

**FRUITLAND PARK CITY COMMISSION SPECIAL
MEETING MINUTES
August 30, 2018**

A special meeting of the Fruitland Park City Commission was held at 506 W. Berckman Street, Fruitland Park, Florida 34731 on Thursday, August 30, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor Chris Cheshire, Vice Mayor John L. Gunter, Jr., Commissioners Christopher Bell, Ray Lewis, and Rick Ranize.

Also Present: District 2 Commissioner Candidates Fred Collins and John Mobilian; City Manager Gary La Venia; City Treasurer Jeannine Racine; Captain Erik Luce, Sergeants David Cox and Henry Rains, Executive Assistant Karen McKillips, Police Department; Interim Fire Chief Donald Gilpin, Deputy Fire Chief Tim Yoder, Firefighter Clarence Williams, Fire Department; Public Works Director Dale Bogle; Parks and Recreation Director Michelle Yoder; Community Development Director Tracy Kelley; Human Resources Director Diane Kolcun, and City Clerk Esther B. Coulson.

1. CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

After Mayor Cheshire called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., Captain Luce gave the invocation and Sergeant Rains led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

2. ROLL CALL

At Mayor Cheshire's request, Ms. Coulson called the roll and a quorum was declared present.

3. COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

By unanimous consent, the city commission recessed its meeting at 6:02 p.m. to the Community Redevelopment Agency and reconvened at 6:12 p.m.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Approval of Minutes

On motion of Vice Mayor Gunter, seconded by Commissioner Bell and unanimously carried, the city commission approved the July 12, 2018 regular meeting minutes.

5. REGULAR AGENDA

(a) 2018 Election Status Update Report

Ms. Coulson gave a report on the August 28, 2018 Primary Election where the two highest votes would be placed on the November 6, 2018 election. She explained that she is waiting for the Lake County Canvassing Board to convene at 3:00 p.m. (August 31, 2018) to conduct the official count certificates.

After Commissioner Bell recognized the presence of District 2 Commissioner Candidates Fred Collins and John Mobilian and questioned whether they could give self-introductions, Mayor Cheshire suggested that they ought to be introduced later in the agenda under public comments.

Ms. Coulson explained that the official certified results for the election would be presented at the next meeting.

(b) Resolution 2018-033 Fruitland Park Library Furniture Deposit – FY 2017-18 Budget Amendment

Ms. Geraci-Carver read into the record proposed Resolution 2018-033, the substance of which is as follows:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE 2017/2018 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET PURSUANT TO SEC. 6.07 OF THE CITY CHARTER; TO INCREASE OR DECREASE BUDGETED ITEMS PROVIDING FOR THE AMENDMENT OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018 BUDGET; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Commissioner Lewis voiced his concurrence with Mayor Cheshire's inquiry that the subject funding would be allocated from the capital improvement program.

After discussion, Commissioner Ranize pointed out the \$45,000 increase for the Fruitland Park library equipment where \$275,000 is not included in the backup for this evening's meeting. He questioned what was previously received for furniture from libraries around the county, what is being purchased and what are the plans for the old furniture.

After Mayor Cheshire suggested that the subject item be tabled, Mr. La Venia addressed the plan to find out more information and that a complete list of the order form and the plan would be provided to the city commission.

On motion of Commissioner Lewis, seconded by Commissioner Bell and unanimously carried, the city commission postponed its action to adopt Resolution 2018-033 as previously cited to the next meeting for more information.

(c) Resolution 2018-047 Police Department Bullet Proof Vest – FY 2017-18 Budget Amendment

Ms. Geraci-Carver read into the record proposed Resolution 2018-047, the substance of which is as follows:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE 2017/2018 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET PURSUANT TO SEC. 6.07 OF THE CITY CHARTER; TO INCREASE BUDGET REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES IN THE GENERAL FUND BUDGET PROVIDING FOR THE AMENDMENT OF THE

FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018 BUDGET; AND PROVIDING FOR
AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

After Ms. Racine described the subject item, **a motion was made by Commissioner Lewis, seconded by Vice Mayor Gunter that the city commission adopt Resolution 2018-047 as previously cited.**

Mayor Cheshire called for a roll call vote on the motion and declared it carried unanimously.

(d) Utility Rate Study BESH – Proposal

The city commission considered its action on the utility rate study proposal with Booth Ern Straughan and Hiott Inc. (BESH).

Mr. La Venia referred to the city commission's actions at its August 9, 2018 regular meeting adopting Resolution 2018-028 to conduct a utility rate study as a wastewater agreement with the direction to incorporate all utilities in the same price within the study. He pointed out his recent meeting with Mr. Duane K. Booth, BESH, who agreed to include water, wastewater and stormwater for the same price in the contract.

In response to Mayor Cheshire's inquiry, Ms. Geraci-Carver addressed the need for the city commission to reapprove same.

Answering Commissioner Ranize' concerns on previous occasions on BESH's underestimated charges which subsequently exceeds engineering costs, Mr. La Venia confirmed in response on similar studies that they conducted and verified that he can obtain from them a list of stormwater utilities studies completed for municipalities. He concurred in the affirmative to Commissioner Lewis' inquiry that a contractual arrangement for \$27,000 has been agreed to by BESH whereby no cost overruns would come before the commission for approval to which Vice Mayor Gunter questioned the accuracy of their figures.

Ms. Geraci-Carver, in response to Mayor Cheshire's question, confirmed that such contractual arrangements are typically adopted by resolution.

By unanimous consent and upon Mayor Cheshire's suggestion, the city manager agreed with the city commission's direction to obtain references, supporting documents, and rate revisions from Booth Ern Straughan and Hoitt Inc. for consideration at the next meeting.

(e) Resolution 2018-049 Authorizing City Attorney to Execute the Updated Certificate of Compliance – Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant

Ms. Geraci-Carver read into the record proposed Resolution 2018-049, the substance of which is as follows:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY ATTORNEY TO EXECUTE THE UPDATED CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE REQUIRED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE - OFFICE OF PROGRAMS AS PART OF A REQUEST FOR FUNDS FROM THE EDWARD BYRNE MEMORIAL JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

After Mr. La Venia explained the subject item, **a motion was made by Commissioner Bell, seconded by Commissioner Lewis that the city commission adopt Resolution 2018-049 as previously cited.**

Mayor Cheshire called for a roll call vote on the motion and declared it carried unanimously.

(f) Line-of-Credit Status Update Report

The city commission considered its action to authorize staff to proceed with the line of credit for various projects related to Hurricane Irma clean-up.

Ms. Racine relayed the suggestion made at the city commission's August 9, 2018 regular meeting to apply for a loan on the line of credit and outlined United Southern Bank's (USB's) proposed terms on the original request of \$500,000 reduced to \$350,000 for the United States Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as it related to Hurricane Irma expenses used as a collateral. She explained that there would be no initial cost if the city does not borrow; however, a 4.5 percent payment would be required on any amount drawn and any FEMA reimbursement payment received would need to be paid down on the 24 months line of credit.

Ms. Racine responded to Commissioner Lewis' inquiry that no mention was made on the requirement for the city to collateralize by establishing a deposit and indicated that the city had adequate funds in the account which was not needed. Commissioner Lewis recognized the expenses associated with the aftermath of Hurricane Irma and the city commission's prediction of a shortfall in its operating funds, the bills exceeding the revenue in the last quarter of the calendar year and the city not having the means to pay the bills positioning it to utilize the line of credit which would be paid off with the funds anticipated from FEMA.

At Mayor Cheshire's request, Commissioner Lewis explained the reason for the surplus and reiterated previous remarks from Ms. Racine and McDirmit Davis (certified public accountants retained by the city) who emphasized the need for the city to have three to six months unrestricted general reserve funds as it is woefully inadequate; that the city be prepared for emergencies and budget for surplus funding. He recognized the statements that there are adequate funds in the bank; however, he cited reasons for utilizing the funds in certain ways.

In response to Ms. Racine's statements for three months in reserves of \$1 million worth of expenses to be conservative, Commissioner Bell indicated that said amount is low in comparison to the six months recommended by the previous CPA including McDirmit Davis.

Ms. Racine voiced her concurrence with Vice Mayor Gunter's recollection that when he was elected as a commissioner on November 2, 1993, the city had six months in reserves. He gave an historical overview on the attempts made over the years to keep taxes low with reserves maintained and recognized the vacant properties at that time and how employees remained employed.

By unanimous consent the city commission directed the city treasurer to proceed in applying for a loan on the line of credit for various projects related to Hurricane Irma clean-up.

(g) FEMA Federally Funded Subaward and Grant – Contract 20301 - Operating Period 2, Category A – Hurricane Irma

The city commission considered the acceptance of the United States Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) federally-funded subaward and grant agreement for Hurricane Irma to the State of Florida Division of Emergency Management.

Mr. La Venia gave an overview of the first of two contracts -- of \$170,000 with the anticipation of receiving the second agreement in the future to cover the remaining funds -- from FEMA for approximately \$220,000 which would total \$380,000 and described the process before receiving the award from the state. He addressed the need for the city commission to reexamine same again.

After discussion, Mr. La Venia reported on the state's identification of more funds, in addition to the application that was previously submitted where the award amount requested was increased.

Following further discussion and **on motion of Commissioner Lewis, seconded by Commissioner Bell and unanimously carried, the city commission approved the United States Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency's federally-funded subaward and grant agreement as previously cited with the modification of \$45,259.01.**

(h) Year-to-Date Budget Financial Report - July 2018

Ms. Racine reviewed the year-to-date budget financial report of July 2018 reflecting revenues and expenses.

On motion of Commissioner Lewis, seconded by Commissioner Bell and unanimously carried, the city commission accepted the financial report as previously cited.

By unanimous consent, Mayor Cheshire opened the public hearing for this evening's meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING

(i) First Reading - Resolution 2018-046 – Lake EMS Assignment ILA

After Ms. Geraci-Carver read into the record proposed Resolution 2018-046, the substance of which is as follows, Mayor Cheshire called for interested participants to be heard:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK, FLORIDA, APPROVING ASSIGNMENT OF THE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENTS BETWEEN LAKE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES, INC. AND CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK TO LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (The second reading will be held on September 13, 2018.)

After discussion, **a motion was made by Commissioner Bell and seconded by Commissioner Lewis that the city commission adopt Resolution 2018-046 previously cited.**

There being no comments from the public and **by unanimous consent, Mayor Cheshire closed the public hearing.**

Mayor Cheshire called for a roll call vote on the motion and declared it carried unanimously.

(j) Second Reading and Public Hearing - Ordinance 2018-015 – Water Rates Increase

It now being the time advertised to hold a public hearing to consider the adoption of proposed Resolution 2018-015, Ms. Geraci-Carver read into the record the following title and Mayor Cheshire called for interested participants to be heard:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 50, SECTION 50.30(A), (B), (D), OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES TO PROVIDE FOR AN INCREASE IN WATER RATES BASED ON THE CPI; TO BE EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2018; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE OF ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (The first reading was held on August 9, 2018.)

After discussion, and **on motion of Vice Mayor Gunter, seconded by Commissioner Lewis and unanimously carried, the city commission postponed its action to enact proposed Ordinance 2018-015 to the October 10, 2018 regular meeting at the city treasurer's request.**

(k) Second Reading and Public Hearing - Ordinance 2018-016 – Water and Wastewater Rates Increase

It now being the time advertised to hold a public hearing to consider the enactment of proposed Ordinance 2018-016, Ms. Geraci-Carver read into the record the following title and Mayor Cheshire called for interested participants to be heard:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 99, SECTION 99.60 (B) OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES TO PROVIDE FOR AN INCREASE IN WASTERWATER RATES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION IN THE CODE OF ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (The first reading was held on August 9, 2018.)

After Mses. Racine and Geraci-Carver confirmed that the agenda title should reflect *wastewater* and not *water and wastewater*, **a motion was made by Commissioner Lewis and seconded by Commissioner Bell that the city commission enact Ordinance 2018-016 to become effective beginning October 1, 2018 as provided by law.**

There being no one from the public and **by unanimous consent, Mayor Cheshire closed the public hearing.**

Mayor Cheshire called for a roll call vote on the motion and declared it carried unanimously.

END OF PUBLIC HEARING

6. OFFICERS' REPORTS

(a) City Manager

i. FDOT US Hwy 27/441 Landscaping Improvements Proposal - JPA MOA

Mr. La Venia reviewed the State of Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) proposal regarding the US Highway 27/441 Landscaping Improvements and referred to FDOT's previous highway maintenance agreement (from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to Lake Ella Drive) for \$14,202 per annum. He outlined the tentative activities for public works personnel – for the duration of two days, at \$33,057.10 per annum (warmer months twice and cooler months, depending on grass growth, once a

month) – and described the current equipment and the type of service to be performed.

After Mayor Cheshire questioned the availability of FDOT grants and Mr. La Venia outlined in perpetuity the city’s responsibility to maintain the roadway, Vice Mayor Gunter referred to the August 29, 2018 Daily Commercial article entitled; “Leesburg, FDOT to add landscaping to Dixie Avenue” and recognized the \$350,000 landscape grant funds for the project. (A copy of the article is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.)

Commissioner Ranize addressed the overhanging trees, the use of the aerial truck and the articulated modem equipment; noted the concerns relating to sidewalk and the likely expense; pointed out the trash pickup which is not the city’s responsibility and identified the drywall situated for a month on CR 466A which has not been removed. He relayed the previous request for additional public works staff and the subsequent permission to rescind same which he believed was not carried out.

Commissioner Ranize recalled his previous references regarding the need for landscape maintenance improvements on US Hwy 27/441; reported on his observations, earlier this day, of a private AAA Mowing Service, a private company who contracted with the Department of Corrections; noted the use of inmate work crews to edge the roadway and questioned whether the police department could review implementing same periodically.

Commissioner Ranize expressed his appreciation to business owners for their efforts in performing landscape maintenance services in front of their properties and agreed that the \$33,000 would help and that the city would be able to afford implementing the remainder.

Following further discussion and in response to Commissioner Bell’s concurrence on the city commission’s desire to proceed, Ms. Geraci-Carver indicated that a resolution and interlocal agreement would be required for adoption.

After discussion and **by unanimous consent, the city commission authorized staff to proceed with the State of Florida Department of Transportation US Hwy 27/441 Landscaping Improvements joint participation agreement.**

ii. **Gardenia Park Swimming Pool Heater**

Mr. La Venia addressed the \$200 received in donations for a pool heater, relayed the willingness of Infinity Fitness and Spa Inc. to obtain same, and conveyed his conversations with Ms. Yoder on its satisfactory condition.

Mr. La Venia conveyed Titan Swim Team's willingness to donate the swimming pool cover and reported on the potential installation of the natural gas at no cost until it is utilized. He referred to his previous conversations with the swimming pool representatives on the reduction of chemical costs which the city will assume if the pool is heated; recognized the team's \$250 monthly cost to cover same and noted the specific purpose of the pool remaining open if there is a need for swim lessons, swim team practice and water aerobics fitness classes. Mr. La Venia pointed out staff's recommendation to offer \$500 to the City of Leesburg for the swimming pool heater and use the \$200 donation received earmarked for the installation.

In response to Commissioner Bell's recollection of the \$2,000 cost, Ms. Yoder conveyed her previous conversations with Mr. Terry W. Miller, Pool Control Inc., who accompanied her to the City of Leesburg before demolishing the Venetian Gardens Swimming Pool Facility and indicated that he would offer no more than \$500 for the 15-year-old heater which is in favorable condition. She acknowledged the total installation cost of \$2,000, if the city's offer is accepted.

Commissioner Ranize pointed out the June 24, 2018 Daily Commercial article entitled "City Pool Reemerges as a Possibility for Leesburg" and referred to its budget of more than \$2.2 million for a swimming pool which could be constructed in two years and addressed the likelihood of the city losing the swim team.

After much discussion and **on motion of Commissioner Bell, seconded by Commissioner Lewis, the city commission approved the offer of \$500 to the City of Leesburg for the swimming pool heater.**

(b) City Attorney

i. Notice of Claim – James Hartson

Ms. Geraci-Carver explained that there is no notice of claim for James Hartson.

ii. Notice of Claim – Larry Odum

Ms. Geraci-Carver explained that there is no notice of claim for Larry Odum.

iii. FRS Matters

Earlier in the meeting, Mr. La Venia announced that Chief Fewless is compelled by the State of Florida Department of Management Services (DMS) Florida Retirement System (FRS) to retire which would become effective Friday, August 31, 2018. In the meantime, he gave reasons why he would be appointing Captain Luce as the interim police chief, a decision

based on recent discussions with Chief Fewless as it related with his experience and the confidence they had with him.

Mr. La Venia identified the FRS' appeals process available for Chief Fewless who intends to pursue same with the assistance provided by the city. Along with Ms. Geraci-Carver, Mr. La Venia reported on his initiation and recent discussions with Mr. Glenn E. Thomas, Attorney with Lewis, Longman & Walker, P.A., who specializes in the subject matter; due to the potential expenditure he has which is limited to \$4,000 and requested the city commission's consideration to exceed same in order to proceed with the FRS' appeals process to which Ms. Geraci-Carver advised against delving into same.

In response to Commissioner Ranize' inquiry and after Mr. La Venia relayed FRS' potential impact on the city; Ms. Geraci-Carver explained that an FRS retiree is prohibited from being employed by another FRS participating agency for a period of six months or a year (regardless of the FRS employee's retirement status). She recognized the violation of FRS' rules where they requested that Chief Fewless repay back to them some of the funds (including the contributions that the city should have been making on his behalf) and explained that the subject issue goes back to 2011 when Chief Fewless participated in the Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP), a five-year period.

Ms. Geraci-Carver explained that Mr. Thomas has been retained; indicated that they are waiting for Chief Fewless to receive documents on FRS' appeals processes which would be addressed with Mr. Thomas who intend to review how the issue would be rectified. She anticipated that more information would be available by the next meeting.

After Commissioner Ranize referred to Mr. La Venia's August 29, 2018 memorandum regarding the potential contractual arrangement for Mr. Fewless, Mr. La Venia relayed the question posed on permitting same as notification was made that other municipalities were utilizing a similar procedure. He conveyed Mr. Thomas' remarks on August 28, 2018 who, in agreement, indicated that such arrangements would not be immediate; as it would need to be implemented through a third party and reviewed and approved by FRS before city commission action to which Ms. Geraci-Carver noted the uncertainty.

Mr. La Venia responded to several questions posed by Commissioner Ranize that the issue originated as a result of a regular IRS audit revealing Chief Fewless' name and IRS subsequent contact to him.

After Commissioner Ranize pointed out his conversations with Ms. Racine earlier this week where it was revealed that the city's part-time employees,

according to the former human resources administrator, were not entitled to be included in FRS' retirement coverage to which Ms. Racine interjected was discovered in DMS Inspector General's Office/Retirement Compliance Audit. As part-time employees are eligible for coverage and the city was going to be penalized for the exclusion, she explained that the city was required to comply by making the adjustments which has already been implemented.

In agreeing with Ms. Racine's comments, Mr. La Venia explained that as he was being employed at the time when the city joined FRS on November 20, 2014, he was informed by the former city treasurer that part-time employees were not required to join FRS which was incorrect information.

In response to a question raised by Commissioner Ranize on the identification of the funding source for part-time employees who could have been included in the FRS and the concerns on the city commission being informed at this evening's meeting on paying back the portion to FRS, Ms. Racine concurred in the affirmative to Mayor Cheshire's request that she would report back to the city commission on same.

Commissioner Lewis agreed with Commissioner Ranize' concerns on the city's incurred liability after joining the FRS; recalled the statements from former Certified Public Accountant (CPA) -- Mr. W. Chet Ross, Shumacker, Johnston & Ross PA, during his review of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the year ended September 30, 2015 – on the city's proportionate share of the FRS net pension liability to be \$273,043 and addressed the current findings shared by the present CPA retained by the city, McDirmit Davis & Company, on same for year ended September 30, 2017 which increased to approximately \$1.6 million.

Commissioner Lewis recognized the city's portion of the pension plan has not been funded appropriately and acknowledged FRS' findings, of which the city was unaware at the time, on its a portion of liability and the amount in question assigned to the city.

Mayor Cheshire referred to the favorable introduction of the FRS plan to the city commission and requested that the city commission consider during its FY 2019/20 budget cycle terminating the FRS plan.

After discussion, Commissioner Ranize gave his prediction on the city going into debt if it is required to pay back Chief Fewless his retirement for the last three years and questioned whether he elected, in participating under the Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP), to receive the lump sum benefits to which Mayor Cheshire advised that he speak with Ms. Geraci-Carver.

After Mr. La Venia responded in the affirmative to Commissioner Ranize's question that staff travelled to Tallahassee to receive FRS training, he further recommended that staff be sent to review FRS in its entirety

Following further discussion, and **by unanimous consent, the city commission agreed with Mayor Cheshire's direction to the city treasurer to provide more information on the repayment to the Florida Retirement System at the next meeting.**

Commissioner Ranize recalled the paperwork he completed when he retired from a law enforcement agency and questioned the city's records prior to retaining Chief Fewless to which Mr. La Venia indicated would need to be obtained from FRS.

After Mayor Cheshire restated the direction for staff to provide more information back to the city commission at its next meeting, Ms. Geraci-Carver and Mr. La Venia concurred in the affirmative. Mayor Cheshire requested that Ms. Geraci-Carver be contacted if there are any more questions in this regard.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Don Brosick, Village of Fruitland Park (Pine Hills resident), questioned the total budget (expenditures, shortfalls and gains) and whether they could be reviewed for the Fruitland Park Library and the water and wastewater treatment plant (WWWTP).

After Ms. Racine referred to the reports provided with the supplemental papers, Ms. Coulson explained that she will provide Mr. Brosick with her contact information and identify where said budget relating to his concerns could be located on the website.

Ms. Rita Ranize, City of Fruitland Park resident, voiced concerns on the events that occurred with Chief Fewless. She questioned the city's knowledge of same and the impact caused to the police department staff; addressed her confidence in Captain Luce and indicated that the city is liable.

Mr. Fred Collins, Villages of Fruitland Park (Pine Ridge) resident and District 2 Candidate, introduced himself to the city commission by highlighting his background and experience primarily in contract negotiations. He referred to the CRA's deliberations at its meeting earlier this day regarding the road resurfacing contract award for roads and streets and the cost effectiveness of the contract with Paqco Inc. (also known as Paquette Company) where he anticipated that there would be another opportunity to review same.

Mr. John Mobilian, Villages of Fruitland Park (Pine Ridge) resident and District 2 Candidate, introduced himself to the city commission highlighting his background and experience in the flight industry for a courier delivery services company. .

8. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

(a) Commissioner Ranize

i. Fruitland Park Library and WWTP Expenses

In response to Mr. Brosick's comments regarding the Fruitland Park Library and WWTP, Commissioner Ranize identified expenditures which was delineated in this day's email from Ms. Racine; a copy of which is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.

i. FRS Matters

With respect to Chief Fewless, Commissioner Ranize referred to a previous meeting on the city commission's support of public safety. He recognized the recent homicide and the professionalism conducted by the police department, the relationship developed with the surrounding areas and the likelihood of losing Chief Fewless; thus, the liability to the city.

In recognizing the tremendous issue before the city and the reasons on his attempts to find the truth, Commissioner Ranize requested Mr. La Venia's resignation.

(b) Commissioner Lewis

i. Fruitland Park Library

Commissioner Lewis gave his recollection issues before the city commission on the:

- awarding the invitations to bid for the site development of the new public library facility construction; according to the plans for said construction provided by Senatore Inc., architect retained by the city, which was placed before the former community development director;
- bids which were several hundred thousand dollars higher than the city's available funds for said project;
- county library system's previous negotiations on one of the library impact fee grants funds awarded towards the furnishing of the new library and the county's subsequent agreement to reprogram and utilize same as part of the construction where the city was still short in funding and decided to proceed in that regard;
- comment made that it was not that the library was over budget but it was the lack of information presented before the city commission in not preparing the site; thus, the April 16, 2018 email with accompanying documents from Ms. Racine that funds, as part of the project to develop the site, would be ready for the public safety building;

- agreements entered with Paquette Company and Signature Construction Inc. for said new library construction with one change order from Paquette and
- previous decision to relocate the stormwater from the site;

ii. WWWTTP Expenses

Commissioner Lewis referred to this day's email from Ms. Racine regarding money questions as it relates to the WWWTTP expenses; addressed the lack of opportunity to review same which appears to be over and questioned the costs on the existing contract which he believes requires additional discussion. (A copy of the email is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.)

iii. Budget

Commissioner Lewis referred to the comments made by the candidate running for city commission district 2 in the August 29, 2018 Villages-News.com article; a copy of which is filed with the supplemental papers to the minutes of this meeting.

Commissioner Lewis gave a detailed overview of his understanding on how the city's finances are governed; the inadequacy of the millage rate to generate the general fund revenue to operate the city, and his actions on same where he believed that detailed deliberations ought to have been held during the budget workshop process. He recognized the decrease in the ad valorem rate from 4.5 or 4.7 mills to 3.986 mills as a result of the additional revenue coming into the city.

(c) Commissioner Bell

i. Budget

Commissioner Bell addressed, during his tenure on the city commission, the talents and skills of previous elected officials which he believed helped or hindered, in some cases, the city's growth. He voiced his belief that Commissioner Lewis gave an accurate account of the city's finances and felt that elected officials ought to assist when items are addressed.

ii. FRS

Commissioner Bell recalled the presentation when the FRS was introduced before the city commission that it which would help secure and retain better employees for the city. He recognized the subsequent problems experienced once implemented; noted the city commission's unawareness of the issues when Chief Fewless was retained and hoped that anyone who was aware of same would come forward.

iii. 2018 FLC 92nd Annual Conference – Home Rule

Commissioner Bell referred to the August 16 to 18, 2018 Florida League of Cities 92nd Annual Conference (Celebrating 50 Years of Constitutional Home Rule). He recalled its history before 1968 where the state government had control over local government and the passage after 1968 of the Constitutional Amendment which allowed cities the right to perform municipal functions and deliver services which exists this day.

Commissioner Bell reported on the erosion of said rights on an annual basis where state chapters are advocating to ensure that they are not lost and referred to the bills during 2018 which threatened the cities' rights which were subsequently defeated. He addressed the pending proposed bills which will impact the cities and pointed out the passage of resolutions on the 2018 Resolutions Committee that he served on which opposed some of the mandates.

Commissioner Bell conveyed the request for the city commission to continuously be aware of same and communicate with the local representatives on such home rule infringements.

**(d) Vice Mayor Gunter, Jr.
2018 FLC 92nd Annual Conference – SROs**

Vice Mayor Gunter referred to Commissioner Bell's reference to the 2018 FLC 92nd Annual Conference which he attended and highlighted the educational session/workshops regarding school resource officers (SROs) and noted the panel on August 19, 2018 which involved law enforcement officers and city managers who advocated the need for a full-time police officer at schools.

Vice Mayor Gunter pointed out his personal conversations with one of the police chiefs who was on the panel who did not disclose to the audience during the session the opportunity to retain a part-time law enforcement retired officer under contract where the officer would be supplied with a uniform, badge and gun; be retained with an annual budget of \$36,000 at \$25 per hour, eight hours a day and 180 days a year with no benefits and no vehicle and where the school district is funding same at 100 percent.

Vice Mayor Gunter reported that the panel shared how school districts ought to employ its own police force, currently implemented by Miami-Dade County School District, West Palm Beach County and the universities in Florida; conveyed the problem of sheriffs' offices and local governments providing a few officers with some schools retaining guardians and noted the lack of a countywide program utilizing different agencies to operate the system.

Vice Mayor Gunter explained that if one agency operates a program where the school has its own police force and develops its own curriculum, he mentioned the costs savings and improved programming involved; relayed the police chief's

comments on the reason the state provides \$45,000 which costs \$35,00 to retain an officer and questioned Lake County School District reviewing something similar.

9. MAYOR'S COMMENTS

(a) 2018 FLC 92nd Annual Conference

Mayor Cheshire acknowledged the reports given by Vice Mayor Gunter and Commissioner Bell regarding their recent attendance at the 2018 FLC 92nd Annual Conference.

(b) Dates to Remember

Mayor Cheshire recognized the following events:

- September 3, 2018, Labor Day – City Hall Closed;
- September 4, 2018, Lake EMS Employee Issues Committee Meeting, Lake County Administration Building, Board Chambers, 315 West Main Street, Tavares, Florida 32778 at 3:00 p.m.;
- September 4, 2018, Lake EMS Operations Committee Meeting, Lake County Administration Building, Board Chambers, 315 West Main Street, Tavares, Florida 32778 at 4:00 p.m.; to which Commissioner Lewis noted that it was cancelled;
- September 11, 2018 the city will be lowering its flags to half-staff in commemoration of *Patriot Day and National Day of Service and Remembrance*;
- September 11, 2018, Lake Emergency Management Services Inc.'s (EMS) Finance Committee Meeting, Lake County Administration Building, Board Chambers, 315 West Main Street, Tavares, Florida 32778 at 2:00 p.m.;
- September 13, 2018, City Commission Regular meeting at 6:00 p.m., where the first reading on the FY 2018-19 budget would be considered;
- September 14, 2018, Lake County League of Cities Sheriff Peyton Grinnell, Lake Receptions 4425 North Highway 19-A, Mount Dora, Florida 32757 at 12:00 p.m.;
- September 14, 2018, Movie on the Lawn, *Avengers – Infinity War*, City Hall Lawn at 7:30 p.m.;
- September 25, 2018, Lake EMS Board Meeting, Lake County Administration Building, Board Chambers, 315 West Main Street, Tavares, Florida 32778 at 2:30 p.m.;
- September 26, 2018, Lake-Sumter MPO Governing Board Meeting, 225 West Guava Street, #217, Lady Lake, Florida 32159 at 2:00 p.m. and

- September 27, 2018, City Commission Regular Meeting at 6:00 p.m. where the second public hearing would be held on the FY 2018-19 budget.

10. ADJOURNMENT

On motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

The minutes were approved at the November 8, 2018 regular meeting.

Signed  _____
Esther B. Coulson, City Clerk

Signed  _____
Chris Cheshire, Mayor