



REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

November 18, 2025

6:00PM

City of Lake Butler

200 SW 1st Street

Lake Butler, Florida 32054

AGENDA

1. Call to order – Roll Call, Opening Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Hendrix called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Roll Call:

City Commission – Commissioner Sirmones, Vice-Mayor Huggins, Commissioner Redman, Commissioner Stephenson, Mayor Hendrix

City Staff – City Manager Hayes, City Attorney Maines, Finance Director Mecusker, Administrative Assistant Page

Opening Prayer led by Commissioner Redman.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Hendrix.

a. Admin Content

If a person decides to appeal a decision made with respect to any matter at this meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceedings and may need to ensure that a verbatim record is made.

2. Approval of The Agenda Format.

a. Motion to approve the agenda format.

Motion to approve the agenda format was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Commissioner Sirmones. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

3. Public Comments

Pursuant to Florida Statutes, members of the public shall be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a proposition before the City Commission. Upon recognition by the mayor, any person may address the City Commission on any subject either included on the agenda or any other subject.

- Three (3) minutes per speaker;
- Comments will not be accepted after the meeting begins;
- State your name and address into the record before addressing the Mayor & Commissioners;
- Address your questions to the Mayor, not city staff;
- Refrain from demands for an immediate response from the Mayor or Commissioners; and
- No boisterous behavior, personal, impertinent, or slanderous remarks.

Public Comments:

Jody Read, CEO and Owner of Sapphire Services located at 250 SW 9th Avenue in Lake Butler, FL and lives at 9600 SW 67th Path in the Southwest of Lake Butler, and is here representing Rotary and stated that Rotary had a meeting with their fireworks people today, and wanted to come to the City and provide an update and to thank the City for the support last year with the staff and management and wanted to formally thank the City.

Mr. Read stated that 2026 will be the 250th celebration of the United States, and that the 4th of July event is anticipated to be bigger with the number of people, food trucks, and a full day's worth of events, and will do a much better job of announcement of the dates and times and events, and stated that the celebration in 2026 will be on Saturday, July 4th, 2026 and that this is the first time in seven years it will be actually on the 4th.

Mr. Read stated to make the fireworks display larger in 2026, where they currently use for fireworks is very close to the surrounding homes and based on the number of fireworks they have planned, and that the fireworks will be on a concrete dock on the water this year to get it away from the houses, and that this concrete dock setup may be permanent but that they would ask permission each time, and that they would of course ask the swimmers not to be in the water during the fireworks show and to not be on the docks once they start setting up, and that they just wanted to make the Board aware of their plans and asked if the Board had any questions or requests for him to take back to the Rotary Club.

Vice-Mayor Huggins asked about the cleanup of the fireworks after the show, and Mr. Read responded saying it should be very minimal cleanup and that the people who are launching the fireworks are supposed to be monitoring the cleanup.

4. Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. Regular City Commission Meeting Minutes from October 21, 2025
- b. October 2025 WEX Invoice, Activity Report & Vehicle Logs
- c. October 2025 Animal Control Logs

Motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

5. Update on Old Public Works Property for sale (9422 SW SR 121) – Brent Line, KW Commercial

Brent Line & Jordane Spitze Harden from Keller Williams provided an update to the Board on the old Public Works Property for sale at 9422 SW SR 121. Mr. Line informed the Board that there have been a half dozen showings in the last month, and that we had one offer come through but that buyer was looking for owner-financing which was not what the City wanted, but that 2 weeks ago, we lowered the price to \$700,000, and that there is a scheduled showing this Friday with a general contractor based in San Diego, California, who has a very short time-frame for moving his business over to Florida, who is sending one of his associates on Friday at 11am, and if everything looks proper, we would expect to have a offer put in by EOD Friday, and that he had already been connected with their financing team and that they are very aggressive. One of the terms of this deal is that they would be looking to zone this property industrial, and that he had spoken with City Manager Hayes & Hayden on the steps it would take to rezone the property but wanted to ask the Board is that a zoning they could approve.

City Attorney Maines stated that what can be done is that the rezoning can be a condition of the contract for the sale and purchase, and that we would go through the normal application process, and stated that this Board cannot commit in advance because land use issues are quasi-judicial but that the agreement can state that the sale is contingent on rezoning of the property, and then initiate the procedures as required by law.

Mr. Line responded confirmed that there will be a condition added to the contract if the buyer wants to move forward after the showing on Friday.

Commissioner Stephenson asked about what the property will be rezoned to, and Mr. Line responding stated it would be Heavy Industrial, and that the company is a large underground utilities company based in San Diego and that they have roughly 10 semi-trucks ready to leave San Diego soon, heading this way.

Mr. Line stated that the price reduction really increased the traffic and that he really expects this showing to go well and has been in constant contact with the buyer about his needs and he seems to be completely committed in this property.

6. Update on Boat Ramp Improvement Project & Townsend Green Building Roof Project – Doug Sanders, Andy Easton & Associates

Mr. Doug Sanders handed out a report to the Board on the Boat Ramp Improvement Project, and provided an update on the status of this project.

Mr. Doug Sanders also provided an update to the Board on the Townsend Green Building Roof Project, and stated after several years of working to get this project completed, it is finally completed.

City Manager Hayes suggested that maybe next month, Doug can come and show the Board the pictures from this project.

7. Code Enforcement Report

Code Enforcement Officer Rick Ward provides a verbal report to the board regarding Code Enforcement discussions & cases and passed out a copy of the same template of the Notice of Violation that he will be using for Code Enforcement violations for the City.

Commissioner Redman asked about if a family member comes to visit and brings a camper to stay in during the holidays or something, if that would be a violation. Mr. Ward explained that the Ordinance reads it cannot be there for more than 24 hours, so it would technically be a violation, but that the notice of violation would give them 15 days to comply & remove the camper, but Mayor Hendrix stated that when that Ordinance is reviewed, maybe update it as a temporary allowance for a certain number of days, and Mr. Ward stated that he is working through the Ordinances and is trying to bring them up to date and make the Ordinances easier to read and easier to follow, and Mayor Hendrix added that we can modify as we go through them as well.

Vice-Mayor Huggins asked Mr. Ward about commercial catering trailers and if they were a violation of the Ordinance. Mr. Ward responded stating that it is not a recreational vehicle, and clarified if it was a food truck. Vice Mayor Huggins confirmed yes. Mr. Ward stated that food trucks are governed by the State of Florida, and what is being monitored right now is the business tax receipts, and that the State Statute says we cannot enforce anything else on them that the State is not enforcing already.

Vice-Mayor Huggins asked about RV's with privacy fences parked on the side of their yards, and that only a small part of the RV can be seen with the privacy fence. Mr. Ward explained that it would depend on the zoning district, and that the main thing that may be involved with that is the height and location of a privacy fence, and that the Ordinance does deal with recreational vehicles being parked in the front yard if they can be parked in the backyard or side yard unless there is a special exception, but that would have to be reviewed.

8. Board Approval & Adoption of Ordinance No. 2025-05 (Code Enforcement Procedures)

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2025-05 to be read by title only was made by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Title read by City Attorney Maines. Motion seconded by Commissioner Redman. Motion passed 4-1 with Commissioner Stephenson opposed.

9. Board Approval & Adoption of Ordinance No. 2025-06 (Junk Vehicles)

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2025-06 to be read by title only was made by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Title read by City Attorney Maines. Motion seconded by Commissioner Redman.

Motion passed 4-1 with Commissioner Stephenson opposed.

10. Board Approval & Adoption of Ordinance No. 2025-07 (Overgrowth of Lawn)

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2025-07 to be read by title only was made by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Title read by City Attorney Maines. Motion seconded by Commissioner Redman. Motion passed 4-1 with Commissioner Stephenson opposed.

11. Board Approval of First Reading of Ordinance No. 2025-08 (Dangerous Buildings)

Commissioner Redman asked about the definition of a dangerous building, and Mayor Hendrix added that she has read through this Ordinance, and has a lot of questions about it.

Mr. Ward explained what constitutes a dangerous building, referring to the proposed Ordinance that explains the definitions or qualifications of a dangerous building.

Mayor Hendrix stated she has concerns with the language in this Ordinance, referencing the section for unfit for human occupancy, like if they have rats, roaches, or whatever, stating we cannot go into their house to determine that. Mr. Ward explained that we are not talking about occupied structures, but one that is unoccupied, and that if it is an occupied structure, especially if it is homesteaded, that we would have to request permission to enter, and we have to be invited in.

Mayor Hendrix stated that even if it is not occupied, it is private property and we cannot enter. Mr. Ward explained that if the building is in a state of disrepair where it would be considered, that it would give us the authority to enter the property.

Mayor Hendrix stated that she would like more time to review this Ordinance and its language, because we are right down to the number of nails and wooden screws. Mr. Ward explained that those requirements are in the Florida Building Code.

Mayor Hendrix also raised concern and said that she does not think we need to be making the decision if a building is dangerous or not, and that in the past, the County would handle this. Mr. Ward responded stating the County is not interested in working with the City to determine if a building is dangerous or not, and Mr. Ward asked them if they had a Board and Seal process, and they do not.

Commissioner Redman stated that we have a lot of old buildings, and people are still living in these old buildings. Mr. Ward explained that there are multiple houses that have pieces of loose tin that are waiting to be blown off in a storm. Mayor Hendrix stated that she thinks we need to be a little sensitive when it comes to their homes, and that we are one of the poorest counties, and that maybe we can get with some churches to help fix their houses before we go full force on them.

Mr. Ward explained that a lot of the language in the current Ordinance involved Hayden in his current position as the inspector, and the one to make the decisions, and we decided to take that out and make it the Code Enforcement Officer, and that he has experience with this.

Mayor Hendrix stated that she understands that part but said that we have to look forward and that when someone comes in after him, they may not have the experience, and that she would feel more comfortable if the City Manager was involved. City Attorney Maines confirmed that she is not, and that there was a version of her included in it, but that it was removed.

Commissioner Stephenson asked about what the Board was told about the Townsend Green Building with the water damage, and how he would handle that. Mr. Ward explained that unless the roof was about to collapse, just a water leak is not enough, and a lot of places leak water. Mr. Ward asked if the building is secured, and that this Ordinance aims at buildings being secured or not.

City Manager Hayes clarified that the buildings Mr. Ward is referring to is the buildings that are unoccupied, and that we are not getting involved with people who are living in homes, but that it would be for buildings that are left abandoned, structures nobody is living in that can be open to homeless people and people walking by, and that she thinks we are getting confused on that tonight, but that we are not going to be going around to people's houses and inspecting them, that is not what we are trying to do.

Commissioner Redman stated that it is not made very clear in the Ordinance what sort of structures will be getting inspected, and Mayor Hendrix suggested maybe taking another look at the language in the Ordinance, and City Manager Hayes said we can take another look at it.

Mayor Hendrix stated that she would like Mr. Ward to confer the City Manager before we move to the next step. City Manager Hayes said we can add that part to the language of the Ordinance.

Motion to table Ordinance No. 2025-08 was made by Commissioner Sirmones. Motion seconded by Commissioner Redman. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

12. City Manager's Report – Kimberly Hayes, City Manager

City Manager Kimberly Hayes provided her report to the Board addressing the updates to the Community Center as well as an update on the Splash Park.

Mayor Hendrix referenced the Governor giving State agencies additional days off for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's and referenced the recently approved Holiday Schedule for 2026, but made a suggestion that as a gratitude to the staff, the Board could maybe give the City employees the same days off for the holidays.

Motion to give November 26th, December 26th, and January 2nd off to the City employees was made by Commissioner Stephenson. Motion seconded by Commissioner Sirmones. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

13. Public Works Department Report

City Manager Hayes referenced the email that she sent out regarding Mr. Michael Gray who resigned from his position as Public Works Director last Friday.

City Manager Hayes introduced Mr. Michael Manning who is temporarily filling in the role of Acting Public Works Director for 30 days.

Mr. Manning introduced himself to the Board.

City Manager Hayes did inform the Board that Mr. Manning has lost another employee today who resigned, and another's employee whose last day is tomorrow so that as of next week, so we are down on staff, so all he has is 3 people with Michael, Hayden, and Cal.

Vice-Mayor Huggins asked Mr. Manning if he is interested in getting his water & wastewater license. Mr. Manning confirmed he still would like to get both his water and wastewater license.

Vice-Mayor Huggins also asked what Mr. Manning's plans are if he is not selected for the position after the 30-day trial, and Mr. Manning responded saying he hopes he can go back in the position he was already in and keep on working.

14. Water & Wastewater Department Report

Lead WTP/WWTP Operator Jason Furman gave a brief report on the Water & Wastewater Department.

15. Reports from Finance Department – Dave Mecusker, Finance Director

Finance Director Dave Mecusker provided the financial reports to the Board, which consisted of the Monthly Financial Report for period of October 1, 2025 through October 31, 2025 and the Reconciled Bank/Books Status Report.

Motion to approve the monthly financial report for period October 1, 2025 through October 31, 2025 was made by Commissioner Sirmones. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

16. Report of City Attorney – John E. Maines IV

Nothing to report. Wishes everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

17. Comments or Remarks by Commission

- Commissioner Sirmones – No comment. Have a safe and Happy Thanksgiving, and do not eat too much.
- Commissioner Stephenson – No comment.
- Commissioner Redman -No Farm Share in December, and Happy Thanksgiving.
- Vice Mayor Huggins – No comment.
- Mayor Hendrix – Reminded everyone on the December 13th Toy Giveaway after the parade and that stockings will be given out. Mrs. Huggins asked to speak and said that they still have Thanksgiving dinners to give out so please have them reach out if they need anything.

18. Meeting Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:34pm.