

# CITY OF WESTLAKE



## Minutes

**City Council Workshop Meeting**  
Tuesday, October 11, 2022, at 6:00 PM

Westlake Council Chambers  
4005 Seminole Pratt Whitney Road  
Westlake, Florida 33470

### **CITY COUNCIL:**

JohnPaul O'Connor, Mayor  
Greg Langowski, Vice Mayor  
Pilar Valle Ron, Council Member – Seat 1  
Julian Martinez, Council Member – Seat 2  
Charlotte Leonard, Council Member – Seat 3

### **CITY STAFF:**

Ken Cassel, City Manager  
Zoie P. Burgess, CMC, City Clerk  
Donald J. Doody, Esq., City Attorney  
Nilsa Zacarias, AICP, Planning and Zoning Director  
Suzanne Dombrowski, P.E., ENV SP, City Engineer

A City Council Workshop meeting of the City Council of the City of Westlake was held on Tuesday, October 11, 2022, at 6:00 PM., at the Westlake Community Center, 4005 Seminole Pratt Whitney Road. Members of the public also participated in the meeting through electronic means and accessed as follows:

1. Join the Webex meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone at the following link:  
<https://cityofwestlake.my.webex.com/>

Meeting ID: 2632 577 7534

Password: hello

2. Participants may also dial in using your phone with any of the following number(s):

United States Toll: +1-408-418-9388

Meeting ID: 2632 577 7534

For participants attending the meeting via WebEx, public comments will be accepted via an electronic comment card, at least 24 hours prior to the public meeting and also acknowledged during the meeting when participants utilize the "raise your hand" feature during the designated time.

Procedures for Public Comment are also provided via the City website:

<https://www.westlakegov.com/cityclerk/page/covid-19-public-meetings>

As a preliminary matter, Ms. Burgess noted that Mayor JohnPaul O'Connor, Vice Mayor Greg Langowski, Councilwoman Pilar Valle Ron, Councilman Julian Martinez, and Councilwoman Charlotte Leonard were present physically constituting a quorum.

Ms. Burgess provided further instruction regarding public comments, noting that comments will be acknowledged by the mayor and accepted at the appropriate times as indicated in the Agenda and those who wish to speak may use the "virtual" hand raise feature.

Ms. Burgess provided the disclaimer that the meeting is being recorded by both voice and video, reminding the audience that microphones are live.

Ms. Burgess further explained that microphones will be muted; audience members have the ability to unmute themselves and anyone that has called in should mute their device.

Ms. Burgess noted that anyone causing a disruption or being inappropriate will be removed from the meeting.

Ms. Burgess reminded Council Members physically present to utilize microphones.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor O'Connor called the City Council Budget Workshop meeting of Tuesday, October 11, 2022, to order at 6:01 PM.

### **ROLL CALL**

Present and constituting a quorum:

Councilwoman Charlotte Leonard  
Councilman Julian Martinez  
Councilwoman Pilar Valle Ron  
Vice Mayor Greg Langowski  
Mayor JohnPaul O'Connor

Also present:

Kenneth Cassel, City Manager  
Donald J. Doody, Esq., City Attorney  
Zoie P. Burgess, CMC City Clerk  
Joseph Berko, Building Official (Via Electronic Media Technology)  
Suzanne Dombrowski, City Engineer  
Nilsa Zacarias, Planning & Zoning Director

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor O'Connor led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **WORKSHOP AGENDA**

#### A. Strategic Visioning (Goals & Objectives) Discussion

Mr. Cassel stated the meeting was initially set as a review process, in which he wanted to remind council we are a unique operation being totally contracted for services. The two charter positions council would have direct impact on are reviewed each month, at every council meeting, when the attorney or himself perform or don't perform and their feedback is taken as a review at that point in time. He clarified this meeting is more of a goals and objectives workshop. Mr. Cassel stated Mr. Koncar previously sent out an email discussing some goals and objectives for council to review and discuss. Mr. Koncar sent out an email to all of council and only received a response from one member and is awaiting feedback from the rest so they can fill in the gaps for the visions of the City. Mr. Cassel discussed certain items that are in the works, processes and how to move items forward. Mr. Cassel summarized the following items to be discussed:

- Working with Mr. Doody on the interlocal agreement to take care of the roads
- Improve Happy Program
- Revision to Sign Codes
- Types of services or provisions for open fields to use for FourthFest, Food Truck events
- Are we moving in the right direction
- How many events does Council want to have
- Need to discuss event needs, land use and insurance

Council discussed the frequency of events and how they affect the HOA's and surrounding city events. The impact of having too many events and what kind of events are wanted. Council discussed their desire to have a Christmas, National Night Out, FourthFest, Food Truck and a 5k run event. Council stated they wanted a minimum of six events per year and go from there and add events as needed.

Mr. Cassel stated council should consider events being held by HOAs, Christ Fellowship Church and other commercial businesses that hold events. Too many events can dilute the events and minimize their impact.

Further Council discussion on event insurance, and other events such as the Golf Cart Parade.

Council discussed parks and the needs and wants for the park such as what buildings and fields they would want at the parks.

Mr. Cassel stated a joint meeting is needed with Seminole Improvement District to discuss the operational structure and what council wants to do with the park.

Council discussed the building department and their failure to issue permits in a timely manner. Mayor O'Connor stated the building departments performance and communication needs to improve. Council instructed the building department to provide a monthly report to council so they can be aware of the changes and issues that arise. Mayor O'Connor also requested 30 questionnaires be sent out to contractors at random to collect information on what they look for in a building department. Council discussed they will all come up with questions and send them to Mr. Cassel so he can create the questionnaire. Further council discussion on ways to improve the building department and what to expect from them.

Ms. Cassel discussed the building department has had a high rate of turnover and they have had a hard time filling vacancies. Mr. Cassel also reminded council the building department is working on implementing an electronic permitting program that will hopefully expedite the process of issuing permits.

Council discussed general development on commercial construction and identified the need for a big box store, for example a Target, Home Depot, or a big box gym.

Mr. Carter commented that he would like council to submit suggestions as to what businesses would be welcomed by the city so that he could include on his radar. Mr. Carter stated a car wash is not something he is looking for as they are small and would not bring much to the city. Mr. Carter suggested a type of warehouse which promotes employment. Mr. Carter also stated the upcoming Town Center will include a fitness complex. Mr. Carter discussed Adventure Park II, which will include golf cart parking, horseshoe, meeting rooms, music, basketball courts and more. Further discussion on city hosting meetings and an agreement with the city would be needed.

Mr. Cassel discussed council also needs to see what they see in three, four, five years in the future for projects and start talking ideas and discuss with the city attorney.

Mayor O'Connor also discussed his desire for the city to have an app and municipal Wi-Fi.

Council discussed public buses to be offered in the future. Mr. Cassel informed them the plan for buses is two years ahead of schedule and hopefully will be seen soon.

Mr. Carter discussed economic outlook and the plan that was previously presented.

Ms. Duhay discussed data analysis and the outlook that was set in 2018 and the projection set for 2038.

Councilwoman Leonard stated she would like a monthly update on the strategic plan in place.

Mr. Cassel also discussed engaging with a grant writing company.

Council discussed the HAPPY Program. Mayor O'Connor requested for rates to be changed so residents could better afford homes.

Mr. Carter mentioned buydowns and affordability and the city was intentionally built around blue-collar families. Mr. Carter offered a rate lock and council to be mindful of value erosion.

Mr. Martinez asked if people were not qualifying for the program as the program has a lot of funds. Mr. Cassel stated the issue is the price of the homes and applicants' liquid assets. Mr. Cassel suggested amending the

requirements for the HAPPY Program to entice others to apply. Council discussed further and suggested social posts to advertise the HAPPY Program.

Public Comment: Ms. Anita Kaplan - 5459 Santa Rosa Lane, Westlake, FL 33470 – Ms. Kaplan stated residents are not aware of the HAPPY Program and offered to distribute flyers to promote the program.

Mayor O'Connor provided a positive note to the city clerk and city attorney.

### **CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS**

A. Councilwoman Charlotte Leonard – Ms. Leonard had no additional comments.

B. Councilman Julian Martinez – Mr. Martinez stated he had no further comments and thanked Mr. Carter for his support.

C. Councilwoman Pilar Valle Ron – Ms. Valle Ron thanked Mr. Carter and all his support. She discussed her appreciation of what is being done for the community.

D. Vice Mayor Greg Langowski – Mr. Langowski wanted to thank city staff and the team that works with the city.

E. Mayor JohnPaul O'Connor – Mr. O'Connor wanted to keep true to the founders of the city. Thanked the city team.

Mr. Carter stated he would like council to modify the opening procedure and include a prayer.

Council stated they loved the idea, and all agreed to incorporate a prayer to city meetings moving forward.

Mr. Doody stated he would like to talk to council individually and explain the challenges this might cause in the future and unintended consequences. He suggested a moment of silence instead and has seen this to prove effective in other municipalities. Including an invocation can trigger an invitation from individuals that council may not find personally adherent to their concept of religion. Mr. Doody stated he will call out to each council member and speak to them individually.

### **CITY ATTORNEY COMMENTS**

Mr. Doody thanked council for their positive comments. Mr. Doody stated he is more than happy to be in a more permanent seat and welcome all legal issues that may come up. Mr. Doody informed council they have a top-notch manager and a great City Clerk's office and states it is a pleasure to work for the city.

### **CITY MANAGER COMMENTS**

Mr. Cassel discussed his appreciation of his staff that work with him.


### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mayor O'Connor called for public comments. Ms. Burgess noted there were no public comment cards received prior to the meeting and gave the virtual audience a moment to comment. There being no comments, the next item followed.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

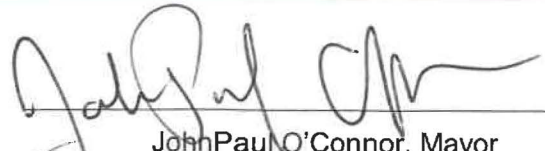
There being no further business, Mayor O'Connor adjourned the meeting at 7:59 PM.

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Zoie F. Burgess, City Clerk

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John Paul O'Connor, Mayor