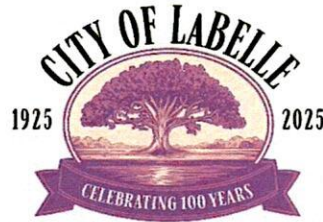


CITY OF LABELLE



MINUTES

Regular Commission Meeting

Thursday, August 13, 2026, at 5:30 PM

LaBelle Commission Chambers
481 West Hickpochee Ave
LaBelle, FL 33975

CITY COMMISSION:

Julie C. Wilkins, Mayor
Jackie Ratica, Vice Mayor
Kevin Holland, Commissioner
Bobbie Spratt, Commissioner
Hugo Vargas, Commissioner

ADMINISTRATION:

Tijauna Warner, MPA, MMC, Deputy City Clerk
Derek Rooney, Esq., City Attorney
Mitchell Wills, Superintendent PW

Minutes

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Wilkins at 5:30 PM.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation by Commissioner Vargas and Pledge of Allegiance lead by Commissioner Spratt.

3. Roll Call

PRESENT

Mayor Julie C. Wilkins

Vice Mayor Jackie Ratica

Commissioner Bobbie Spratt

Commissioner Hugo Vargas

Commissioner Kevin Holland

City Attorney Derek Rooney

City Clerk Tijauna Warner

4. Additions of Emergency Basis From Mayor, Deletions and Approval of Agenda Items

5. Presentations

8B. RESOLUTION 2026-22 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF LABELLE, FLORIDA, ALLOWING FOR A VARIANCE FROM THE FENCE REGULATIONS ESTABLISHED IN THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE SECTION 4-84 FOR A REDISENTIAL PROPERTY WITHIN THE R-1A ZONING DISTRICT AT THE SUBJECT PROPERTY LOCATED AT 471 FORT THOMPSON AVENUE; IN THE CITY OF LABELLE, FLORIDA; PROVIDING FOR INTENT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Derek Rooney read Resolution 2026-22 title into the record.

Patty Kulak gave a brief of Resolution 2026-22.

Public Hearing Opened

No Comments

Public Hearing Closed

Motion made by Commissioner Vargas to approve Resolution 2026-22 with staff recommendation, Seconded by Vice Mayor Ratica. Mayor Wilkins called for the question. Motion passed unanimously.

Voting Yea: Mayor Wilkins, Vice Mayor Ratica, Commissioner Spratt, Commissioner Vargas, Commissioner Holland

6. Consent Agenda Items for Consideration

(Any commissioner or citizen may request to have an item removed from the consent agenda and placed on the regular agenda for further discussion.)

A. Approval of July Check Register

B. Approval of June Minutes:

July 9, 2026 LPA Meeting

July 9, 2026 City Commission Meeting

July 23, 2026 City Commission Budget Workshop

July 23, 2026 City Commission Special Meeting

C. Approval of Staff Reports:

-HCSO- Lt. Allen Hudson

-Fire Department- Chief Brent Stevens

-Building Department- Mark Lynch

-Code Enforcement- Zane Mungillo

D. RCM Lift Station 3, 11, & 18 Proposals

E. FY2026 Audit Engagement

Motion made by Vice Mayor Ratica to approved Consent Items, Seconded by Commissioner Vargas. Mayor Wilkins called for the question. Motion passed unanimously.

Voting Yea: Mayor Wilkins, Vice Mayor Ratica, Commissioner Spratt, Commissioner Vargas, Commissioner Holland

7. Non-Public Hearing Items for Consideration

(Limited to 15 minutes per item: 3-5 minutes optional presentation time with the remaining time for discussion by the Commission)

A. 100 N. Lee Street Tree Removal Permit

City Commission granted a continuance on behalf of the applicant for 100 N. Lee Street Tree Removal Permit.

B. LaBelle Civic Center Deposit Increase

Motion made by Commissioner Vargas to approve increasing the LaBelle Civic Center Deposit Fee to \$1500 and Rental Fee to \$3000. Motion failed due to lack of a second.

Motion made by Commissioner Holland to approve increasing the LaBelle Civic Center Deposit Fee to \$1500 and Rental Fee \$2500. Commissioner Holland and Commissioner Vargas withdrew their motion.

Motion made by Commissioner Spratt to approve increasing the LaBelle Civic Center Deposit Fee to \$2000 and keeping the Rental Fee of \$2500, Seconded by Mayor Wilkins. Mayor Wilkins called for the question. Motion passed 4-1.

Voting Yea: Mayor Wilkins, Vice Mayor Ratica, Commissioner Spratt, Commissioner Holland

Voting Nay: Commissioner Vargas

C. Moratorium on Data Center

A member of the public, Rafael Herrera, addressed the Commission, noting his 20-plus years in information technology and stating that his opposition is rooted in a clear understanding of data centers' environmental and infrastructure impacts, including land clearing, water and power consumption, noise, and permanent landscape changes. He urged the Commission to protect the land, water, and natural character of the community while still possible. A discussion ensued.

Motion made by Commissioner Spratt to direct staff to amend the land development code to include a definition of a data center and establish it as a prohibited use, Seconded by Vice Mayor Ratica. Mayor Wilkins called for the question. A discussion ensued. Motion passed unanimously.

Voting Yea: Mayor Wilkins, Vice Mayor Ratica, Commissioner Spratt, Commissioner Vargas, Commissioner Holland

D. Local Small Business Advisory Committee

Motion made by Commissioner Spratt to have the City Attorney drafted the Ordinance and/or Resolution to create a Local Small Business Advisory Committee, Seconded by Commissioner Vargas. Mayor Wilkins called for the question. A discussion ensued. Motion passed unanimously.

Voting Yea: Mayor Wilkins, Vice Mayor Ratica, Commissioner Spratt, Commissioner Vargas, Commissioner Holland

E. Appointing Residents to Local Planning Agency

Motion made by Vice Mayor Ratica to have the City Attorney draft an Ordinance and/or Resolution to appoint residents to the Local Planning Agency, Seconded by Commissioner Vargas. Mayor Wilkins called for the question. A discussion ensued. Motion passed unanimously.

Voting Yea: Mayor Wilkins, Vice Mayor Ratica, Commissioner Spratt, Commissioner Vargas, Commissioner Holland

F. Caloosa Humane Society Love Unleashed Gala Sponsorship

Motion made by Commissioner Spratt to decline Caloosa Humane Society Love Unleashed Gala Sponsorship Request, Seconded by Commissioner Holland. Mayor Wilkins called for the question. A discussion ensued. Motion passed unanimously.

Voting Yea: Mayor Wilkins, Vice Mayor Ratica, Commissioner Spratt, Commissioner Vargas, Commissioner Holland

G. AOI Lease - Stella Luckey

City Commission directed the City Attorney to draft a lease for Arts of the Inland.

8. Public Hearings and/or Ordinances

- A. RESOLUTION 2026-21 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF LABELLE, FLORIDA, GRANTING A SPECIAL EXCEPTION FROM THE BUSINESS GENERAL (B-2) ZONING DISTRICT FOR A CHILD CARE FACILITY TO BE LOCATED AT 90 HOWE AVENUE, CITY OF LABELLE, FLORIDA; PROVIDING FOR INTENT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Derek Rooney read Resolution 2026-21 title into the record.

Patty Kulak gave a brief description of Resolution 2026-21.

Public Hearing Opened

Comments provide by: Sherri Denning in-favor of Resolution 2026-21

Public Hearing Closed

Motion made by Vice Mayor Ratica to approve Resolution 2026-21, Seconded by Commissioner Spratt. Mayor Wilkins called for the question. A discussion ensued. Motion passed unanimously.

Voting Yea: Mayor Wilkins, Vice Mayor Ratica, Commissioner Spratt, Commissioner Vargas, Commissioner Holland

- C. RESOLUTION 2026-24 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LABELLE, FLORIDA, APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN HENDRY COUNTY AND THE CITY OF LABELLE FOR ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICES FOR UNINCORPORATED EAST HENDRY COUNTY; AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE THE AMENDMENT; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS, SEVERABILITY, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Motion made by Commissioner Spratt to approve Resolution 20206-24, Seconded by Mayor Wilkins. Mayor Wilkins called for the question. Motion passed unanimously.

Voting Yea: Mayor Wilkins, Vice Mayor Ratica, Commissioner Spratt, Commissioner Vargas, Commissioner Holland

- D. RESOLUTION 2026-25 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LABELLE, HENDRY COUNTY, FLORIDA, ESTABLISHING FINAL RATES FOR PROVIDING FIRE PROTECTION, AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
- E. RESOLUTION 2026-26 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LABELLE, HENDRY COUNTY, FLORIDA, ESTABLISHING FINAL RATES FOR PROVIDING POLICE PROTECTION, PROVIDING SEVERABILITY, PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
- F. RESOLUTION 2026-27 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LABELLE, HENDRY COUNTY, FLORIDA, ESTABLISHING FINAL RATES FOR PROVIDING RECREATION FACILITIES, AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
- G. RESOLUTION 2026-28 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LABELLE, HENDRY COUNTY, FLORIDA, ESTABLISHING FINAL RATES FOR PROVIDING STREET LIGHTING, PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Public Hearing Opened for Resolutions 2026-25, 2026-26, 2026-27, and 2026-28.

No Comments

Public Hearing Closed for Resolutions 2026-25, 2026-26, 2026-27, and 2026-28.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Ratica to approved Resolutions 2026-25, 2026-26, 2026-27, and 2026-28, Seconded by Commissioner Spratt. Mayor Wilkins called for the question. Motion passed unanimously.

Voting Yea: Mayor Wilkins, Vice Mayor Ratica, Commissioner Spratt, Commissioner Vargas, Commissioner Holland

- H. ORDINANCE 2026-01 (first reading) AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LABELLE, FLORIDA, PROVIDING FOR A SMALL-SCALE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT TO THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP FOR A 1.58+/--ACRE TRACT GENERALLY LOCATED NORTH AND SOUTH OF WEST YEOMANS AVENUE, NORTH OF WEST HICKPOCHEE AVENUE, AND WEST OF NORTH MAIN STREET; AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE

PLAN DESIGNATION FOR THE PROPERTIES FROM "DOWNTOWN DISTRICT" DESIGNATION TO "COMMERCIAL" DESIGNATION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

- I. ORDINANCE 2026-02 (*first reading*) AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LABELLE, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE CITY OF LABELLE ZONING MAP FOR A 1.58+/-ACRE TRACT GENERALLY LOCATED NORTH AND SOUTH OF WEST YEOMANS AVENUE, NORTH OF WEST HICKPOCHEE AVENUE, AND WEST OF NORTH MAIN STREET, AMENDING THE ZONING DESIGNATION FROM PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD) AND DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT (DBD) ZONING DISTRICT TO PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD) ZONING DISTRICT, PROVIDING FOR IDENTIFICATION OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY; PROVIDING FOR INTENT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

City Planner Kulak announced that the applicant for Ordinance 2026-01 and companion Ordinance 2026-02 has requested a continuance to the September 10, 2026 agenda. Kulak noted that since the agenda was published, she had received written comments from residents for the record, and that the applicant's communications indicated they may be redesigning the site plan in response to public feedback received at prior meetings. City Attorney Rooney advised that, because the hearing was not formally opened, public comment could not be entered into the official record at this meeting; members of the public wishing to comment should plan to attend the rescheduled hearing. The item will be re-advertised.

Patty Kulak advised the applicants for Ordinance 2026-01 and Ordinance 2026-02 requested a continuation which was granted by the City Commission with re-advertisement.

- J. ORDINANCE 2026-09 (*first reading*) AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LABELLE, FLORIDA; AMENDING THE CITY OF LABELLE CODE, CHAPTER 14, ARTICLE V, MUNICIPAL DOCK; AND CREATING SECTION 14-88, PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE MUNICIPAL DOCK; PROVIDING FOR LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS; PROVIDING FOR PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES, ENFORCEMENT, AND PENALTIES; PROVIDING FOR RATIFICATION OF PRIOR ACTIONS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION, SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Derek Rooney read Ordinance 2026-09 title into the record and gave a brief description.

Public Hearing Opened

No Comments

Public Hearing Closed

City Commission consented to move forward to the second reading.

- K. ORDINANCE 2026-10 (*first reading*) AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LABELLE, FLORIDA; AMENDING THE CITY OF LABELLE CODE, CHAPTER 6, FIRE PREVENTION, ARTICLE II, FIRE PREVENTION AND LIFE SAFETY STANDARDS; AMENDING SECTIONS 6-12, CODE ADOPTED; APPLICABILITY, AND 6-13, AMENDMENTS TO FIRE PREVENTION CODE; PROVIDING FOR LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS; PROVIDING FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE CURRENT EDITION OF THE FLORIDA FIRE PREVENTION CODE AND RELATED STANDARDS; PROVIDING FOR RATIFICATION OF PRIOR ACTIONS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION, SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Derek Rooney read Ordinance 2026-10 title into the record and gave a brief description.

Public Hearing Opened

No Comments

Public Hearing Closed

City Commission consented to move forward to the second reading.

9. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

(Limited to 3 minutes per person)

Christina Davidson expressed concerns with congested traffic and trucks on the bridge and drainage. A discussion ensued.

10. City Related Business by Commissioners

A. Hendry County Interlocal Agreement - Vice Mayor Jackie Ratica

Vice Mayor Ratica asked City Attorney Rooney to provide an overview of the city's current status regarding impact fees, as she had received questions from the public on the topic. Rooney provided an extensive explanation distinguishing between impact fee systems and the special assessment system currently employed by the city. He noted that impact fees are most effective in communities experiencing rapid, sustained growth, and that the city given its more moderate pace of new residential construction relies primarily on special assessments, which allow the city to borrow against stable, committed revenue and address infrastructure needs holistically rather than waiting for sufficient permit revenues to accumulate. He noted that for high-growth areas like South LaBelle Village, impact fees may be appropriate, and that the city is actively working with Hendry County and its planning consultants to delineate growth areas and infrastructure responsibilities before formalizing any interlocal impact fee collection agreement.

11. Adjournment

Motion made by Vice Mayor Ratica to adjourn the meeting, Seconded by Commissioner Spratt. Mayor Wilkins called for the question. Motion passed unanimously.

Voting Yea: Mayor Wilkins, Vice Mayor Ratica, Commissioner Spratt, Commissioner Vargas, Commissioner Holland



There being no further business to discuss, Mayor Wilkins adjourned the meeting at 7:28 PM.


Vince Ross, Mayor


ATTEST: Tijauna Warner, MPA, MMC, City Clerk