

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FLORALA HELD DECEMBER 11, 2023 IN THE AUDITORIUM AT FLORALA MUNICIPAL COMPLEX.

Workshop was held from 6:00-6:30 PM for topics of discussion: Healing Tools for Warriors with Penny Pinkham, Executive Director, and day-to-day Operations for City Personnel by Department.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Robbins with the following members present:

Councilwoman Wallace-Patton, Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins, Mayor Robbins. Absent: Councilman Bryan.

The invocation was given by Donna Milner.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given by Lamicha Lewis and all present.

The first item on the Agenda was the approval of the minutes of the November 13, 2023 Council Meeting with the correction of a duplication in the heading and a correction to Mayor title on last page. Councilwoman Inabinett made the motion to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2023 meeting and Councilwoman Franklin seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Abstained: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The second item on the Agenda was the approval of the Special Call meeting minutes of the November 20, 2023 with the correction to the first item regarding the title of Aron Jenkins and a typo on a name. Councilwoman Inabinett made the motion to approve the Special Call minutes of the November 20, 2023 meeting and Councilman Robbins seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton, Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The third item on the Agenda was the approval of the Special Call meeting minutes of the November 28, 2023 with the correction to the Mayor's title on last page. Councilwoman Inabinett made the motion to approve the Special Call minutes of the November 28, 2023 meeting and Councilwoman Franklin seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Abstained: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The fourth item on the Agenda was approval of the accounts payable December 11, 2023 and to pay bills as needed. Councilwoman Inabinett made the motion to approve and Councilwoman Wallace-Patton seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton, Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The fifth item on the Agenda was the report from Sherry Simpson on the library financial award and the community room. Ms. Simpson shared that the Children's Council in early childhood development gets a grant and disburses that among different libraries as a donation to supply books, diapers, wipes, etc. to those with children from 6 months to 5 years old. In order to qualify, one has to attend a story time or a parent-child story time. The goal of the program is to promote early childhood literacy. The community room is available for use to non-profit groups. The meeting room was used for 120 meetings in 2022-23 with 957 people total. Examples of users: mental health group, Florida History Club, Bluegrass practice, and virtual doctor appointments/tele medical meetings with doctors.

The sixth item on the Agenda was the report from Councilwoman Wallace-Patton regarding her trip to Atlanta for the National League of Cities. Multiple cities were there to learn and network with each other regarding funding, the latest grants to help citizens, and there were different vendors set up to offer information to the cities about their services that could help in the different cities. The members were bussed to different places around Atlanta and the next meeting will be held in Tampa, Florida.

The seventh item on the Agenda was Healing Tools for Warriors and the approval of leasing the property at 805 Fir Street to this non-profit organization. This was discussed at the workshop prior to the start of the Council meeting. Councilman Robbins made a motion to approve this lease at \$600 per month for twelve months while other properties that might work for them are checked out, and Councilwoman Inabinett seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton, Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The eighth item of business was the franchise fee request proposal by Councilwoman Wallace-Patton. This item was requested to be tabled by Councilwoman Wallace-Patton until she could gather further information. Councilwoman Wallace-Patton made the motion to table this item and Councilman Inabinett seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton, Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The ninth item on the Agenda was approval of an upgrade distribution for WIFI at the RV park at Lake Jackson. The proposal was made by Assistant Lake Manager, Otis Dixon. The upgrade will be a one-time cost of \$2,482.30. Councilwoman Inabinett made the motion to approve and Councilwoman Franklin seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton, Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The tenth item on the Agenda was approval of an adjustment to the rates charged at the RV park at Lake Jackson. This adjustment proposal was made by Assistant Lake Manager, Otis Dixon. The increase in rates will offset the cost of the upgrade previously approved. Current rates total \$9,515 and proposed increased rates total \$10,400. Councilwoman Wallace-Patton

made the motion to approve and Councilwoman Inabinett seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton, Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The eleventh item on the Agenda was a report on the Winter Clerk Conference in Orange Beach, Alabama from November 29-December 1. Clerk Hendriks reported that the conference allowed the clerks from different cities to network and discuss different issues that cities were having and to hear solutions to those issues. The first guest speaker was speaking on active shooters in the workplace (or out in public) and to have a plan and practice that plan; learned more about Retirement System of Alabama (RSA); the overtime law update, and there was a retirement reception for Lori Lein, our legal contact with Alabama League of Municipalities.

The twelfth item on the Agenda was a report from Betty Strickland for the Christmas Committee. Betty reported that there are many great things going on in the city with the Christmas decorations. The Key Club really enjoyed working with the decorations. There has been a joint effort of all people coming together to make this happen. Rober Price has been around 5th Avenue picking up fallen trees! Next year there will be more lights because the more lights the merrier! The City workers have helped a lot and the Santa shop at the old filling station looks great. The theme for next year is "Winter Wonderland".

The thirteenth item on the Agenda was about vacating City property at the north end of Fifth Street from Dwight Stone Avenue north and to vacate the east most end of Eleventh Avenue from Glenda Ward's property line east to the intersection of Fourth Street. A public hearing will be held at the January 8th City Council meeting. Councilwoman Wallace-Patton made the motion to approve and Councilman Robbins seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton, Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The fourteenth item on the Agenda was approval to surplus kitchen items at old Headstart lunchroom in order to use that space to store Christmas decorations. Items to be surplusd are the sinks and the dishwasher. Councilwoman Franklin made the motion to approve and Councilwoman Inabinett seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton, Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The fifteenth item on the Agenda was introducing the parking lot plan at Lake Jackson. Eric Jordan provided a map of the places that are being considered for more parking. The parking lot plan is in the initial stages of discussion.

The sixteenth item on the Agenda was an update on the repair in the auditorium. An independent insurance adjuster from AMIC was in last week to look at the damage. He will contact a structural engineer and send us a written assessment but it should all be covered

under the previous claim for the roof damage and we should hear from the engineer in a couple of weeks.

The seventeenth item on the Agenda was the HVAC quotes for the new split unit at Florala Family Care. The quotes received were: Gary Strickland for \$8K; Allen Heating and Cooling for \$6,875; Panhandle Heating and Cooling for \$8,180.43. Councilman Robbins made a motion to accept the quote from Allen Heating and Cooling for \$6,975 and the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wallace-Patton.

The eighteenth item on the Agenda was the approval of day to day operations for City personnel by department. Mayor Robbins said this item would be moved to the January 8, 2023 City Council meeting.

The nineteenth item on the Agenda was a correction by Mayor Robbins regarding two Lake Jackson employees, Michael Todd and Dominique Nelson. These two employees were hired as regular, part-time employees as Step 1 laborers, per the Compensation Plan. Both employees will stay at \$11.25 per hour.

The twentieth item on the Agenda was the approval to roll the current CDs at Southern Independent Bank over for another 90 days at the rate of 5.5%, which is the rate from initial opening of these CDs. The CDs are as follows: Rebuild Alabama Gas Tax, GOB Capital Improvement Fund, Florala Gas Tax Fund, Four Cents Gas Tax, and American Rescue Plan. Councilman Robbins made the motion to approve and Councilwoman Wallace-Patton seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton, Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The twenty-first item on the Agenda was an update on the gym rehabilitation. Currently, the city is waiting on the engineer from McKee & Associates to give an update on how the subcontractors are going to shrink the cost of the scope of work to fit into the project budget in combination with the cost of the roof (roof cost \$212K). The Mayor and Operations are also working on how to reduce costs on our side. The project is currently \$368,135.47 over the project budget.

The twenty-second item on the Agenda was hearing from Gary and Lynne Jones regarding parking at Lake Jackson. Gary and Lynne live on Lake Jackson and provided several options for parking via email that was provided to each Council member and the Mayor.

The twenty-third item on the Agenda was approval of power and lights on Wall Avenue. The power for these lights across Wall Avenue is currently being provided by the old court building. The proposal to the Council is to leave the power on and keep the lights across the street, and to replace any bad light bulbs (there are bulbs on hand to do this). Councilwoman Inabinett made the motion to approve and Councilwoman Franklin seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins

called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton, Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The twenty-fourth item on the Agenda was approval of police and fire department taking Santa around town on Christmas Eve. Councilwoman Wallace-Patton made the motion to approve and Councilwoman Inabinett seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton, Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The twenty-fifth item on the Agenda was the opening of the bids received for surplus item dozier. Mayor Robbins opened the first envelope and Clerk Hendriks read the bid. The first bid was from Earnest Phillips for \$2,000. Mayor Robbins opened the second bid and Clerk Hendriks read the bid. The second bid was from Charles Cook for \$1,888. Councilwoman Wallace-Patton made the motion to accept the bid from Earnest Phillips for \$2,000, and Councilwoman Franklin seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton, Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Nays: None. Motion carried.

The twenty-sixth item on the Agenda was the opening of the bids received for surplus item backhoe. There was only one bid received and Mayor Robbins opened the bid. Clerk Hendriks read the bid. The only bid was from Charles Cook for \$1,800. Councilwoman Wallace-Patton made the motion to accept this bid from Charles Cook for \$1,800, and Councilman Robbins seconded the motion. Mayor Robbins called for the vote. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Yeas: Councilwoman Wallace-Patton, Councilwoman Inabinett, Councilwoman Franklin, Councilman Robbins. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Mayor Robbins shared the following points of interest of city and community news: Friends of Lake Jackson has calendars for sale for \$10 each; on December 7, Southeast Alabama Works came for educators workshop, had lunch at The Depot and toured Mojo Sportswear on Caton Road as part of workforce development; thank you to Chamber of Commerce for Shop the Blocks and the Fire department for the parade; multiple businesses said that it was a very busy day for them customer-wise. City Hall will be closing at noon on December 22, offices will be closed on December 25th & 26th. Want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas! The Senior Center is having a Christmas party for the seniors on December 16th at 11 AM and the police are having a party on December 16th at 7 PM. There will be fire truck training at the RJE building, in the parking lot, on December 18-22 and landing zone training at the airport. Mayor and Council was invited to the fire department award ceremony-Mayor and Councilwoman Inabinett attended. Meagan Jordan was awarded Fire Officer of the Year and David Hamilton was awarded Firefighter of the Year. Tyson Stokes and Zack Dorsey were recognized for their 5-year anniversary with the fire department.

District Reports were called for:

Councilwoman Wallace-Patton Ms. Hazel Bryant is waiting on updates regarding the property next door to her property from Chris Jackson regarding the right-of-way. Per Chris, Alabama Power has a fifteen-foot radius around their poles, and they will have to look at this request. No call from the district. A lot of comments have been received on how great the lake looks and why hasn't Otis Dixon been named the interim Lake Manager since he is doing such a great job. Page eleven of the SOP states that no position should be left vacant for more than 60 days. Mayor Robbins stated that the interviews are scheduled for next week for this position. A cemetery list of board members is needed and plan to meet with Joey. Recreation board meets next Monday at 6:30 at the Senior Center.

Councilman Bryan Could not be at the meeting.

Councilwoman Inabinett Otis and Chris already spoke. No complaints from the district. The RV park has had 80% capacity and brought in \$15,778.59 for the month of November. A wonderful job! There are two streetlights out at the fire department, but they have already been reported to Alabama Power.

Councilman Franklin No complaints from the district. Everyone is enjoying all the Christmas lights. Sherry has already covered the library information.

Councilman Robbins No calls from the district. Met more people from the district and need to know when the business cards will be in so that I can hand some out. The concrete by my house has been picked up. Have not spoken with Aron in court yet but there is a judge issue. The police is doing well, and we are in a much better place now than what it was before.

Operations Already spoke about.

Chief McGraw The new cameras are in and working good. Waiting on the tasers and the new police truck looks great!

Next Council meeting is January 8, 2023

Meeting adjourned.

Gayle C. Robbins, Mayor

Gina Hendriks, City Clerk