



**TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES
TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS – 155 F. Road, Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470
Tuesday, May 13, 2025**

TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kane called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE FOLLOWED BY A MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Kane led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Anita Kane, Vice Mayor Margaret Herzog, Councilmember Paul Coleman, Councilmember Lisa El-Ramey, Councilmember Phillis Maniglia (via zoom), Town Manager Francine Ramaglia, Town Attorney Glen Torcivia, Project Coordinator Jeff Kurtz, Public Works Director Richard Gallant, Community Standards Director Caryn Gardner-Young, Public Works Superintendent Craig Lower, and Town Clerk Valerie Oakes were present.

ADDITIONS, DELETIONS AND MODIFICATIONS

Mayor Kane stated there had been confusion regarding the agenda additions prepared by staff following the last meeting. To address concerns, she decided the Council would proceed with the original May 6th agenda, continuing from item no. 16 where the meeting ended. Mayor Kane stated if time permitted, the Council would review the additional items and determine whether to discuss them or move them to the next agenda.

REGULAR AGENDA

16. Consideration of Approval of **Ordinance No. 2025-02** on First Reading: AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES, FLORIDA, AMENDING ARTICLE I “IN GENERAL,” ARTICLE II “IMPROPER DISPOSAL OF WASTE MATERIALS,” AND ARTICLE III “COLLECTION OF WASTE; FRANCHISES AND REGISTRATION OF CONTRACTORS AUTHORIZED,” ALL OF CHAPTER 38 “SOLID WASTE,” OF THE LOXAHATCHEE GROVES CODE OF ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT, SEVERABILITY, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Town Clerk Oakes read the title of Ordinance No. 2025-02 into the record.

Town Manager Ramaglia presented Item No.16.

Public comments received from Jo Siciliano and Virginia Standish. Town Council discussion ensued.

MOTION: COUNCILMEMBER COLEMAN/COUNCILMEMBER EL-RAMEY MOVED TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2025-02 ON THE FIRST READING, WITH THE MODIFICATIONS TO DELETE THE TERM LIVESTOCK WASTE THROUGHOUT ARTICLE A, AND TO STRIKE SECTION E ON PAGE 636 IN ITS ENTIRETY. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (5-0).

17. Discussion on Livestock Waste Non-Exclusive Franchise Program to Replace Registration Program as Required by FS 163.3205

Town Manager Ramaglia introduced Item No. 17.

Public comments received from Mr. Santana, Brett Raflowitz, Ally Daly, Virginia Standish, and Cassie Suchy. Town Council discussion ensued.

By consensus, Council directed staff to meet with the manure haulers and return with proposed standards, taking into consideration the concerns discussed, by the July 1st meeting if possible, with proposed standards reflecting the concerns discussed, for Council to review, amend, or forward to the Town Attorney, and for staff to also provide a current list of haulers operating in or applying for a franchise in the Town, with consideration of posting the list on the Town’s website as a resource page.

MAYOR KANE CALLED FOR A BRIEF RECESS AT 7:30 PM.

RECONVENED TOWN COUNCIL MEETING AT 7:40 PM.

DISCUSSION

18. Discussion on Charter Review Amendments

Town Attorney Torcivia introduced the discussion on Charter Review Amendments.

Public comments received from Manish Sood, Todd McLendon, and Cassie Suchy. Town Council discussion ensued.

By consensus, Council will bring forward two to five names for consideration at the next meeting for the Charter Review Committee, at which time clarification from Mr. Torcivia on the required committee size will be available, allowing Council to decide whether the committee will consist of five, ten, or fifteen members and then proceed accordingly.

Public comments received from Todd McLendon and Cassie Suchy. Town Council discussion ensued.

By consensus, Council directed staff to exclude borrowing power from consideration by the Charter Review Committee.

By consensus, Council directed staff to leave the Town Attorney’s contract execution authority for the Charter Review Committee to review.

Public comments received from Todd McLendon, Virginia Standish, and Cassie Suchy. Town Council discussion ensued.

19. Discussion of Proposed Ordinance Updates to the Unified Land Development Code

Mayor Kane introduced the discussion of Proposed Ordinance Updates to the Unified Land Development Code.

Community Standards Director, Caryn Gardner-Young, agreed to send Council proposed updates after the meeting.

No public comment. Town Council discussion ensued.

20. Discussion of Scheduling Council and Community Strategic Planning

A. Council Policy Action Plan

B. Council Meeting Action Plan

Mayor Kane advised that more information for discussion item no. 20 is listed in the agenda created for the following agenda.

By consensus Town Council directed staff to move forward with engaging Checree Bryant of Actuate Consulting as the lead for the SWOT analysis and requested that staff obtain a formal quote for these services.

Councilmember El-Ramey requested to receive and file a document regarding disciplinary actions received from the Human Resources (HR) manual, and hereto attached as Exhibit A.

21. Discussion of Rural Vista Guidelines

By consensus, Council directed staff to remove Royal Vista, send the item with corrections to the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC), and return it to Council for a first reading at the next meeting once the corrections are confirmed.

TOWN STAFF COMMENTS

Town Manager stated that she had received a list of concerns but found it vague and generic, making detailed responses difficult. She explained that although she had attempted to meet with Councilmember El-Ramey since her candidacy began, no meeting had occurred. Instead, she received emails that were reprimanding or accusatory. She emphasized that email was not the best form of communication and invited Councilmembers and residents to meet with her or staff directly. Ms. Ramaglia noted that her contract included an organizational review process and explained that the Town had consistently used methods such as whiteboards and tallies to set priorities in a fair manner. She acknowledged that the timeliness of agendas could be improved but stated that staff had been working diligently and that the Town's financial performance remained strong. She addressed concerns regarding capital improvements, citing delays due to easement acquisitions, storm recovery efforts, and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) processes, but reported that the Town had secured funding for drainage and mitigation projects. Ms. Ramaglia clarified that solid waste revenues were ahead of budget while expenditures were temporarily elevated due to storm cleanup. She highlighted the expertise of staff, noting that several had qualifications as city managers, attorneys, or planners but chose to serve the Town at lower pay scales out of commitment. She explained that the Town had assumed responsibility for building and code enforcement to improve performance, though challenges remained with certain regulatory processes, and a new bid for development services was being prepared. She emphasized that the Town had moved from chaos to culture, building a committed and professional team environment. She reaffirmed her pride in staff performance, stating that while disagreements may occur, collaboration produces stronger outcomes. She emphasized that punishment was not appropriate for staff, reiterated her willingness to meet with Councilmembers or residents about her contract, and stated that performance should be judged on facts rather than narratives. Ms. Ramaglia noted that the budget had not yet been approved because the legislative session had been extended through June 30th, and that staff and lobbyists would be available to assist in further discussions. She underscored that Town operations were a collective team effort, not the result of any one individual.

Town Attorney had no report.

Public Works Director stated a correction was needed to his quarterly report regarding amnesty days. While the report stated there would be one pickup day in June and one in July, a letter was sent to all residents clarifying that, for this year, the amnesty period will run for the entire month of June. Residents may place vegetative debris at the curb on regular collection days, and the tonnage will be deducted from the Town's contract with Coastal. He explained that this approach

should save the Town money, as last year's two amnesty pickups cost approximately \$24,000, while this year's method is expected to remain below that amount. Mr. Gallant updated Council on upcoming Capital Improvement Projects (CIP).

Town Clerk had no report.

TOWN COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

Councilmember Phillis Maniglia addressed the Council regarding committee membership, noting that members are not kicked off but may be replaced if they fail to attend meetings regularly or do not understand their role. She stated that during Anita's time on the Finance Advisory and Audit Committee (FAAC), the committee was extremely productive, and as a Councilmember she relies on FAAC for accurate information drawn from the auditors' records and staff input. Ms. Maniglia emphasized that committees are advisory in nature and must remain factual and focused. She cautioned that if committee members use meetings to advance personal agendas rather than fulfill their responsibilities, Council should consider appointing replacements, as there are residents willing to serve. She concluded by encouraging Councilmembers to review the Town Charter for clarity on each committee's functions.

Councilmember Lisa El-Ramey stated that, regardless of who serves as Town Manager, the Council has historically failed to establish performance standards and targets for the position. She noted that disciplinary actions are clearly outlined in the Town's HR manual for employees and asserted that similar accountability should apply to the Town Manager. She explained that since running for Council, her goal had been to bring accountability by holding the Town Manager to clear up expectations. She added that she had chosen not to meet privately with the Town Manager, preferring instead to have matters documented in writing or discussed publicly. Councilmember El-Ramey emphasized that she was not uninformed and would welcome clarification if others believed otherwise.

Councilmember Paul Coleman mentioned that the meeting had been much improved compared to the prior one. He emphasized that his purpose in serving the Council was to help the Town move forward, noting that in past years projects were often pursued for limited or individual reasons rather than for the betterment of the community. He explained that while he had long opposed paving roads, he previously stated that if paving were to occur, it should be done according to a plan and with fiscal responsibility in mind. He reiterated that his focus was always on what was best for the Town, not for individual interests, and that this principle had guided his prior public comments as well. Mr. Coleman reflected on his lifelong residency in the community and his involvement since the incorporated effort, noting that the Council was now in a good position to move forward. He acknowledged that progress might sometimes require rethinking prior positions or making difficult decisions but stressed that the goal must remain the Town's overall success and that his guiding principle was nothing but forward from here.

Vice Mayor Margaret Herzog commented that preparing for the agenda had been challenging and at times frustrating and despite reaching out to multiple individuals for direction and guidance, it remained difficult to determine what was expected and how to proceed. She expressed that it was reassuring to learn her frustration was shared by others and emphasized that when Council is tasked with responsibilities, members commit themselves fully. Ms. Herzog stressed the

importance of clarity and efficiency moving forward and noted that time is valuable and should be used effectively.

Mayor Anita Kane noted that staff had prepared additional backup materials for the agenda and requested that Councilmembers hold June 17th, July 15th, or August 19th as potential dates for second meetings during the upcoming budget season. She addressed committee appointments made at the prior meeting, noting that both her appointee and Vice Mayor Herzog's appointee are landowners in Loxahatchee Groves but not residents. She explained that in the past, landowners were allowed to serve on ad hoc committees but not standing committees due to concerns about developers being appointed. However, she suggested reconsidering this policy for two reasons: the ongoing difficulty in recruiting and retaining committee members, and the fact that current rules permit renters but not landowners to serve, which may be inequitable. Ms. Kane stated that both appointees, Peter Lamuto, to the FAAC and Bill Yan, to the Planning & Zoning Board, had agreed to serve and were local landowners, not absentee owners. She requested that the Council either reconsider the policy at the next meeting or, if consensus existed, allow the appointments to stand so that she and Vice Mayor Herzog would not need to identify alternative candidates.

By consensus, the Council agreed to place on the next Consent Agenda the item regarding Council appointments to the Resilient Florida Steering Committee, including consideration of Mayor Kane's appointment and the potential removal of a former Councilmember currently serving.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Council, Councilmember El-Ramey moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:52 PM, which was seconded by Councilmember Coleman and passed unanimously (5-0).

**TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES,
FLORIDA**

ATTEST:

Signed by:
Valerie Oakes
06E744C2F37F4A4...
Town Clerk

Signed by:
Anita Kane
F5AB3D69FF41435...
Mayor Anita Kane, Seat 3

Signed by:
Margaret Herzog
69ECD57738A5448...
Vice Mayor Margaret Herzog, Seat 5

Councilmember Phillis Maniglia, Seat 1
Signed by:
[Signature]
07066C56061A4B9...

Councilmember Lisa El-Ramey, Seat 2
Signed by:
[Signature]
2B235D3F5E51430...
Councilmember Paul T. Coleman II, Seat 4



TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY MANUAL

Chapter 15 – Anti-Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy

The Town does not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation of any of our employees, customers, vendors, suppliers, or independent contractors. Any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation which violates applicable federal, state, or local law, including, but not limited to discrimination or harassment related to same sex harassment or an individual's race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital, veterans or military status, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, or any other protected status in accordance with applicable law is a violation of this policy and will be treated as a disciplinary matter. For these purposes the term "harassment" is based upon any categories protected by law and generally includes category and includes *without limitation*: slurs and any other offensive remarks; jokes other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct; leering, making offensive gestures, display objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters degrading a protected category; sexual advances, propositions, or requests; verbal abuse, graphic verbal commentaries or degrading words used to describe individual's protected category; suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations; or physical conduct, such as touching, assault, battery, impeding, or blocking movements. Concerns about what constitutes harassing or discriminatory behavior should be directed to the HRD or Town Manager.

Violation of this policy will subject an employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. If you feel that you are being discriminated against, harassed, or retaliated against by another employee, you must immediately contact the HRD or the Town Manager. You may be assured that you will not be penalized in any way for reporting a harassment problem in good faith.

All complaints of unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation which are reported to management will be investigated as promptly as possible and corrective action will be taken where warranted. The Town prohibits employees from hindering internal investigations and internal complaint procedures.

All complaints of unlawful harassment, discrimination, or retaliation which are reported as provided herein will be treated with as much confidentiality as possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

Discrimination, harassment, or retaliation of employees in connection with their work by non-employees may also be a violation of this policy. Any employee who experiences harassment by a non-employee, or who observes harassment of an employee by a non-employee must immediately report such discrimination or harassment to the HRD or the Town Manager. Appropriate action will be taken against violation of this policy by any non-employee.

Discrimination or Harassment of our customers or employees of our customers, vendors, suppliers, or independent contractors, by our employees is also strictly prohibited. Such harassment includes sexual advances, offensive verbal or physical conduct based on a protected category, inappropriate comments based on a protected category, and insults based on a protected category. Any such harassment will subject an employee to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.



TOWN OF LOXAHATCHEE GROVES

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY MANUAL

Your notification of the problem is essential. The Town cannot resolve a discrimination or harassment problem without becoming aware of the situation. Therefore, it is your responsibility to bring those kinds of problems to our attention immediately so that the Town can take appropriate steps to correct the problem.

Allegations of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation against the HRD shall be reported to the Town Manager. Allegations of discrimination or harassment against the Town Manager shall be reported to the Town Attorney who shall notify the Town Council. If the Town finds that an employee has violated the Town policy, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including termination of employment.