

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT PUBLIC HEARING OF LAKE BUTLER, FLORIDA  
MEETING MINUTES



September 16, 2025  
5:45PM  
City Hall Lake Butler  
200 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Lake Butler, Florida 32054

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MEETING MINUTES

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1. **Call to order – Roll Call.**

Mayor Hendrix called the public hearing to order at 5:45pm.

**Roll Call:**

City Commission – Commissioner Sirmones, Commissioner Stephenson, Mayor Hendrix

City Staff – City Manager Hayes, City Attorney Maines, Finance Director Mecusker,

Administrative Assistant Page

Absent – Vice-Mayor Huggins, Commissioner Redman

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 Sirmones. Motion seconded by Commissioner Stephenson. Motion passed 3-0.

Mayor Hendrix requested to have the record reflect that Vice-Mayor Huggins is now present.

3. **Public Hearing for SE 25-02 (Concerning a Special Exception as Provided for in the City of Lake Butler Land Development Regulations) (Union County BOCC)**

A. Motion to open the public hearing for SE 25-02

Motion to open the public hearing for SE 25-02 was made by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Motion seconded by Commissioner Sirmones. Motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Russ Wade, County Attorney, stated he is here this evening to answer any questions and went over the proposed plans to upgrade the courthouse security, explaining to the Board what is planned.

Mayor Hendrix informed the Board that she had asked a question after seeing construction going on at the Courthouse, and that she called City Attorney Maines, and asked him to clarify that there are 2 different things here.

City Attorney Maines confirmed and explained that there are 2 different issues, with the 100sqft addition to the Courthouse and the handicap parking located to the East of the Courthouse and on Lake Avenue, and that the addition does not have anything to do with the sidewalk and handicap parking space modifications,

and that the sidewalk and handicap parking is being discussed in the regular meeting, and that this hearing is for the proposed additions to the building on County property, and that all other issues are a separate issue.

Mayor Hendrix clarified that construction has already began on the West side, and that construction was not stopped, and that there was no permit currently for the work, and that the County Coordinator would have been the one to submit that paperwork in order to get a permit just like any other place in the City, because you have to have a letter of compliance from the City, so that got skipped, and that is why we have this, and that the staff worked diligently on that to expedite this so we didn't slow things down, and wants to go on record as being concerned that the County Coordinator failed again to follow the protocol for this.

Mayor Hendrix stated that we had a meeting, and the previous Mayor was brought up, Mr. Stegall, and he brought up the people that made the plans, but that this is something that your project manager typically will handle and it didn't get handled, and this is where we are in order to give them their letter of compliance, the Board would make a vote on this to get the letter of compliance to pull the permit they should have already had and verified with City Attorney Maines, who confirmed.

County Attorney Mr. Wade discussed the zoning requirements regarding a special exception under the Commercial Central Business District zoning and that every modification would require zoning approval.

Mayor Hendrix stated that didn't happen and that it happened at the County level, and that the plans were made up in July of last year, and it never made it to this Board, so she was just concerned that building was going on with no permits, and that this Commission was not aware and that we do not need to know the detail of what is going on, but any changes that are being done we need to know about, which is what Mr. Wade is referring to.

Vice-Mayor Huggins clarified that the purpose of the special exception is to keep the project going without having a permit. Mr. Wade responded stating that this special exception is a part of the permitting process, and explained that the special exception is technically for all modifications to the Courthouse which require zoning approval by the City, and it is because of the City's zoning code lists a special exception for public facilities, and that it is not allowed as a right, but a special exception and that is the technical approval.

Mayor Hendrix stated that we did not have them stop construction, because we were told that only sidewalks were being replaced and that more than that was being done on the West side, so the East side will have more modifications than the West side, so in order to give them the letter of compliance in order to pull a permit, this is what we would need to do, but this is just the comments open.

City Attorney Maines stated that this only pertains to the East side. Mayor Hendrix asked about the modifications to the West side, and City Attorney Maines stated he does not believe that has been applied for yet. Mr. Wade stated that the plans and application were intended for modifications for both sides of the Courthouse and that they submitted the entirety of the plans, and that the interior plans only pertain to the East side, and that the West side has modifications to the parking and replacement of the sidewalks, and that there is a screening wall being added to protect the Sheriff's Office on the West side, and a matching screening wall on the East side for the Clerk's office, and that it is just to close those entrances off to the public.

Mayor Hendrix asked if the approval that is taking place is covering all of the modifications, and City Attorney Maines referred to the Concurrency Management report and that it only lists the 100sqft addition on the East side, and that this concurrency report does not address any other improvements or modifications to the courthouse. Mr. Wade clarified on the concurrency report addressing the impact to water, sewer, and traffic. Mr. Maines stated that the report references the 100sqft addition multiple times. Mayor Hendrix asked if that is all that is needed so we can give them the letter of compliance. Mr. Maines stated that the letter of compliance would address the improvements to the East side, but if she is asking if the letter of compliance would pertain to any other improvements, the answer would be no.

Mr. Wade asked if the resurfacing on the West side needs a separate application, and Mr. Maines stated that the parking is not the issue, and there are questions and that he does not know about the wall beside the Sheriff's Office, and he saw it for the first time today, and did not know anything about it, and that we have not asked the planning council if that is subject also to a special exception, so he does not know the answer to that question, but that the 100sqft addition to the East is what is covered under this special exception.

Mayor Hendrix clarified, asking if staff were to check with Sandra at the planning council, because when she got the plans and sent the form, and referenced the call the County had with Mr. Koons, they could confirm if they need this for that, or if it covers that. Mr. Maines stated he thinks this does not cover that, but wonders if it is needed. Mayor Hendrix suggested that be the question they asked, and if everything is good, we can move forward with this, and that Mrs. Hayes can get with Mr. Wade and let him know.

Mr. Wade clarified that the planning council has received a full set of plans, and Mayor Hendrix stated that she understands, but just to confirm with the walls. Mr. Maines confirmed what Mr. Wade said and stated that the concurrency report only covers the impact to the community and community elements that this improvement is going to have, and that he does not know or can say if the report covers any other improvements.

Mr. Wade asked if there are any additional services required by the City, and Mr. Maines clarified on the concern Mayor Hendrix asked about the wall on the West side, and if the special exception covers that, and that this report does not cover that.

Mayor Hendrix clarified that there will be the walls to both sides of the courthouse.

Mr. Wade stated that the intention was to get approval for the entire project, and that there was a limited set of plans included with the application, because security is exempt from the public records, and were not disclosed, but that a full set of plans was provided to the City and the Planning Council.

Mr. Maines addressed that the concurrency management report references the 100sqft addition several times, and that is what this report addresses, and he cannot address the other improvements.

Mayor Hendrix clarified that Sandra can confirm if the two walls need a special exception or not, and that we can move forward.

Mr. Maines refers to the City Manager to reach out to the Planning Council to verify.

#### **B. Motion to close the public hearing for SE 25-02**

Motion to close the public hearing for SE 25-02 was made by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Motion seconded by Commissioner Sirmones.

Commissioner Stephenson asked Mr. Wade what this will do with construction progress, and if there will be a special meeting after we hear back from the City Manager or what are we going to do. Mr. Wade explained that if this is approved, they will move forward with the interior space modifications, and hopes there is not a delay due to the security walls, but that he did not know it was an issue until just now.

Commissioner Stephenson asked what we will do when we hear back from the City Manager, and if an emergency meeting will be held. Mr. Maines explained that if any additional LDR compliance issues arise, then the City Manager will handle that in her office, a special meeting would not need to be held, and it would be handled administratively, and she would contact him, and he would make contact with the County Attorney, and staff may possibly meet to discuss the situation and the process moving forward, but there would be no emergency meeting.

Motion passed 4-0.

4. Resolution No. BA SE 25-02 (Concerning a Special Exception as Provided for in the City of Lake Butler Land Development Regulations) (Union County BOCC)

- A. Motion to adopt Resolution BA SE 25-01 (Concerning a Special Exception as Provided for in the City of Lake Butler Land Development Regulations) (Union County BOCC) and for the resolution to be read by title only.

Motion to adopt Resolution No. BA SE 25-01 concerning a special exception as provided for in the City of Lake Butler Land Development Regulations for the Union County Board of County Commissioners and for the Resolution to be read by title only was made by Commissioner Sirmones. Title read by Mr. Maines. Mayor Hendrix requested to make one correction, and that the Resolution No. that was read by BA SE 25-02 and not BA SE 25-01. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Motion passed 4-0.

5. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the public hearing was made by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Motion seconded by Commissioner Sirmones. Motion passed 4-0.

Public hearing adjourned at 6:08pm.