

**FRUITLAND PARK CITY COMMISSION REGULAR  
MEETING MINUTES  
September 23, 2021**

A regular meeting of the Fruitland Park City Commission was held at 506 W. Berckman Street, Fruitland Park, Florida 34731 on Thursday, September 23, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Mayor Chris Cheshire, Vice Mayor John L. Gunter, Jr., Commissioners Patrick DeGrave, and John Mobilian.

**Members Absent:** Commissioner Chris Bell

**Also Present:** City Attorney. Anita Geraci-Carver, City Treasurer Jeannine Racine; Senior Finance Specialist Christine Hoop, Finance Department; Police Chief Erik Luce, Public Works Director Robb Dicus; Community Development Director Dwyane Williams; Human Resources Director Jabari Hopkins, and City Clerk Esther B. Coulson.

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

After Mayor Cheshire called the meeting to order, Associate Pastor Mike Benintende, Trinity Assembly of God, gave the invocation and Chief Luce led in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

ACTION: 6:00:02 p.m. No action was taken.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Mayor Cheshire requested that Ms. Coulson call the roll where a quorum was declared present.

ACTION: 6:01:33 p.m. **By unanimous consent, the city commission excused the absence of Commissioner Bell from this evening's meeting.**

**3. REGULAR AGENDA**

**(a) Resolution 2021-036 Liberty Partners of Tallahassee Contract Renewal**

Ms. Geraci-Carver read into the record the title of proposed Resolution 2021-036, the substance of which is as follows:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK, FLORIDA, APPROVING THE LIBERTY PARTNERS OF TALLAHASSEE, LLC & CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK CONTRACT 2021-2022 CONTRACT FOR GRANT MANAGEMENT AND CONSULTING SERVICES; AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (Postponed from the August 26, 2021 regular meeting.)

**ACTION:** 6:01:55 p.m. A motion was made by Vice Mayor Gunter and seconded by Commissioner Mobilian that the city commission adopt Resolution 2021-036 as previously cited.

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

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

**By unanimous consent, Mayor Cheshire opened the public hearings on this evening's agenda.**

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

**(b) Second Reading and Public Hearing – Resolution 2021-037 - FY 2021-22 Adopted Millage**

It now being the time advertised to hold a public hearing,

Mayor Cheshire read into the record the city's preparedness to set the tentative millage rate of 3.9134 -- a two-percent (2%) increase over the roll back rate of 3.8365 mills which is the same rate as the last three years, and is a sixty-two thousand, seven hundred and thirty-nine dollar (\$62,739) increase in ad valorem taxes over the roll back rate, due to a 5.78% increase in taxable value (an increase of forty-eight million, eight hundred and ninety-nine thousand dollars (\$48,899,000) assessed value) due to development activity and the ad valorem increase is due to the value generated by new developments.. After Ms. Geraci-Carver read the following title on proposed Resolution 2021-037, Mayor Cheshire called for interested parties to be heard:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING A FINAL MILLAGE RATE OF 3.9134 LEVYING OF AD VALOREM TAXES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (The first reading was held on September 9, 2021.)

Messrs. Carl Yauk, Villages of Fruitland Park (Pine Hills) resident, voiced concerns on the millage rate over the three years; questioned the current fund balance (budget versus expenses) and believed that the millage rate ought to be reduced.

Donald A. "Don" Brozick, Villages of Fruitland Park (Pine Hills) resident, referred to the June 12, 2014, Village Center Community Development District Interlocal Agreement with the city for certain activities; recognized the ad valorem tax rate imposed and collected; the increases with additional properties and franchise (utilities) tax and revenues generated, and the city's responsibilities for roads, law enforcement and signage. He questioned the differences between the millage rate of 3.360792 (as publicly noticed) and 3.192752; the city's consideration of the roll

back rate on the revenues generated, and the development of a structured cost reduction program as part of the city's plan with savings, omissions, and tracking for efficiency and effectiveness.

**ACTION:** 6:03:30 p.m. A motion was made by Commissioner Mobilian and seconded by Commissioner DeGrave that the city commission adopt Resolution 2021-037 as previously cited

**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.**

**(c) Second Reading and Public Hearing – Resolution 2021-038 – FY 2021-22 Adopted Budget**

It now being the time advertised to hold a public hearing, and subsequent to Ms. Geraci-Carver's reading of the following title on proposed Resolution 2021-038, Mayor Cheshire called for interested parties to be heard:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FRUITLAND PARK, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE FINAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (The first reading was held on September 9, 2021.)

**ACTION:** 6:09:48 p.m. A motion was made by Commissioner DeGrave and seconded by Vice Mayor Gunter that the city commission adopt Resolution 2021-038 as previously cited.

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

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

**END OF PUBLIC HEARING**

**5. (a) City Manager**

**i. Economic Development Status Update**

With respect to economic development, Mr. La Venia recognized the number of activities on development applications received which will be before the city commission for consideration at a future meeting.

**ACTION:** 6:12:10 p.m. No action was taken.

**ii. TRAKiT/Superion (Solutions) LLC Citizens' Engagement – CentralSquare Technologies Discussion**

After Mr. La Venia pointed out the city commission's direction at its September 9, 2021 regular meeting on references from municipalities who use the MUNIS software and the costs involved, he conveyed their satisfaction with same.

ACTION: 6:11:32 p.m. No action was taken.

**(b) City Attorney**

**i. City of Fruitland Park v. State of Florida Department of Management Services**

With respect to the State of Florida Department of Management Services case, Ms. Geraci-Carver reported on the pending process with Mr. Glenn E. Thomas, Lewis Longman Walker PA (attorney retained by the city), to schedule a closed-attorney session before the city commission where confirmation anticipated from him to appear via Zoom video conference will be forthcoming and that she will be making an announcement at the next meeting.

ACTION: 6:12:22 p.m. No action was taken.

**ii. Michael and Laurie Fewless v. City of Fruitland Park**

Ms. Geraci-Carver announced that regarding the Michael and Laurie Fewless case, there is a pending process to schedule a closed-attorney session before the city commission where confirmation is anticipated from Mr. Thomas to appear via Zoom video conference will be forthcoming. She explained that she will be making an announcement at the next meeting.

Ms. Geraci-Carver explained that she has not received any hearing dates on the recommended order; referred to Mr. Fewless' attorney filing of a motion for case management conference on the subject litigation, and indicated that they are waiting until same is settled.

ACTION: 6:12:22 p.m. and 6:13:28 p.m. No action was taken.

**iii. Norman C. Cummins v. Stephen P. Angelillo and City of Fruitland Park, Lake County Case No. 2020-CA-1026**

Regarding the Norman C. Cummins v. Stephen P. Angelillo and City of Fruitland Park, Lake County case, Ms. Geraci-Carver explained that the motion was filed and anticipated that by the end of the year the matter would be resolved.

ACTION: 6:13:50 p.m. No action was taken.

**6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business to come before the city commission at this time.

ACTION: 6:14:16 p.m. No action was taken.

**7. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Yauk questioned the status of addressed the need to improve communications by placing notifications of city activities as inserts in its utility bills; inquired about the city's development improvement plans, and review the community redevelopment agency's fund.

Mr. Joseph "Joe" A. Largey, Villages of Fruitland Park (Pine Hills) resident, thanked the city commission for its service and voiced concerns on the percentage of taxes added to his utility bill as it pertains to the city.

ACTION: 6:14:17 p.m. No action was taken.

**8. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

**(a) Commissioner Mobilian**

Commissioner Mobilian stated that he has nothing to report at this time.

ACTION: 6:18:30 7:26 p.m. No action was taken.

**(b) Commissioner DeGrave**

Commissioner DeGrave stated that he has nothing to report at this time.

ACTION: 6:18:33 p.m. No action was taken.

**(c) Commissioner Bell**

Commissioner Bell absent from this evening's meeting.

ACTION: 6:18:33 p.m. No action was taken.

**(d) Vice Mayor Gunter, Jr.**

Vice Mayor Gunter was absent from this evening's meeting.

ACTION: 6:18:35 p.m. No action was taken.

**9. MAYOR'S COMMENTS - Dates to Remember**

**(a) FY 2021-22 Budget**

Mayor Cheshire expressed the hard work conducted on the FY 2021-22 budget; the purpose of fees included in the residents' bills, and the anticipation of commercial developments potentially lowering taxes in that regard. He reiterated his previous

statements and recalled workshops, Community Redevelopment Agency and regular meetings that were held on the FY 2021-22 budget where the citizens could attend and ask questions at such forums and welcomed those concerned to meet with the city manager and city treasurer to address same.

ACTION: 6:18:38 p.m. No action was taken.

**(b) Dates to Remember**

Mayor Cheshire announced the following dates:

- October 6, 2021, Annual Public Meeting - Lake County Legislative Delegation – 2022 Session/Hearings, Venetian Center, 1 Dozier Circle, Leesburg, Florida 34748 at 9:00 a.m.;
- October 8, 2021, Lake County League of Cities Congressman Daniel Webster *Washington Update*, Mount Dora Golf Course, 1100 South Highland Street, Mount Dora, Florida 32757 at 12:00 p.m.;
- October 14, 2021, City Commission regular at 6:00 p.m.;
- October 23, 2021, Trick or Trot TBD;
- October 27, 2021, Lake LCLC *Sheriff's Update*, Mount Dora Golf Course, 1100 South Highland Street, Mount Dora, Florida 32757 at 12:00 p.m.;
- Lake~Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization (LS~MPO) Governing Board Meeting, MPO Board Room Suite 175, 1300 Citizens Boulevard, Leesburg, Florida 34748 at 2:00 p.m.;
- October 28, 2021, City Commission regular at 6:00 p.m.
  
- November 11, 2021, Veterans' Day, City Hall Closed;
- November 11, 2021, City Commission regular at 6:00 p.m. - Cancelled.
- November 18, 2021 City Commission special at 6:00 p.m.;
- November 19, 2021, *Sponsor's Day Event*, Mount Dora Golf Course, 1100 South Highland Street, Mount Dora, Florida 32757 at 12:30 p.m.;
- November 25, 2021, Thanksgiving – City Hall Closed;
- November 26, 2021, Day After Thanksgiving – City Hall Closed;
- November 25, 2021, City Commission regular at 6:00 p.m. - Cancelled

ACTION: 6::20:24 p.m. No action was taken.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the city commission at this time, on motion made, second and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

The minutes were approved at the October 28, 2021 regular meeting.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Esther B. Coulson, City Clerk, MMC

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Chris Cheshire, Mayor

