Ashcraft asked about the FDOT maintenance agreement with Mr. Gierok indicating there has been no action on it yet. He indicated he does have funds in the budget for the maintenance; however, FDOT is still doing the maintenance at this time.

Commissioner Lee thanked Mr. Gierok, Greg Dobbins, Michelle Saxman and Sally Mayer for their work on the AIB project.

Commissioner Asbate asked if they are ok with sidewalks and stormwater based on the new master plan with Mr. Gierok responding affirmatively.

Commissioner Asbate asked if the City could construct a parking garage utilizing a subcontractor rather than a developer with Mr. Gierok stating staff obtained some competitive pricing based on a design-build prior to the Atrium proposal. He indicated they have the design package already written and estimated a timeframe of eight months.

The Commission complimented Mr. Gierok and his staff for all of their work and how they save the City money.

Fire Department

Mike Swanson, Fire Chief, commented on the number of structure fires in the current fiscal year. He noted the five-year ISO review would be upcoming. He stated he is in the process of hiring a new Fire Captain and they are a little short on firefighters. He reported on the total calls for 2024 and stated that most of the calls are between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. which results in many times both vehicles responding to calls at the same time. When another call occurs another city or the county has to respond.

Chief Swanson noted that the department no longer has to respond to assisted living/nursing home calls. He indicated that the City's calls pretty much stay the same year round. He explained that the response challenge is the need for a station on the north end. He expressed support for pursuing the public safety facility and emphasized they need a third truck on the road.

The Commission asked about the City taking over a county station to the north with Chief Swanson indicating that would not help the City's ISO. They asked if the City could put a rescue truck on the north side at a County station with Chief Swanson indicating he has not pursued that. He noted they already place the rescue truck somewhere on the north end. He emphasized he needs another full station on the north end. He explained he is indicating the northwest section of the City such as towards Grand Island.

Commissioner Asbate asked the cost for a new fire station with Chief Swanson estimating \$1.2 million. He noted the fire truck has already been ordered. It was noted that the County puts up a mobile home until they can build a station with Chief Swanson stating that would be possible if they could identify a piece of property to put it on. He indicated that the City really needs to identify the property for a fourth station as well before property rates increase further.

Chief Swanson noted that both Tavares and Mount Dora have relocated their stations which has impacted the City's responses as well. He confirmed they would need two or three acres for a fire station only. They would need up to 15 acres for a public safety facility.

Craig Capri, Police Chief, recommended they build the joint public safety facility in the north area where the Fire Department needs it to be.

Commissioner Asbate commented on the City-owned properties and the possibility of either selling those and using the funds to purchase property for the fire station or possibly doing a land swap.

Discussion was held regarding the old Eustis Commerce Park property and the need to identify property for the next fire station.

Chief Swanson indicated he could generate heat maps for review by the Commission. He commented on the auto aid mutual aid software being built into FirstWatch. He then commented on the City's fire command staff. He stated the department has met 100% of the training requirements for the 2024 ISO rating. He reviewed all of his personnel's certifications. He noted the department received four grants for his people to attend paramedic school. He cited various other training they are undergoing. He indicated he would be undertaking the fire inspector duties for a while because of his fire inspector resigning. He explained that is so he can get a better feel for the position before hiring a new person.

Chief Swanson reported on the implementation on new software - GovWell - which allow businesses to pay their fire inspection fees online. He reviewed their inspection statistics. He stated current challenges including staffing and retaining personnel. He commented on union negotiations and succession planning. He cited how personnel don't necessarily want to be promoted. He then commented on the difficulty in obtaining equipment and the possible need to order a new truck before the other one is received due to how long it takes to get a new truck. He announced his firefighters are training on the new truck and once it is completely on the road they will do the wet down, push in, ceremony.

Police Department

Chief Capri commented on the state of the department when he was hired and the number of vacant positions. He explained some changes since then including the addition of school resource officers. He cited the department's technology, addition of radios to the cars, implementation of consolidated dispatch, two new motorcycle units and two new canines.

Chief Capri explained they are full service dogs but they will not be trained for marijuana due to possession of marijuana not being prosecuted by the courts. He stated they will work an 11-hour shift. He expressed the opinion that there will be more grant money provided for police departments. He commented on the security that will be implemented for Georgefest. He noted there are currently two openings for police officers and interviews are scheduled. He commented on the department's community engagement activities and on his efforts to keep the Commission informed about incidents and activities.

Vice Mayor Ashcraft asked about the code enforcement lien collections with Chief Capri stating it's going Ok. He indicated that since EPD took over code enforcement things have improved. Vice Mayor Ashcraft asked about the speed zone enforcement tickets with Chief Capri responding that the first hearing on appeals would occur that month.

Mayor Hawkins asked about the narrowing of the lanes and if there are any issues with it.

Chief Capri commented he has seen some issues and stated his opinion that more accidents will occur at the intersection by City Hall.

Chief Swanson responded that has slowed down the fire trucks and will continue to do so. He explained they have to wait to pull into both lanes since the trucks won't fit in one lane.

Discussion was held regarding the affects of the road narrowing and how it will probably reduce the amount of 18-wheeler traffic. Discussion was also held regarding keeping the public informed about the project.

Chief Capri commented on the need for additional positions and the possibility of adding a new position each year for the next five years.

Mayor Hawkins asked if the Police Department has hot spots and what is his biggest problem with Chief Capri stating they do not have hot spots and noted the reduction in crime statistics. He stated his biggest challenge is quality of life issues such as homelessness and dumping. He commented on his expectations for his personnel and how they respond to incidents.

The Commission complimented Chief Capri on his accessibility and expressed appreciation for his work.

Commissioner Lee complimented all of the department heads on their presentations and the information provided.

Mayor Hawkins complimented Assistant City Manager Miranda Burrowes for her work with the Commission.

Vice Mayor Ashcraft commented on the challenges facing the City most of which boil down to money.

Mr. Carrino thanked everyone for pulling the information together on such short notice.

Commissioner Asbate cited the following items to be worked on as follows: 1) Hiring a consultant; 2) Starting a parking garage; 3) Architectural guidelines in the Central Business District; and 4) Scheduling a follow up workshop by end of February. He expressed support for hiring the consultant by the end of February.

Mayor Hawkins expressed agreement with those items. He commented on the need to move forward as quickly as possible.

Commissioner Asbate suggested discussing a date for a follow-up meeting at the January 16th meeting.

2. Adjournment: 6:10 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 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



MINUTES

City Commission Meeting

6:00 PM – Thursday, January 16, 2025 – City Hall

Invocation: Moment of Silence

Pledge of Allegiance: Commissioner Emily Lee

Call to Order: 6:02 p.m.

Acknowledge of Quorum and Proper Notice

PRESENT: Commissioner Emily Lee, Commissioner George Asbate, Vice Mayor Gary Ashcraft, Mayor Willie Hawkins

ABSENT: Commissioner Michael Holland

1. **Agenda Update**

Miranda Burrowes, Assistant City Manager, stated that there is an updated version of the downtown incentive program on the dais.

2. **Approval of Minutes**

January 2, 2025 City Commission Meeting

Motion made by Vice Mayor Ashcraft, Seconded by Commissioner Lee, to approve the Minutes. The motion passed on the following vote:

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

3. **Presentations**

3.1 Incoming Mayor's Message from Mayor Willie Hawkins

Mayor Willie Hawkins delivered his Incoming Mayor's message to the City Commission and members of the public.

3.2 Library Award Presentation

Ann Ivey, Library Director, explained the new award program for Library staff members they established to recognize each other for kindness and excellence in the day-to-day operations of the library. She stated the program is called the LIBRARY EXCELLENCE AWARD PROGRAM (LEAP) where staff nominate each other every month and Certificates of Achievement are given out at morning meetings to each person who was nominated. She indicated the program was started in May of 2024 and had 81 total nominations. She explained that the staff member with the most certificates would be recognized with a dinner/gift card and acknowledgement by the City Commission. Ms. Ivey presented the first annual award to Carrie Cottrell, Library Assistant II, and noted that Ms. Cottrell was nominated 11 times during the year by her teammates.

Jerry Gunther and Derek Wallace from G3C2 presented their monthly update. He explained they decided to focus on lot three first. He indicated they are basing what they are presenting on the master plan. He stated that they are proposing a mixed use/residential use on half of the lot with parking on the other half. He explained they feel that parking needs to go in first to support what goes on the rest of the three lots. He presented four different elevations showing what has been done in other communities. He stated three were built in downtown areas and have a downtown look to them. He indicated the one different one was for AdventHealth which is a very inexpensive garage which used banners to decorate it that could be changed periodically. He commented that the master plan shows 220 spaces on the three lots which they feel is significantly under what will be needed. He cited what the master plan proposed and the amount of parking that would be needed for those uses which would result in 594 spaces being needed. He added they could reduce that by approximately 15% due to how the parking would be timed based on the uses which would result in a total of 500 spaces.

Mr. Gunther stated the most economical design for the garage would consist of two bays with two parking rows which would be located on the north side of Block 3 and would have 520 spaces if built as planned. He stated this is their biggest deviation from the master plan as they do not feel 220 spaces would be adequate.

The Commission asked about the number of parking levels with Mr. Gunther responding there would be ground level plus four levels. He added the height would be about 45 feet; however, that side of the block is much lower so a lot of it will be built in the ground. He indicated that a three story mixed use building would be on the other side and would hide the garage.

Mr. Gunther explained that the mixed use project and the parking would be done at the same time. He added that residential would be next on block 2 and explained that they needed to get some energy downtown in order to attract a hotel to the downtown area. He stated that within the next few months they will have plans for all three blocks.

The Commission asked about how they determined the amount of parking required with Mr. Gunther responding that it is based on the square footage of the lots.

Derek Wallace reviewed the mixed-use options with apartments and parking garage next to it. He presented renderings and explained that retail would be on the first floor, office space on the second floor and residential on the third floor. He added that it would sit back from the road and there would be some parking in front of the retail space. He noted the possibility of outdoor seating as well. He stated the purpose of the renderings is just to show their concepts to see if they are going in the right direction. He added they are separate buildings with residential on the inside.

The Commission asked if it is possible to surround the parking garage with retail to be more aesthetically pleasing.

Mr. Wallace responded that the parking and residential portions of the design would include first floor as retail use. He added that, at this point, they can probably do just about anything they want. He stated that there is only so much retail they can put in that area due to the amount of time that would be required to find quality retail tenants. He explained how their financing approvals are based on the tenants they have already arranged.

The Commission asked about the number of residential units with Mr. Wallace indicating it currently reflects 80 units.

The Commission then asked about the amount of retail space with Mr. Wallace responding number of tenants would be based on the amount of space each type of tenant requires.

The Commission asked if they should conduct a market study first prior to designing the buildings with Mr. Wallace stating that, at this time, he has only designed a box. A feasibility study will be needed to determine what the retail/office space is designed for.

Mayor Hawkins asked where the entrance to the garage would be located with Mr. Wallace responding that the entrance would be off MacDonald.

Commissioner Asbate asked about the location of the parking garage and expressed concern regarding walkability for the downtown area. He stated his thought that it would be better placed on the outside of the area, not the interior. He expressed support for a market analysis. He asked that future reports be provided sooner so the Commission has the time to review prior to the meeting. It was suggested that they can review what was provided and further discussed the following month. He further expressed support for the City to hire a consultant as soon as possible and emphasized the need for walkability.

Mr. Wallace commented on their need for the market analysis so they can obtain their financing.

The Commission discussed walkability and the location for the garage.

Commissioner Lee asked them to review the contents of the documents provided and then they can discuss it at the next meeting.

Mr. Gunther stated the recommended location for the garage is the furthest east of downtown and is the furthest south where a garage could be placed. He added that eventually they will need additional parking on the north side. He stated that people will not rent an apartment and then want to walk three blocks. He said it would be difficult to get it financed that way.

Further discussion was held regarding the best location for the parking.

Mayor Hawkins asked if the garage would also provide parking for the convention center.

Discussion was held regarding the convention center/community center and the need to make sure they don't compete with each other.

Commissioner Lee asked about the additional sections of the booklet provided.

Mr. Wallace reviewed the various sections of the booklet provided. He indicated they have had discussions with a hotel developer. He stated that the developer should have a feel by April as to whether or not there is an interest to move forward. He added that it would not be easy to get a hotel. He further stated it would be 18 months before they could even start.

Mr. Wallace stated that Tab 4 provides information regarding a firm that sources vendors for the mixed use. He indicated they are a very well respected company and they have expressed interest in bringing vendors to Eustis. He stated the final tab is regarding design guidelines so they have something to start from. He commented that they are unable to proceed until the City gets its consultant so they receive direction from the Commission.

Mayor Hawkins stated that based on previous discussions the hotel and/or convention center was always going to be on Block 1. He further stated they know they will need parking so where else could they put it. He commented on walkability versus the ease people want for parking.

Discussion was held regarding parking versus valet parking, the best location for the garage and the need for parking for the downtown residents. Comments were made about asking the downtown businesses and their employees to not park in the downtown parking spaces. Discussion was held regarding not slowing up the process and the need for a consultant to help them start making some decisions. It was stated that they need to allow G3C2 to continue developing their ideas rather than squashing their ideas.

Discussion was held regarding allowing G3C2 to proceed with their plan so they have a base for the next month. Commissioner Ashcraft noted they would not be meeting with the consultant until the 13th.

Mr. Wallace stated they cannot order the feasibility studies under the current agreement. He said without a pre-development agreement, they can't spend additional funds. He commented on the funds already expended by the company and emphasized the amount of work that goes into the design.

Mr. Gunther asked how soon the City will have a consultant in place with Ms. Burrowes stating that the goal is to have a consultant on board prior to the workshop so they can attend. She added that currently the City Manager is requesting information from potential providers.

Commissioner Ashcraft recommended that G3C2 not do another thing until the City decides what they want to do with the consultant.

Mr. Gunther stated that the parking garage can be relocated anywhere. It was noted that the Mount Dora parking garage is rarely used because it is on the outskirts of downtown.

Commissioner Ashcraft questioned why they would want G3C2 to do anything further until they get the consultant onboard.

Further discussion was held regarding whether or not G3C2 should move forward before the consultant is brought onboard. Concern was expressed regarding the development of the master plan and how it was developed using feasibility studies and public opinion.

Mr. Wallace explained they will have to do a feasibility study and have a concept plan in place in order to get their financing.

Mr. Gunther commented on the high cost of the residential and the expectations of those residents. He emphasized that the parking will have to be in the downtown area.

The Commission further discussed whether or not to allow G3C2 to move forward or to wait until the consultant is chosen and the possibility that the different consultants will have differing opinions.

Commissioner Ashcraft commented that the Commission knows what they want and where and questioned why a consultant is needed.

Mr. Wallace stated that each block has a different feel and emphasized they can't be all done at the same time. He indicated they would be bringing back Block 2 at the next presentation.

Commissioner Ashcraft confirmed their opinion that the hotel cannot be the first thing that's built.

Mr. Gunther commented on the possibility of doing a pre-development agreement for each block individually. He stated that the other blocks will be very similar to the master plan with a hotel and restaurant and convention center on block 1 and most of the residential on block 2.

Mayor Hawkins stated it was a consensus for them to move forward with Mr. Gunther indicating they would continue to work on the project.

RECESS: 7:08 p.m. RECONVENE: 7:15 P.M.

4. Audience to be Heard

Marie Alberti, President and CEO of Lake Eustis Area Chamber of Commerce, announced the monthly Sip and Stroll Sunset event on January 30th with entertainer Mark Houghton in Pocket Park at 6:30 p.m. with Hickory Hill Realty and Property Management sponsoring. She noted the Chamber will be accepting registration from businesses to participate and support each other. She indicated the event will start at the Chamber of Commerce building with a stroll through the downtown. She added the Georgefest Breakfast would be held on February 5th at Lifepoint Church. She highlighted other Georgefest activities and events.

Shekita Hill and Pastor Kelly thanked City Commission for its support with the Martin Luther King Jr. event to be held January 19th at Trinity Church at 4 p.m. with a gospel concert, and the Unity Walk and breakfast on January 20th. She commented on the speeches from young people to be judged and opportunity to recite their speeches on Monday at Ferran Park. She explained the speech program and encouraged participation from the young people.

5. Consent Agenda

5.1 Resolution Number 25-10: Approval of Annual Purchase in Excess of \$100,000

5.2 Resolution Number 25-12: Seventh Addendum to the Amended and Restated Solid Waste And Recycling Collection and Disposal Contract

Motion made by Vice Mayor Ashcraft, Seconded by Commissioner Lee, to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion passed on the following vote:

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

6. Ordinances, Public Hearings, & Quasi Judicial Hearings

6.1 Resolution Number 25-11: Fine Reduction/Release of Lien - 1601 Orange Drive

Sasha Garcia, City Attorney, announced Resolution Number 25-11: A Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Eustis, Florida; providing for a reduction of outstanding code enforcement fines and release of a code enforcement lien recorded against 1601 Orange Drive, upon full payment of the reduced fine.

Eric Martin, Code Enforcement Supervisor, presented the terms of the resolution and explained the proposed reduction is from \$28,750 to \$13,230 with the release of lien once the fine is paid. He stated staff's recommendation for approval.

Commissioner Lee asked why they are recommending a substantial reduction.

Mr. Martin explained the property was the subject of a tax deed sale in December 2023 and at the time the fines were \$95,000. The City received \$66,000 from the tax deed surplus. The \$28,750 was what was not paid from the proceeds. The applicant requested a reduction to zero and the Code Board denied that and recommended the reduction to \$13,230. He confirmed that the new owner has brought the property into compliance and renovated it.

Mayor Hawkins confirmed that the fine was on the old owner and that all the fines accrued under the old owner.

Mr. Martin stated the old owner was Godly Trust. He explained that the lien against the property carried over. He said any liens that are not paid through a tax deed sale are incumbent upon the new owner. He explained that the amount from the tax deed usually is sufficient to pay off the lien so the Commission never sees those.

Craig Capri, Police Chief, expressed concern about trying to get money from an innocent person and Mayor Hawkins agreed.

Attorney Garcia explained this was a non-traditional purchase. It was purchased through a tax deed sale. She indicated that in a traditional sale, they would have done their research and would have satisfied the lien prior to the sale. She explained that it is a buyer beware situation. In this case, the lien was not extinguished through the tax deed sale leaving the new owner responsible for the balance.

Mr. Martin stated that the new owner did request a full waiver which the Board denied. He explained that, in the past, the cases would come before the Commission as a release of lien and would ask to waive any remainder. He stated that the Board felt that the new owner should have done their due diligence. He indicated that the Commission has the ability to waive the remaining fines. He reviewed the history of the violation and how the fines accumulated. He commented on the improvements made to the property by the new owner. He indicated that the City costs totaled approximately \$2500.

Chief Capri expressed concern about the Code Board and support to change to a magistrate process.

Attorney Garcia stated that the Commission has the discretion to accept the recommendation of the Code Board or to vary it however they choose.

Mr. Martin confirmed that staff's recommendation was to waive the fines and not hold the new owner accountable.

Commissioner Asbate asked if he could discuss the case (since he previously served on the Code Enforcement Board) and Attorney Garcia responded he could discuss the case and vote on the issue even though he was on the Board. Commissioner Asbate commented on the Board's feelings on the case.

Chief Capri emphasized his desire for compliance, not getting money.

Commissioner Asbate emphasized the importance for consistency and treating all cases the same.

Mr. Martin explained the new owner cleared the violation and improved the property immediately in order to sell the property. The remaining lien was discovered when the new owner tried to sell the property.

Attorney Garcia explained the tax deed sale occurred because the property taxes were not paid. She stated that the Tax Collector receives the funds from the auction and anything over the amount of the unpaid taxes is paid to anyone who has a valid lien against the property. The City would have been notified of the tax deed sale and would have submitted a request for payment.

Mr. Martin explained the tax deed sale process. He stated, in this case, the City received \$66,578.11 from the auction. He asked if it was possible to change the resolution to drop the fine to zero and authorize the City Clerk to execute a release of lien.

Attorney Garcia indicated that, if the Commission wants to reduce the fine to zero, then they will have to bring it back to a future agenda. She indicated they could table the resolution and bring it back with a full waiver.

Discussion was held regarding changing the City's policy so that future cases are consistent and allowing a full waiver of liens.

Attorney Garcia opened the public hearing at 7:46 p.m.

Alan Paczkowski, chairman of the Code Enforcement Board, stated the new owner did not show up at the meeting where they discussed the application for a waiver. He discussed how the Code Enforcement Board reviews each case to make a determination. He emphasized that the Board members are not there to make money for the City and reviewed the specifics of the case.

Attorney Garcia conducted a straw poll on disposition of the resolution due to the absence of Commissioner Holland. The straw poll results were as follows: Commissioner Lee - in favor of reduction as presented; Commissioner Asbate - in favor of reduction as presented; Commissioner Ashcraft - not in favor as presented, support full waiver; and Mayor Hawkins - not in favor as presented, support full waiver.

Attorney Garcia indicated the Commission could reduce the fine but to completely waive the fine would require rewording the title of the resolution to provide for an elimination of the fine and would require postponement of consideration.

Commissioner Ashcraft suggested reducing the fine to \$100.

Further discussion was held regarding the reduction with Commissioner Lee emphasizing the need to consider each case on a case-by-case basis and Commissioner Asbate emphasizing the need for consistency.

Attorney Garcia recommended postponing the resolution to allow for a full Commission and changing the resolution to either a reduction of the outstanding lien to an amount to be determined by the Commission or for elimination of the lien.

Mayor Hawkins asked that the resolution be postponed to February 20th as he would be absent at the February 6th meeting.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Ashcraft, Seconded by Commissioner Asbate, to postpone Resolution Number 25-11 to the February 20, 2025 agenda.

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

Attorney Garcia suggested that the Commission considered a joint meeting with the Code Enforcement Board to discuss the issues.

Mayor Hawkins noted it was 8:05 p.m. and asked if the rest of the Commission wanted to continue with the agenda. It was a consensus to continue and finish the agenda.

7. Other Business

7.1 New Downtown Business Growth and Economic Sustainability Grant Program

Al Latimer, Economic Development Director, noted that October 3rd staff was asked to develop some ideas to help stimulate business traffic and growth downtown. They were also asked to work with the Chamber of Commerce and they subsequently talked with the downtown businesses. The result was a draft incentive program which was brought back for review by the Commission. Six ideas were presented to the Commission. He presented the

revised Downtown Business Growth and Economic Sustainability Incentive Program with guidelines and application so they could see the total program. He stated there are four grant opportunities proposed as follows: 1) Entertainment Grant; 2) Sidewalk Dining Establishment Assistance Grant, 3) Patrons Tour Grant; and 4) Customized Business Training Grant.

Mr. Latimer reviewed each of the grants, its specifications, maximum award, number of awards per year and total budget.

The Commission asked if one business could receive all of one grant with Mr. Latimer explaining it is limited to one award per business per year.

The Commission asked if the City would approve the entertainment with Mr. Latimer responding that they are recommending that a committee be formed of staff members to review each application. A number of things would be considered including the taste, style of the entertainment, and the timing of the event so it does not conflict with a regular City event.

Mr. Latimer explained that the Pocket Park concerts are envisioned as consisting of middle school, high school and college bands to play in Pocket Park. He added that the Chamber of Commerce could hire a performing arts band to play there as well. He suggested that could become a regular occurrence and confirmed that the entertainment would be scheduled by the business applicant, not the City. He noted the intent is also to help with the development of the various school bands.

The Commission asked about the Patron Tours Grant with Mr. Latimer explaining the tours must originate from outside of the City. He noted that the Chamber of Commerce could also apply for that category.

The Commission recommended that the Sidewalk Dining Assistance Grant be clarified as to what it does and does not cover.

The Commission asked if the downtown merchants are currently taking advantage of the business incubator and what it offers with Mr. Latimer responding that the program is more for a customized training program to assist a specific business with marketing, pricing information, inventory control, etc. He added it could help build their relationship with the incubator.

Commissioner Asbate reported there are about 370 entrepreneurs per month that take advantage of the business incubator. He stated they work with SBCC and can meet with a certified public accountant who will evaluate their issues. He added they also can go to One Million Cups who will provide assistance with a specific problem. He noted that is all for free. He suggested giving Mr. Latimer the flexibility to adjust the funds between the various programs.

Mr. Latimer confirmed that the total budget is \$50,000 but they decided to initially only utilize \$29,000.

The Commission asked if one business could apply for all of the grants with Mr. Latimer responding negatively. The Commission indicated that the restrictions regarding how frequently a business can apply should be included in the program details.

The Commission requested that staff keep statistics on the program and provide updates to the Commission on how well it is working.

Discussion was held regarding whether or not the program would apply throughout the CRA district not just within the Central Business District.

Ms. Burrowes clarified that the funds budgeted are not CRA funds but come from the economic development fund.

Discussion was held regarding budgeting some CRA funds for the program for businesses within the CRA and use the economic development funds within the Central Business District.

8. Future Agenda Items and Comments

8.1 City Commission

Commissioner Ashcraft commented on the Habitat for Humanity presentation at the recent Lake County League of Cities luncheon. He suggested that the City might want to have Habitat for Humanity run the City's housing rehab program. He expressed concern regarding how the current program has been run and stated he just wants to get the most out of the City's funds.

Mayor Hawkins expressed support for having a discussion on that issue.

Commissioner Ashcraft expressed support for having another housing rehab program funded out of the General Fund for people under certain incomes that aren't located within the CRA district.

Commissioner Asbate clarified that Mega Workplace will not charge the City for any events or classes that it holds at Mega Workplace that are for fostering economic growth and collaboration. He suggested that the Commission provide direction to code enforcement that if a property goes to tax deed sale and the City receives a portion of the proceeds due to a code enforcement lien that would be the end of it and would not need to come before the Commission. He asked about consistency in dealing with cases.

Attorney Garcia stated that the Code Enforcement Board is an independent body and cases are considered separately. She stated that their recommendations come to the Commission as an appellate.

Discussion was held regarding the decision being made on a case by case basis and the Code Enforcement Board being an independent body.

8.2 City Manager: None

8.3 City Attorney: None

8.4 Mayor

Mayor Hawkins expressed appreciation for the constructive dialogue during the meeting and stated they are moving in the right direction. He commented on how the meetings probably will be longer due to that. He announced that the Eustis African American Committee would be holding their Sassy Senior Fashion Show on Jan 24th. He added that Parks and Recreation would hold the daddy daughter dance on January 18th. He cited the oath the Commissioners take to assume their positions. He stated that oath means they are to put the City first. He commented on how the Commissioners represent the City and the importance for sworn and unsworn personnel to remember that whatever they do while in a City vehicle reflects on the City. He then announced a comedy show would be held on January 25th at the Hideaway Plaza.

Commissioner Lee asked that the City purchase a new chair for Commissioner Asbate.

Fire Chief Mike Swanson announced the Tri-City Food Drive would be held Saturday, January 25th with drop off at Station 22.

The Commission asked how many fires the department has responded to since the new with Chief Swanson responded there have been at least 15 since January 1st with an average of 1-2 per day.

9. Adjournment: 8:42 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 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

GARY ASHCRAFT
Vice Mayor/Commissioner



City of Eustis

P.O. Drawer 68 • Eustis, Florida 32727-0068 • (352) 483-5430

TO: Eustis City Commission

FROM: Tom Carrino, City Manager

DATE: February 11, 2025

RE: Resolution Number 25-02: Appointing and Designating a Special Magistrate as City's Local Hearing Officer pursuant to Ordinance 24-11 and Chapter 316, Florida Statutes for school zone speed infraction hearings

On February 1, 2024, the City of Eustis (the "City") adopted Ordinance Number 24-11 authorizing the use and implementation of school zone speed detection systems within City limits to promote deterrence of drivers speeding through school zones, and thereby aid in further protecting the health, safety and welfare of students, pedestrians and residents.

Per Ordinance Number 24-11 and Chapter 316, Florida Statutes, the City Commission was required to designate a Local Hearing Officer to conduct proceedings. Per the relevant statutes, the City Commission could appoint its code enforcement board or a special magistrate.

The City Commission approved Resolution 24-10 designating the City's Code Enforcement Board as its Local Hearing Officer for hearings on school zone speed limit infractions enforced through speed detection systems.

Since then, the City Commission, in good faith, determined the appointment of a Special Magistrate to serve as the City's Local Hearing Officer is in the best interest of the City and its residents, respecting the demands already placed on the Code Enforcement Board members.

The City's Code of Ordinance allows for its Code Enforcement Board counsel to act as a Special Magistrate when there is no quorum at a code enforcement hearing. Given this allowance under the City Code, the local hearing officer definition under Florida law and the intent of the City Commission when it appointed the Code Enforcement Board, appointing said counsel as Special Magistrate solely to serve as the Local Hearing Officer in Chapter 316 proceedings is consistent with all applicable law and would be the most seamless designation.

RECOMMENDATION

Approval of Resolution 25-02

ATTACHMENTS

Resolution 25-02

Professional Services Contract

Requesting Department: Eustis Police Department

Prepared By: Sasha Garcia, City Attorney

Reviewed By: Tom Carrino, City Manager

RESOLUTION NUMBER 25-02

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF EUSTIS, FLORIDA, APPOINTING A SPECIAL MAGISTRATE AS THE CITY'S LOCAL HEARING OFFICER PURSUANT TO ORDINANCE 24-11 AND CHAPTER 316, FLORIDA STATUTES; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, on February 1, 2024, the City of Eustis (the "City") adopted Ordinance Number 24-11 authorizing the use and implementation of school zone speed detection systems within City limits, to promote deterrence of drivers speeding through school zones, and thereby aid in further protecting the health, safety and welfare of students, pedestrians and residents; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Ordinance Number 24-11, the City Commission designated its currently appointed Code Enforcement Board to serve as its Local Hearing Officer, having jurisdiction to conduct proceedings in accordance with Chapter 316, Florida Statutes, as such may be amended from time to time; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission, in good faith, has determined the appointment of a Special Magistrate to serve as the City's Local Hearing Officer is in the best interest of the City and its residents, respecting the demands already placed on the Code Enforcement Board members; and

WHEREAS, consistent with the City's Code of Ordinances and Chapter 316, Florida Statutes, the City Commission chooses to appoint counsel for the Code Enforcement Board as Special Magistrate solely to serve as the Local Hearing Officer in Chapter 316 proceedings; and

WHEREAS, said counsel agrees to and wishes to accept the Special Magistrate appointment pursuant to the terms stated in the attached Professional Services Agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the City Commission of the City Eustis, Florida that:

Section 1. Appointment and Designation of Local Hearing Officer. The City Commission of the City of Eustis hereby appoints Matthew C. Frey of Campione & Hackney, P.A. as a Special Magistrate to serve as the City's Local Hearing Officer.

Section 2. City Manager Authorization. The City Manager is hereby authorized to execute the attached Professional Services Agreement between the City and the law firm Campione & Hackney, P.A.

Section 3. Conflict. Any other Resolution or part thereof in conflict with this Resolution or any part hereof is hereby repealed to the extent of the conflict.

Section 4. Severability. It is declared to be the intent of the City Commission of the City of Eustis that, if any section or portion of this Resolution is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional, by a court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct and independent provision, and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions hereof.

Section 5. Effective Date. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

DONE AND ADOPTED in Regular Session of the City Commission of the City of Eustis, Florida, this 11th day of February, 2025.

**CITY COMMISSION OF THE
CITY OF EUSTIS, FLORIDA**

Willie Hawkins
Mayor/Commissioner

ATTEST:

Christine Halloran, City Clerk

CITY OF EUSTIS CERTIFICATION

**STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF LAKE**

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me, by means of physical presence, this 11th day of February, 2025 by Willie Hawkins, Mayor/Commissioner, and Christine Halloran, City Clerk, who are personally known to me.

Notary Public - State of Florida
My Commission Expires:
Notary Serial Number:

CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

This document is approved as to form and legal content for reliance and use by the Eustis City Commission.

City Attorney's Office

Date

CERTIFICATE OF POSTING

The foregoing Resolution Number 25-02 is hereby approved, and I certify that I published the same by posting one copy hereof at City Hall, one copy hereof at the Eustis Memorial Library, and one copy hereof at the Eustis Parks and Recreation Office, all within the corporate limits of the City of Eustis, Lake County, Florida.

Christine Halloran, City Clerk

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT
(Special Magistrate Services)

THIS AGREEMENT (“Agreement”) is entered into by and between the City of Eustis, a Florida municipal corporation (“City”) and Campione & Hackney, P.A., a Florida professional association, authorized to do business in the State of Florida (“Special Magistrate”).

WHEREAS, pursuant to City Ordinance 24-11 and Chapter 316, Florida Statutes, the City is in need of special magistrate services to serve in the capacity of the City’s local hearing officer; and

WHEREAS, the local hearing officer shall conduct hearings on challenged uniform traffic citations for violations of sections 316.1895 and 316.183, Florida Statutes, that are captured by speed detection systems in accordance with section 316.1896, Florida Statutes, as such may be amended from time to time; and

WHEREAS, the Special Magistrate has notified the City of its interest in serving as its local hearing officer for the purposes stated herein; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this Agreement is to set forth certain terms and conditions for the provision of the services to be provided by Special Magistrate to the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the premises and mutual covenants herein contained, the sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged by the parties, the City and Special Magistrate agree as follows:

SECTION 1: INCORPORATION OF RECITALS. The foregoing Recitals are incorporated into this Agreement as true and correct statements.

SECTION 2: SPECIAL MAGISTRATE’S SERVICES. Special Magistrate shall serve as the City’s local hearing officer for uniform traffic citations for violations of sections 316.1895 and 316.183, Florida Statutes, that are captured by speed detection systems in accordance with section 316.1896, Florida Statutes. The City shall coordinate all hearing dates with Special Magistrate. At the conclusion of the hearings, the Special Magistrate shall render an order containing findings of fact, based on the evidence of record, and conclusions of law, and shall order proper relief consistent with the powers granted by Florida law. This is not an exclusive contract. The parties agree that Special Magistrate shall serve in an ex officio capacity if Special Magistrate serves other local governments as a special magistrate, and that such service to other local governments does not create duties inconsistent with serving as the special magistrate to the City.

Special Magistrate has represented to the City that the services to be provided under this Agreement will be performed primarily by Matthew C. Frey, Esq. In the event Attorney Frey is unable to attend, Special Magistrate will first seek to arrange coverage by one of the attorneys employed with Campione & Hackney, P.A. Attorney Frey or someone on his behalf shall provide notice of his unavailability and the name of his replacement as promptly as possible. Such notice shall be provided to the City Manager and City Attorney. For this purpose, email notification is sufficient. In the event the Special Magistrate is unable to provide an attorney to attend a hearing due to sickness, health reason, conflict, or other emergency, the Special Magistrate will propose a qualified attorney and such temporary replacement is subject to prior written approval by the City Attorney.

SECTION 3: INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR RELATIONSHIP.

- a. No relationship of employer or employee is created by this Agreement, it being understood that Special Magistrate will act hereunder as an independent contractor and none of the Special Magistrate's, officers, directors, employees, independent contractors, representatives or agents performing services for Special Magistrate pursuant to this Agreement shall have any claim under this Agreement or otherwise against the City for compensation of any kind under this Agreement. The relationship between the City and Special Magistrate is that of independent contractors, and neither shall be considered a joint venturer, partner, employee, agent, representative or other relationship of the other for any purpose expressly or by implication.
- b. The City and Special Magistrate each for itself, its employees and contractors, agree that upon entering this Agreement, no member of the City Commission, no City employee, no City consultant, or other person, including a respondent or respondent's representative, shall have any ex parte communication with the Special Magistrate concerning any item before the Special Magistrate, or seek to influence, by any means, the outcome of any matter which shall come before the Special Magistrate, except a proper hearing to which all parties have been given proper notice, or have waived such notice. This provision shall not apply to any City employee or contractor assigned to assist the Special Magistrate in the performance of strictly administrative or ministerial duties.

SECTION 4: TERM AND TERMINATION.

- a. **Term.** This Agreement shall be effective on February 11, 2025 (effective date) and shall remain in effect until terminated by either party, as detailed further below.
- b. **Termination.** Either party may terminate this Agreement at any time by giving not less than thirty (30) days prior written notice of termination.
- c. **Effect of Termination.** Termination of this Agreement shall not affect any rights, obligations, and liabilities of the parties arising out of transactions which occurred prior to termination. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the parties acknowledge and agree that this Agreement is subject to budgeting and appropriation by the City of funds sufficient to pay the costs associated herewith in any fiscal year of the City. Notwithstanding anything in this Agreement to the contrary, in the event that no funds are appropriated or budgeted by the City's governing board in any fiscal year to pay the costs associated with the City's obligations under this Agreement, or in the event the funds budgeted or appropriated are, or are estimated by the City to be, insufficient to pay the costs associated with the City's obligations hereunder in any fiscal period, then the City will notify Special Magistrate of such occurrence and either the City or Special Magistrate may terminate this Agreement by notifying the other in writing, which notice shall specify a date of termination no earlier than twenty-four (24) hours after giving of such notice. Termination in accordance with the preceding sentence shall be without penalty or expense to the City of any kind whatsoever. The City shall pay Special Magistrate for all services provided up to the date of termination.

SECTION 5: COMPENSATION.

- a. **Payments.** The City agrees to compensate Special Magistrate for services provided in the amount of One Hundred Ninety-Five Dollars (\$195.00) per hour. Special Magistrate shall not charge for travel time to and from the hearings. There will be a minimum guarantee of two (2) hours for each hearing unless the hearing is cancelled.
- b. **Invoices.** Special Magistrate shall render monthly invoices to the City for services that have been rendered in conformity with this Agreement in the previous month. Each invoice shall contain a detailed description of services and the dates of services. Invoices will normally be paid within thirty (30) days following the City's receipt of the Special Magistrate's invoice. Invoices shall be submitted to: City of Eustis, Attn: City Manager, 10 North Grove Street, Eustis, FL 32726.

SECTION 6: COMPLIANCE. The proceedings and duties of the Special Magistrate hereunder are pursuant to and shall be in accordance with Florida Statutes, the City's Charter and Code of Ordinances. Each of the parties agrees to perform its responsibilities under this Agreement in conformance with all laws, regulations and administrative instructions that relate to the parties' performance of this Agreement.

SECTION 7: GOVERNING LAW, VENUE AND REMEDIES. This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Florida. All legal action necessary to enforce the Agreement will be held in Lake County. No remedy herein conferred upon any party is intended to be exclusive of any other remedy, and each and every such remedy shall be cumulative and shall be in addition to every other remedy given hereunder or now or hereafter existing at law or in equity or by statute or otherwise. No single or partial exercise by any party of any right, power, or remedy hereunder shall preclude any other or further exercise thereof.

SECTION 8: WAIVER OF JURY TRIAL. TO ENCOURAGE PROMPT AND EQUITABLE RESOLUTION OF ANY LITIGATION, EACH PARTY HEREBY WAIVES ITS RIGHTS TO A TRIAL BY JURY IN ANY LITIGATION RELATED TO THIS AGREEMENT.

SECTION 9: AUTHORITY TO PRACTICE. During the term of this Agreement, Special Magistrate will be registered or have applied for registration with the Florida Department of State in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 607, Florida Statutes. Special Magistrates who provide the services under this Agreement must be a member of the Florida Bar and remain in good standing with the Florida Bar during the term of this Agreement. In the event Special Magistrate loses his/her good standing with the Florida Bar or becomes suspended or disbarred, the Special Magistrate shall immediately notify the City and the City may terminate this Agreement. In the event a legal conflict arises between Special Magistrate and any respondent, Special Magistrate shall immediately advise the City of such conflict and shall recuse himself/herself and take no further action in the case.

SECTION 10: PUBLIC RECORDS. Special Magistrate shall comply with Florida's Public Records Act, Chapter 119, Florida Statutes (§119.0701), and, if determined to be acting on behalf of the City as provided under section 119.011(2), Florida Statutes, specifically agrees to:

- (a) Keep and maintain public records required by the City to perform the service.

(b) Upon request from the City's custodian of public records or designee, provide the City with a copy of the requested records or allow the records to be inspected or copied within a reasonable time at a cost that does not exceed the cost provided in Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, or as otherwise provided by law.

(c) Ensure that public records that are exempt or confidential and exempt from public records disclosure requirements are not disclosed except as authorized by law for the duration of this Agreement and following completion of this Agreement if Special Magistrate does not transfer the records to the City.

(d) Upon completion of this Agreement, transfer, at no cost, to the City all public records in possession of Special Magistrate or keep and maintain public records required by the City to perform the service. If Special Magistrate transfers all public records to the City upon completion of the Agreement, Special Magistrate shall destroy any duplicate public records that are exempt or confidential and exempt from public records disclosure requirements. If Special Magistrate keeps and maintains public records upon completion of the Agreement, Special Magistrate shall meet all applicable requirements for retaining public records. All records stored electronically must be provided to the City, upon request from the City's custodian of public records or designee, in a format that is compatible with the information technology systems of the City.

IF SPECIAL MAGISTRATE HAS QUESTIONS REGARDING THE APPLICATION OF CHAPTER 119, FLORIDA STATUTES, TO THE SPECIAL MAGISTRATE'S DUTY TO PROVIDE PUBLIC RECORDS RELATING TO THIS AGREEMENT, CITY'S CUSTODIAN OF RECORDS AT (352) 483-5430 OR CITYCLERK@EUSTIS.ORG OR 10 N. GROVE ST., EUSTIS, FL 32726.

SECTION 11: GENERAL CONDITIONS.

11.1 Assignment. This Agreement shall not be assigned or subcontracted, except with the written consent of the City.

11.2 Headings. The captions utilized in this Agreement are for the purposes of identification only and do not control or affect the meaning or construction of any of the provisions hereof.

11.3 Modification. This Agreement may not be amended, released, discharged, rescinded or abandoned, except by a written instrument duly executed by each of the parties hereto.

11.4 Waiver. The failure of any party hereto at any time to enforce any of the provisions of this Agreement will in no way constitute or be construed as a waiver of such provision or of any other provision hereof, nor in any way affect the validity of, or the right thereafter to enforce, each and every provision of this Agreement.

11.5 Severability. The invalidity or unenforceability of any particular provision of this Agreement shall not affect the other provisions hereof, and this Agreement shall be construed in all respects as if such invalid or unenforceable provisions were omitted.

11.6 Notices. Wherever provision is made in this Agreement for the giving, service or delivery of any notice, statement or other instrument, such notice shall be in writing and shall be deemed to have been duly given, served and delivered, if delivered by hand or mailed by United States registered or certified mail or sent by facsimile, addressed as follows:

If to Special Magistrate:
Campione & Hackney, P.A.
2750 Dora Avenue
Tavares, Florida 32778

If to City:
City Manager
10 North Grove Street
Eustis, FL 32726

Each party hereto may change its mailing address by giving to the other party hereto, by hand delivery, United States registered or certified mail notice of election to change such address.

11.7 Preparation. This Agreement shall not be construed more strongly against either party regardless of who was more responsible for its preparation.

11.8 Entirety of Agreement. This Agreement is intended by the parties hereto to be the final expression of their Agreement, and it constitutes the full and entire understanding between the parties with respect to the subject hereof, notwithstanding any representations, statements, or agreements to the contrary heretofore made.

11.9 Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, and will become effective and binding upon the parties as of the effective date at such time as all the signatories hereto have signed a counterpart of this Agreement.

[Remainder of Page Left Blank]

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have made and executed this Agreement on the respective dates under each signature: City through its City Manager, and by Special Magistrate, through its duly authorized representative.

SPECIAL MAGISTRATE

Campione & Hackney, P.A.

By: _____

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

This ____ day of February, 2025.

CITY

By: _____

Tom Carrino
City Manager

This ____ day of February, 2025.



City of Eustis

P.O. Drawer 68 • Eustis, Florida 32727-0068 • (352) 483-5430

TO: EUSTIS CITY COMMISSION

FROM: Tom Carrino, City Manager

DATE: February 11, 2025

RE: Resolution Number 25-14: Parks & Rec: Pickleball Courts and Basketball Courts

Introduction:

Resolution Number 25-14 approves the installation of 4 pickleball courts, resurfacing of the basketball courts, and installation of basketball goals at Carver Park

Background:

Resolution 25-14: The approved fiscal year 2024-2025 budget includes repairing and resurfacing Carver Park basketball courts and installing new basketball goals. The current courts are cracked, unlevel, and have a fading surface, which is a safety issue. The old basketball goals will be removed and replaced with newer goals. The cost of the project includes addressing all tasks mentioned. The project is in the CIP and on the agenda for consent.

The approved fiscal year 2024-2025 budget also includes installing pickleball courts. The courts will replace the existing tennis court at Cardinal Cove and use the existing foundation to install four new pickleball courts. The project includes washing, repairing, and installing nets and gates to divide the courts into four. No construction is required. The project is in the CIP and on the agenda for consent.

The chosen vendor is CourtCo LLC. Their prices are based on Equalis Group contracts, which can be piggybacked.

<u>Account</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Capital Outlay Machinery and Equipment (Account 001-7320-572-60-64)	\$50,000
Carver Parks Improvement (Account 010-8600-572-60-83)	\$67,7000
Racquet/Tennis/Ball Courts (Account 010-8600-572-60-22)	\$50,000

<u>Project</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Pickleball Court Installation	\$45,590
Basketball Court Resurface and Basketball Goals	\$91,440

Recommended Action:

The administration recommends approval of Resolution Number 25-14.

Policy Implications:

There are no policy requirements.

Alternatives:

Approve Resolution Number 25-14

Deny Resolution Number 25-14

Budget/Staff Impact:

The CIP plan was approved for the fiscal year 2024-2025. No additional staff time will be required.

Prepared By:

Anna Vilches, Parks and Recreation Administrative Assistant

Reviewed By:

Sam Brinson, Parks and Recreation Director

RESOLUTION NUMBER 25-14

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF EUSTIS, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING A PURCHASE IN EXCESS OF \$100,000 FOR THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT TO INSTALL PICKELBALL COURTS AND REPAIR BASKETBALL COURTS ALLOCATED IN THE APPROVED FISCAL YEAR 2024/2025 BUDGET.

WHEREAS, the City of Eustis Parks and Recreation Department’s approved Fiscal Year 2024/25 Budget includes \$167,700.00 in Capital Outlay Machinery and Equipment (Account 001-7320-572-60-64), Carver Parks Improvement (Account 010-8600-572-60-83), and Racquet/Tennis/Ball Courts (Account 010-8600-572-60-22) Funds for basketball goals, resurfacing the basketball courts and installing pickleball courts at Carver Park.

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Department has determined the need to purchase basketball goals, resurface basketball courts, install pickleball courts at an estimated cost of \$137,030.00, and

WHEREAS, the City Purchasing Policies require that the City Commission approve any purchase in excess of \$100,000;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Commission of the City of Eustis, Florida, as follows:

1. The City of Eustis Parks and Recreation Department is hereby authorized to purchase basketball goals, resurface basketball courts, and install pickleball courts at Carver Park at an estimated cost of \$137,030.00 utilizing funds allocated in the Parks and Recreation Department’s approved FY 2024/25 Budget; and
2. The City Manager is hereby authorized to execute any required documents for the approved purchase.

DONE AND RESOLVED, this 11th day of February 2025, in the regular session of the City Commission of the City of Eustis, Lake County, Florida.

CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF EUSTIS, FLORIDA

Willie Hawkins
Mayor/Commissioner

ATTEST:

Christine Halloran, City Clerk

