



REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

February 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.

In Attendance:

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

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

Opening Prayer was led by Commissioner Redman.

Pledge of Allegiance was 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 Stephenson. 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 City Mayor & Commissioners;
- Address your questions to the City Mayor, not city staff;
- Refrain from demands for an immediate response from City Mayor or Commissioners; and
- No boisterous behavior, personal, impertinent, or slanderous remarks.

Mayor Hendrix opened the floor to public comments.

There were no public comments.

Mayor Hendrix closed the floor to public comments.

4. Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. Meeting Minutes from 1-21-2025
- b. Code Enforcement Report January 2025.
- c. January 2025 WEX Invoice, activity report, and vehicle logs
- d. Animal Control Logs for January 2025 (NONE).

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

5. Mittauer & Associates Engineer's Recommendation of Award for LP WTP GST Upgrade with DEP Agreement No. LPA0314

Mayor Hendrix stated that this agenda item is for the storage tank for the water.

Mayor Hendrix welcomed Mr. John Petrohovich from Mittauer & Associates who was in attendance via Microsoft Teams. Mayor Hendrix stated that she had a question regarding this item and clarified that this is for changing the scope of the project from replacing the tank to refurbishing the tank, in which Mr. Petrohovich confirmed. Mr. Petrohovich explained the last meeting in which the board approved Mittauer & Associates to communicate with DEP on the scope of the ground storage tank project for the City's potable drinking water. Due to funding constraints, Mittauer conferred with City staff and the board to get approval to discuss with DEP to see if the change of scope would be approved to get the project in budget.

Mr. Petrohovich explained that the project would be to rehabilitate the ground storage tank, which has been approved by DEP, and that is what is recommended and presented tonight. Mr. Petrohovich stated that the approval would be to award the project to the lowest bidder, but also to authorize the Mayor and City Manager to negotiate a change order with the low bidder to align the project costs with the project budget.

Mayor Hendrix discussed the proposal and asked if the proposal is what would be negotiated and is concerned with the terms and conditions of the proposal, and confirmed with Mr. Petrohovich that this is what would be negotiated if approved by the Board, and stated she had a lot of questions.

Mr. Petrohovich confirmed with the Mayor that this would be what is negotiated and stated that the CROM would be a sub-contractor with Kent Brothers, the lowest bidder, and that is what would be negotiated.

Mayor Hendrix confirmed with Mr. Petrohovich that the proposal is not what was being approved tonight, because she was not prepared to sign this agreement due to the questions and concerns that she had.

Commissioner Stephenson asked when this would be discussed by the Board and stated that the CROM company and Kent Brothers were not present at this meeting and asked how the board would get answers on this.

Mayor Hendrix stated that the first thing would be if the Board wanted to award Kent Brothers the bid, and the second part would have the Board's permission to have herself and Mrs. Hayes to negotiate and discuss the proposal with Mittauer & Kent Brothers. Mayor Hendrix asked if after negotiations, the negotiations would be brought back to the Board, to update them on the status and terms of the contract but she is aware that there is a timeline for this project and proposal.

Mr. Petrohovich confirmed that following the recommendation to award the bid to Kent Brothers, then the Change Order would come before the board that would get this project within budget, and stated that regarding the timeline, he sees no issues with meeting this timeframe, and following the meeting, Mittauer would schedule a meeting with the Mayor and City staff to discuss this project and move forward.

Vice-Mayor Huggins asked Mr. Petrohovich what would happen if we started the negotiations and the project would not get below \$730,000, where we would get additional funds.

Mayor Hendrix stated that we have no additional funds but stated that the proposal is at \$680,000 but some of the items may not be needed, and Mr. Mittauer might tell the City that certain items listed on the proposal may not be necessary which would bring the project cost proposal down as well.

Mr. Petrohovich confirmed with Vice-Mayor Huggins that each item on the proposal would be discussed and reviewed by Mr. Mittauer to ensure that the City is getting what is needed and staying within budget.

Commissioner Redman stated that the proposal is at \$680,000 and change and the budget is \$730,000, and Mayor Hendrix confirmed that we have that wiggle room to start with, and the amount of wiggle room is approximately \$50,000. Commissioner Redman asked if there would be something not listed on this proposal that we would want, and Mayor Hendrix stated the SCADA system would be one, and Commissioner Redman asked if there was a dollar amount for the SCADA system.

Mayor Hendrix asked how much the SCADA system and the items on the City's wish list would be and asked if the amount that we have the wiggle room on (approximately \$50,000) would cover the cost of the items the City wishes to get.

Mr. Petrohovich confirmed that there is significant wiggle room with the proposal, and that there is not a set dollar amount for the SCADA system, and that the price varies for each component.

Mayor Hendrix stated that on the contract, the additional items are significant and are red flags that we have, and that we should try to go under \$680,000 and not over.

Mayor Hendrix asked once these motions have been made, and to do the negotiation, should we come back to the board to update them and then they would vote to sign the contract.

Mr. Petrohovich stated that the board would award the bid to Kent Brothers for the project, and that the Change Order would be what is brought to the board with the updated proposal after negotiations, and that is what would be voted on by the Board.

Mayor Hendrix clarified that the Change Order would be brought to the Board at the next meeting, and if we need it sooner, then an Emergency Special Meeting can be called for this meeting to get this taken care of and clarified that the timeline is running out to use this funding.

Mr. Petrohovich clarified that the timeline to have this done, and confirmed that an extension has been approved and filed which extended the deadline to December 31, 2026.

Motion to approve Engineer's Recommendation of Award for Kent Bros. was made by Commissioner Sirmones. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

Motion to authorize the Mayor and City Manager to negotiate a Change Order with the low bidder Kent Brothers and CROM to bring the project within the construction budget was made by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Motion seconded by Commissioner Redman. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Hendrix stated that if the Board has any questions to direct them to Mrs. Hayes to bring them to the negotiation meeting.

Commissioner Redman clarified that the proposal includes the required work and Mayor Hendrix confirmed.

6. Mittauer & Associates Engineer's Recommendation of Award for Sprayfield Modifications with DEP Agreement No. WG088

Mayor Hendrix explained that for this project, we had a budget of \$3.5 million and the low bidder came in at \$3,346,770 so we are within budget, and is in line with everything we have and would be the final number, and Mr. Petrohovich confirmed, and Mayor Hendrix clarified that the left-over money could be used for additional needs for the Sprayfield, and Mr. Petrohovich confirmed that the overage for this would be used for the WWTP, and Sprayfield, with WG088 being for the entire project.

Commissioner Stephenson asked about the significance of the difference between the two bids. Mayor Hendrix stated that her experience has been that companies will outbid themselves but just to have a record of putting in a bid, and that the bid amount would be what the City pays, any additional costs would be absorbed by the contractor, not the City.

Motion to approve the Engineer's Recommendation of Award to Commercial Industrial Corp. for Sprayfield Modifications with DEP Agreement No. WG088 was made by Commissioner Stephenson. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

7. Resolution 2025-01 for Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Sidewalk Project (reference Lake Butler School Sidewalks Improvement Project)

Motion to approve Resolution 2025-01 was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

8. Approval of Temporary Easement for Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Sidewalk Project (reference Lake Butler School Sidewalks Improvement Project)

Motion to approve three (3) Temporary Easements for Parcel No. 700.1, 702.1, and 703.1 to be granted to Florida Department of Transportation by the City of Lake Butler for the Lake Butler School Sidewalks Improvement Project was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

9. Approval of Traffic Signal Maintenance & Compensation Agreement for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 between City of Lake Butler & Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)

Motion to approve the Traffic Signal Maintenance & Compensation Agreement for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 between City of Lake Butler & Florida Department of Transportation was made by Commissioner Sirmones. Motion seconded by Commissioner Redman. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

10. Approval of Amendment 3 for City of Lake Butler Grant CDBG MT118 with Florida Commerce

Motion to approve Amendment 3 for Grant CDBG MT118 with revised Attachment A for the Project Description & Deliverables for Item 4 under Deliverable 2 – Engineering & Design to be moved to Deliverable 3 – Construction was made by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Motion seconded by Commissioner Redman. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

11. Approval of FEMA Agreement No. Z4257 for Federal Assistance for Hurricane Debby (reference DR4806)

Motion to approve FEMA Agreement No. Z4257 for Federal Assistance for Hurricane Debby (reference DR4806) was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

12. Approval of FEMA Agreement No. Z4502 for Federal Assistance for Hurricane Helene (reference DR4828)

Motion to approve FEMA Agreement No. Z4502 for Federal Assistance for Hurricane Helene (reference DR4828) was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Commissioner Sirmones. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

13. City Manager Reports – Kimberly Hayes, City Manager

City Manager Hayes provided her update to the board.

Report Item #1: Update on Wawa

City Manager Hayes stated that there were discussions earlier today with representatives from Wawa as well as the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, so that is where we are still at. Mrs. Hayes stated she wished she could give more of an update on this, but there are still issues that they have to work out and explained that one of the issues is that the property the Wawa is planning to build on is 2 separate lots owned by 2 separate entities. Mrs. Hayes explained that herself and Hayden were on the phone earlier with the planning council, and during the call with the planning council, Wawa was calling.

Report Item #2: Update on DOC Contract

Mrs. Hayes stated that she had sent emails requesting an update and called Steven Reecy earlier today to ask where we are at with the contract and that the contract is still going through the Chain of Command, and is in the offices in Tallahassee, and that the City has the numbers.

Mayor Hendrix clarified to the Board that the terms of the contract that the City and DOC kept going back and forth on came out that DOC would pay 138% of the ordinance rate, which is 25% for out-of-city, plus an additional 13% with the minimum usage, and that DOC will pay for one of our employees, and stated that the new plant would require 3, so they are paying 1, and they are paying the readiness to serve of

\$2,5000 and stated that the numbers that have been agreed upon are very good and will help tremendously.

City Manager Hayes explained to the Board where the agreed upon numbers would take us. Mrs. Hayes stated that when she first came to the City, the average was \$36,037.83 and then went up to \$61,661.46 with the 125% above inside rates and with the proposed contract, the average bill would be \$80,168.03 and stated that she is very happy with the numbers.

Report Item #3: Update on USDA Grant

City Manager Hayes updated the Board that this grant is almost finished, and we are gathering the invoices and documents now, and that the City has purchased new equipment that was approved by USDA, which includes a Towable Lift for \$44,500, a Panel Pump trailer for \$32,858, 2 Gravely Zero-Turn Lawnmowers for \$18,827.64, and 2025 Big Tex Dump Trailer for \$8,690, and a sewer snake we have been needing for \$6,558 and that the City will get reimbursed for this, but the grant total was \$108,700.

Mayor Hendrix stated to make sure to take care of the lawnmowers and equipment.

Report Item #4: Update on FBIP Grant

The RFP and RFQ's for Engineering and Grant Administration will close on Wednesday, March 12, 2025 and Mrs. Hayes can give an update to the Board at next month's meeting.

Commissioner Stephenson referenced the recent water main breaks and issues with not having the correct equipment or parts, and asked City Manager Hayes what has been done to mitigate that issue. City Manager Hayes responded to Commissioner Stephenson, stating that Sam and Jason will be giving an update on that issue and referenced that there would be documentation kept and recorded which is due by March 1, and they have had that assignment for a week now so they are working on that and that there will be accountability on the equipment and parts now.

14. Report from the Public Works Director – Sam Norris, Public Works Director

Mr. Norris referenced the readiness to serve water line and valves. Mr. Norris stated that since the water main break, they have implemented checks on the valves and manholes and have been dealing with several water line issues around town and just finished a large project with the water line near the bank. Mr. Norris stated that starting March 1, the valves would be checked by Public Works staff to ensure they are opening and closing properly, and that the valves are working, and stated that it will be started sooner if possible.

Mr. Norris referenced the work orders for Public Works and stated that 118 work orders have been documented, and there were between 270-300 water meter issues in the last 6 weeks and referenced the significant number of water meter issues that they have been working on for the last several weeks. City Manager Hayes explained that the work order list was found by Elaine in the system, and is a better accountability factor for both in the office and Public Works, and is a great thing and will be on the agendas from now on for the board's review.

Mr. Norris explains to the Board that the biggest challenge faced has been the water meter system, and informed the board of the significant number of water meter equipment pieces we are having to send back due to their continued malfunctioning. Mr. Norris explains that the system is not up to Lake Butler's standards and wanted to

inform the Board of other systems that are available and the current water meter system is about to run out of warranty and is about to come out of the City's pocket for expenses for repairs. Mr. Norris informed the Board of approximately 125-200 water meter visits due to their malfunctioning.

Mayor Hendrix raised concern with the fact that these new meters were paid for with a grant, and a out-of-state company came in and replaced all of the City's water meters. Mr. Norris confirmed Zenner was the company the Mayor was referring to and that the City is still paying on the loan for this grant and water meter project.

City Attorney Maines referenced the previous system that was in place prior to the previous city manager's arrival.

City Manager Hayes referenced 8 pages of meters and customers with broken or malfunctioning meters and that the Public Works staff has been trying to get them fixed but they continue to malfunction, and informed the board that due to this issue, the customer is charged the minimum bill because we cannot charge them based on their usage, so businesses such as Laredo's are paying the minimum, so the City is losing money in this system, and that they have been working hard, and Mr. Norris stated that he has had 1 person assigned to just meters, and has 2 two to three days out of the week and stated that there are down to 3 pages of meters that are not working. City Manager Hayes stated that the City just spend \$13,000 to fix these meters, and that the warranty is fixing to run out.

Mayor Hendrix asked when the warranty runs out and suggests that the contract and legal terms be looked into.

Mr. Norris stated that the City could go to a simpler system, and that all that would have to be changed is the face of the meter, because the meter is the same but the face and electronics of it are what is different and can be 1 pieces instead of the current equipment which is 4 pieces and that City staff can ride by the meters in the truck to gather readings, or go back to manual readings.

Vice-Mayor Huggins asked if the spike in volume of the water main breaks are causing the meters to malfunction. Mr. Norris stated that the equipment itself is just malfunctioning and is not of good quality. Vice-Mayor Huggins gave kudos to Ms. Elaine for finding the report to show this data.

Mr. Norris stated that the valves and manhole maintenance will take place as soon as March 1, but hopes to start sooner.

Vice-Mayor Huggins asked Mr. Norris how many functioning zero turn mowers we have and referenced the 2 mowers that the City purchased recently. Mr. Norris explained to Vice-Mayor Huggins and to the board that the Husqvarna mowers that were purchased were not commercial-grade lawnmowers and are not holding up well.

Mr. Norris explained that the two new mowers will be put on the shelf until the ones we do have are not working and we have to use the new ones and stated that one of the Husqvarna mowers is going to Jason to mow the grass around the wastewater treatment plant.

Mr. Norris also explained that the Hustler mower that was purchased a couple of years ago is also getting some work done to it.

Mr. Norris explained that there were 6 weed eaters that were irreparable and just wore out, and City Manager Hayes approved Mr. Norris to purchase 4 new weed eaters to use for the upcoming summer.

Mr. Norris informed the Board that the City needs smaller sump pumps for cleaning out sewer lines and public works maintenance.

Mr. Norris informed the Board that most of the mowing equipment is ready to go.

Mayor Hendrix asked if the City has about 5 working mowers, and Mr. Norris responded with 7 working mowers, and stated that the City should be in good shape for the upcoming mowing season.

City Manager Hayes also informed the Board that both Sam and Jason have a date of March 1 to provide a tool inventory for their departments for all equipment on the vehicles as well as the shops.

Vice-Mayor Huggins asked if the City has a woodchipper. Mr. Norris responded that what he saw was the skid steer that has a cutdown feature and stated that the Public Works staff has worked on cutbacks of roadways and stated that the Westside and Fletcher Myers Parks were spruced up and that they were pressure washed, and painted.

Mr. Norris stated that he is working on adding the handicap equipment to Westside Park and Fletcher Myers Park.

Commissioner Stephenson asked if the City was at the point that a contractor can come in and assist the City in getting caught up.

Mr. Norris explained that some of the City workers are fully trained in fixing the water meters and stated that the problem is the type of equipment the City has for water meters and stated that it is junk.

Lead WTP/WWTP Operator Jason Furman stated that the electronic side of it is the problem, and referenced the best water meter system currently is Neptune, which is what the City had before Zenner, and gave an example of the function of the system at his previous job with Neptune water meters.

Mayor Hendrix asked how much the system change would be, and Mr. Norris stated it would have to be researched and calculated for all the items needed for the change.

Mayor Hendrix asked how many meters are in the City, Mr. Norris responded with an approximate number of 1,100.

Mayor Hendrix asked City Manager Hayes and Public Works Director Sam Norris to gather some numbers and costs, and stated that the negotiations from the leftover grant for the water storage tank can be used for replacing the meters.

City Attorney Maines stated that the least cost-effective way is to fix what we currently have in place, and Mayor Hendrix referenced the fact that the City is still paying on the loan for the meters that are not working right.

Commissioner Stephenson asked about the vehicle that he saw about the sewer maintenance vehicle he saw on the road a few years ago, and Mr. Norris explained that the vehicle he is referring to is a multipurpose vehicle with a Jetter on the front, and a VAC-CON system in the back and that he is in discussions with City of Starke for their old, used vehicle.

Mayor Hendrix referenced the previous culvert cleanout that was creating problems with breaking the culverts while cleaning them out and urged Mr. Norris to be careful when doing that.

15. Report from the Lead WTP/WWTP Operator – Jason Furman, Lead WTP/WWTP Operator

Lead WTP/WWTP Operator Jason Furman was introduced by City Manager Hayes. Mr. Furman updated the Board that Syangro, the biosolids drying company that comes out and removes the City's sludge from the wastewater treatment plant digesters. Mr. Furman explained that they removed 51 tons of biosolids and stated that there are still about 40 tons left. Mr. Furman explained to the Board that Syangro comes out once a year and that in Green Cove Springs, they pumped 500,000 gallons a day and had Syangro out at the plant every 6 weeks, and the City also pumps 500,000 gallons a day and has Syangro come out once a year, so due to this issue, the biosolids are going out into the sprayfield pond and being sprayed out of the sprinklers, which is causing the tests at DEP to fail, and that is what is messing up the Sprayfield.

Mr. Furman informed the Board that the chlorine system at the plant failed, and that we had to get Barrett Supply Services out to assist in rebuilding some parts for our chlorine tanks. Mr. Furman explained that a couple of pieces of the panel for the chlorine pumps were replaced after shattering while trying to fix it.

Mr. Furman referenced the sprinkler that sprays the top of the plant died that is being replaced.

Mr. Furman referenced the tool inventory at the plant, and that they are cleaning out the shed at the property that was kind of a workout room. Mr. Furman explained that they are trying to get the list of all the City's infrastructure so parts can be ordered for supply for future use.

Mr. Furman explained that the ready-to-serve line and in-house tap are in progress.

Vice-Mayor Huggins commended Mr. Furman for his knowledge and experience. Mr. Furman recapped where he has worked in his career.

16. Reports from Finance Department – Dave Mecusker

Finance Director Dave Mecusker provided his monthly report to the Board and emphasized that the last 2 pages of the financial report will be primarily discussed. Mr. Mecusker explained to the Board the summary of activity by month for the 4 major funds, General Revenue, Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste. Mr. Mecusker referenced the positive direction that the City is moving in since Mrs. Hayes has been with the City and provided the statistics listed on the monthly bank account reconciliation report that is provided to the Board.

City Manager Hayes provided an update to the Board that City Hall has purchased a

vehicle for administration to use for city-related business, and that it is a little Ford Maverick out front, and the budget was \$38,000 and we got it for \$37,649.50 from Beck Ford in Palatka for the board members or administration to use as needed.

Motion to approve the Monthly Financial Report for the period October 1, 2024 through January 31, 2025 was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Commissioner Sirmones. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

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

Nothing to report.

18. Comments or Remarks by Commission

- Commissioner Sirmones – No comment.
- Commissioner Stephenson - Asked what property the City owns and asked about the status of the former Public Works property and where we were with that and if the list of properties can be discussed at next month's meeting. Mayor Hendrix stated that she spoke with City Attorney Maines about the properties and that the properties must be declared as surplus first and that herself, City Attorney Maines and City Manager Hayes will discuss this and bring to the board next month. City Manager Hayes informed the board that the old public works property is appraised at \$675,000.
- Commissioner Redman – No comment
- Vice Mayor Huggins – No comment
- Mayor Hendrix -Referenced the passing of Mr. Fletcher Myers, former black Mayor and black Commissioner, and referenced the proclamation given to him in his honor. Discussed with the board about the idea of a memorial like what is at Lakeside Park at Fletcher Myers Park and to re-dedicate it to the family and that this idea can be talked about at the next meeting. Thanks the City staff for their hard work.

19. Meeting Adjournment

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:35pm.