



## REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

August 19, 2025  
6:15PM  
City of Lake Butler  
200 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Lake Butler, Florida 32054

CERTIFIED TO BE A TRUE &  
EXACT COPY OF ORIGINAL

*Kinley Hays*

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### MEETING MINUTES

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

Mayor Hendrix called the meeting to order at 6:11pm.

##### **Roll Call:**

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

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

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 Sirmones. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. 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.

Mayor Hendrix opened the floor to public comments.

##### **Public Comments:**

Margo Van Peterson – 367 NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street

Mrs. Peterson addressed the board regarding affordable housing in Lake Butler and proposed a code amendment to the Zoning & Land Development Code to allow for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) for single family

properties, and hopes the board will consider this proposal. A copy of the letter that was read to the Board is attached to these minutes.

Connor Rye provided a public apology to the Board regarding an incident that occurred while fishing with friends at Lakeside Park on Sunday, August 3, 2025. Mr. Rye explained that he was being reckless and jumped on a pole that fell into the water. Mr. Rye explained that when he got home, he informed his parents and then contacted the Sheriff's Office regarding the issue and also met with Mrs. Hayes and expressed his apologies and stated he would be going down to the lake every Saturday to do community service.

Mayor Hendrix commends Mr. Rye for taking accountability for his actions, and his parents as well, and said he spoke with Mrs. Hayes who informed her of the incident.

Mrs. Hayes expressed how impressed she was with Connor for immediately telling his parents what he did, and then the immediate call to the Sheriff's Office. Mrs. Hayes explained to the Board that she had a great conversation with Connor and his mother about the incident, and that he will be doing community service, and stated he was very apologetic and was very proud of how he handled the situation and did the right thing. Mrs. Hayes thanks Connor for doing the right thing, and thanked his parents as well.

Vice-Mayor Huggins thanked Connor for his integrity and bravery he has shown and for coming up and speaking with Mrs. Hayes and for the community service work he plans to do as well.

Commissioner Redman thanked Connor as well, and stated that he will make mistakes, but to learn from the mistakes he makes and said he is very proud of him and to be a leader, not a follower.

There were no further public comments.

Mayor Hendrix closed the floor to public comments.

#### 4. Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. Special City Commission Meeting Minutes from July 10, 2025
- b. Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget Workshop Minutes from July 10, 2025
- c. Regular City Commission Meeting Minutes from July 15, 2025
- d. Special City Commission Meeting Minutes from July 31, 2025
- e. Code Enforcement Report July 2025
- f. July 2025 WEX Invoice, activity report, and vehicle logs
- g. Animal Control Logs for July 2025
- h. DOC-Attorney Revised Amendment to No. 5 to U08-005 City of Lake Butler Water/Wastewater Services Agreement with Department of Corrections originally approved at July 10, 2025 Special Meeting

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

#### 5. Discussion on Vandalism Incident at Lakeside Park on July 27, 2025

Mayor Hendrix explained that she received a message from two citizens at like 7:15am Sunday morning, to come down to the park, there had been an incident that happened in the park around 3am. There was extensive damage to the lot that we lease from Mr. Driggers, and there was damage to the retention pond and the handicap area of the park. The two citizens were down there, and she called the Sheriff's Office to file a police report. Camera footage was pulled, as well as the footage from the residents who live across the road, and the group of individuals who were down at the park for hours, and decided to take their truck, drive through the retention pond, drive over the 10-inch pipe, do donuts around the handicap merry-go-round, then proceeded to go back through the retention pond, and come out the street facing the residents, and broke the 10-inch pipe, and decided to go in front of the Community Center and then went onto Mr. Driggers property and did some donuts, dug up ruts, and then get stuck, and have to get someone to come pull them out, and that this happened around 2:50am and ended around



3:40-3:50am. Mayor Hendrix said she spoke with the Sheriff's Office who informed her they identified the suspects. Later that day, she received a phone call from Mr. Driggers, and there was a couple of people down there on his property, and she went down and identified herself, and asked them what their names was, said the first one refused to give them their name and asked why she needed to know, she explained again who she was, and asked the other gentlemen was his name was, he also asked why she needed to know, she explained that there was damage to this property, and that the truck they were in looked like the truck from the camera footage, and they started laughing, she said she did not find anything funny about the situation, he said that truck was not the truck that did it, but I am not going to tell you I was not the one who did it, and she responded telling them they do not need to be here, and said she has not ever been disrespected so badly, and expected more and called the Sheriff's office and asked if they told them to come down here, which they did not, so Mr. Townsend was called and she told the deputy they need to leave the premises, and that another deputy had to come down there and tell them to leave, so they left. Mayor Hendrix said that they were down there with a shovel and a rake, and one of them said they were there to make things right. Mayor Hendrix explained that she met with Mrs. Hayes and the Sheriff and discussed the incident, and identified the individuals who was the driver and passenger, from what we were told, and that herself, Mrs. Hayes and the Sheriff came up with an opportunity for these young men, one who she believes is 18 and the other one may be underage, and said it would not look good to get arrested for this, so part of this discussion and letter to the Sheriff was that they would come to the meeting tonight and give a public apology to the board, and they also will fill in the damaged areas with dirt and sod, and said she was told they started this work, and it is not acceptable, and that they need to work with Mrs. Hayes on this, and that they will also pay to fix the 10-inch pipe that was broken, and that they will maintain Mr. Driggers property for the destruction of his property and stated the two gentlemen are here tonight to speak to everyone.

Zeke Malphurs publicly apologized to the Board for the damage caused to the ground and apologized to Mr. Driggers as well for the damage to his property and sincerely apologized for his actions.

Case Elixson publicly apologized to the Board for the damage caused to the ground and apologized to Mr. Driggers as well and sincerely apologized for his actions.

City Manager Hayes addressed the two individuals who spoke and stated that she will be working very closely with them to get the situation resolved and taken care of the right way and restored to how it was before.

Mayor Hendrix stated that there is vandalism at all the parks, and that maybe at the upcoming budget workshop, there can be further discussion on camera updates.

6. Certificates of Appreciation (Union County Senior Citizens on the Move, Gather Senior Connection, Let's Thrive by Lake Butler Hospital) – Mayor Hendrix

Mayor Hendrix recognized the three (3) organizations: Let's Thrive by Lake Butler Hospital, Union County Senior Citizens on the Move, and Gather Senior Connection.

Mayor Hendrix presented a plaque of appreciation to each of the groups, and photos were taken.

7. First Reading of Ordinance No. 2025-01 for Application CPA 25-01 (Spires Inc.)

Motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 2025-01 for Application CPA 25-01 (Spires Inc.) to be read by title only was made by Commissioner Redman. Title only read by City Attorney Maines. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

8. First Reading of Ordinance No. 2025-02 for Application LDR 25-01 (City Commission)

Motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 2025-02 for Application LDR 25-01 (City Commission) to be read by title only was made by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Title read by City Attorney Maines. Motion seconded by Commissioner Redman. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

9. First Reading of Ordinance No. 2025-03 for Application Z 25-01 (Spires Inc.)



Motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 2025-03 for Application Z 25-01 (Spires Inc.) to be read by title only was made by Commissioner Sirmones. Title read by City Attorney Maines. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

10. Board Review and Discussion of Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for General Contractor Services for Townsend Green Building Rehabilitation Project

City Manager Hayes explained that an RFQ was put out, no bids were received, and they will readvertise it and basically start over since we did not receive any bids.

11. Board Discussion on Rates and Fees for Occupational Licenses, Water/Sewer Tap Connections, & One-Time Event Fees

Mayor Hendrix explained that City Manager Hayes and her staff prepared a list of the surrounding cities' fees and what they charge and opened the floor to discussion.

City Attorney Maines suggested simplifying the current occupational license fee schedule.

The Board collectively agreed to table the discussion on the occupational licenses to next month's meeting after further research can be done.

Mayor Hendrix explained there are 3 motions on the table:

1. Motion to deny the one-time event fee for all special events within the City of Lake Butler was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Commissioner Stephenson. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.
2. Motion to table discussion on occupational licenses was made by Commissioner Sirmones. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.
3. Motion to keep the water/sewer tap fee of \$2,200 was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Commissioner Sirmones. The motion passed 4-1, with Commissioner Stephenson opposed.

12. Board Discussion on proposed Noise Ordinance for City of Lake Butler

Mayor Hendrix explained she has gotten lots of complaints and phone calls about air boats and racing boats that come up from Savannah and Miami to test their boats in the lake, and there has been frustration with the noise so early in the morning, and that is where this started, but after speaking to Mr. Maines, they do not think this noise ordinance can handle this sort of thing, but that this is for everyone to read and get back with Mrs. Hayes and to have further discussion, but one of the items that Mr. Maines mentioned is that we do not own the lake, we lease the lake if we put our docks in there, and that is why we had to rip out the rotten docks before we were ticketed by FWC, but we do have the ability to say we do not want any airboats or race boats there unless it is a sanctioned event, and that signs can be put up, and a Resolution can be drawn up. Mr. Maines stated that limiting access to that type of watercraft would alleviate this problem. Mayor Hendrix stated this is just a discussion item, not a voting item, and can be brought up at next month's meeting for further discussion.

13. Update on Church property located across from Union County Farm Bureau – Commissioner Sirmones

Commissioner Sirmones provided an update to the Board that he spoke with the owner of the old church property who stated that they had left someone in charge to keep up with the property, but they did not keep up with the property, and the owner has had multiple strokes and cannot get out there and physically clean up the property. Vice-Mayor Huggins asked if there is a policy that prohibits him from taking his zero-turn over there and mowing the property, and Mayor Hendrix stated as a citizen, yes, and confirmed with Mr. Maines, who agreed as a citizen, you are able to do so. Vice-Mayor Huggins stated he would let Mr. Jackson know that as well.

14. Approval of Lease Agreement between Alachua County Facilities Management & City of Lake Butler for Townsend Green Building Office – October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026



Mayor Hendrix confirmed with Mrs. Hayes that this lease is the same as the one last year, and nothing has changed, and Mrs. Hayes confirmed yes, nothing changed with the lease.

Motion to approve the Lease Agreement between Alachua County Facilities Management & City of Lake Butler for one of the Townsend Green Building offices for the period of October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026 was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

#### 15. Board Discussion on 2025 Christmas Parade Date and Theme

Mayor Hendrix explained that the City asked for the community's input on suggestions and ideas for a theme this year, and that we received 8 and read the list of ideas (Santa's Toyland Christmas, Hometown (Country) Christmas, Ugly Sweater Party Christmas, Home for Christmas: A Salute to our Hometown Heroes, A "Quacktastic" Christmas doing a duck-themed parade, Candyland Christmas, Winter Wonderland Christmas, "Hallmark" Movie Christmas). Mayor Hendrix suggested to the audience to raise their hands if they pick each theme, and went through the list, and the majority vote was for Hometown Country Christmas.

Mayor Hendrix stated that our dates are limited with the band availability.

Motion to set the date for the 2025 Christmas Parade for the City of Lake Butler for December 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm and for the theme to be Hometown (Country) Christmas was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Hendrix stated that this is not on the agenda, but she has seen on Facebook about Halloween and fall festivals, and that Halloween is on Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, and wanted to see what the Board wanted to do.

Motion to set the Trick-or-Treating hours for the City of Lake Butler to be on October 31<sup>st</sup> from 6pm-8pm was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Commissioner Stephenson. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

#### 16. Date of 1<sup>st</sup> Public Hearing for the 2025-2026 Annual Operating Budget

Motion to set the 1<sup>st</sup> public hearing for 2025-2026 annual operating budget and TRIM hearing for September 4, 2025 at 5:30pm was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Commissioner Sirmones. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

Motion to set the 1<sup>st</sup> public hearing for the 2025-2026 TRIM hearing for September 4, 2025, at 5:40pm was made by Commissioner Sirmones. Motion seconded by Commissioner Redman. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

The consensus of the board is to set the 2<sup>nd</sup> TRIM and budget public hearings for the night of the 16<sup>th</sup> at 6pm and 6:10pm.

#### 17. City Manager's Report – Kimberly Hayes, City Manager

City Manager Kimberly Hayes provided a report to the Board addressing the Fletcher Myers Park Dedication Ceremony, update on the Splash Park, update on the paving of SE 7<sup>th</sup> Street and SW 1<sup>st</sup> Drive, and update on the funding for the Ground Storage Tank.

City Manager Hayes provided an update to the Board regarding the work that is being done to the ground storage tank, informing the Board that there was more work than what they anticipated when they got into the ground storage tank, and that more repairs are needed and is more than what was budgeted for, so the additional cost was approximately \$52,000, and that we had \$15,000 left in the construction budget, so there is a difference of \$37,000 that the City needs to come up with to get the repairs needed to the ground storage tank to last for years and years. Mrs. Hayes explained that she spoke with Mr. Mecusker, and that a loan against the Wastewater CD can be done and that it will not affect the Wastewater budget, and also stated



that she met with CPH, the engineers, and they are getting with the contractor tomorrow, and stated that the project is at a standstill until the funding is determined and resolved.

Motion to approve the \$37,000 loan against the Wastewater CD to be able to complete the ground storage tank rehab project was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Vice-Mayor Huggins. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

18. Report from Public Works Department – Public Works Director Michael Gray

Public Works Director Michael Gray provided his report to the Board regarding the work completed in the Public Works Department.

19. Reports from Water/Wastewater Department – Jason Furman – Lead WTP/WWTP Operator

Lead WTP/WWTP Operator Jason Furman provided his report to the Board regarding a water break on August 11, 2025, the ground storage tank estimated date of completion, and the wastewater sprayfield pump repair.

20. Reports from Finance Department – Dave Mecusker

Finance Director Dave Mecusker provided his reports to the Board.

Motion to approve the financial report for period October 1, 2024 through July 31, 2025 was made by Commissioner Redman. Motion seconded by Commissioner Sirmones. Unanimous approval. Motion passed 5-0.

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

Nothing to report.

22. Comments or Remarks by Commission

- Commissioner Sirmones – Asked about the offer on the public works property and why it was not on the agenda. Mayor Hendrix explained that offer was for owner-financing, and Mr. Maines further explained the offers.
- Commissioner Stephenson – no comment.
- Commissioner Redman – no comment.
- Vice Mayor Huggins – Thanked Mrs. Hayes for the update on the roads. Asked about the water bills regarding the due date and late fees being applied. City Manager Hayes and Accounts Payable & Payroll Clerk Elaine Hines explained the current process that is in place. Vice-Mayor Huggins stated he was just trying to understand the process so that if a citizen asks, he is giving them the correct information. Stated he was looking through Captain Williams' report, regarding the sheds and campers, which he had some concerns about, and when looking at his report, he did drive-bys, and did not go knock on the doors, and we went to the actual houses and knocked on the doors, whereas he sent a letter, but we went and knocked on the doors, so he is trying to understand his report versus what we are doing, and wants to make sure we are following the rules, and wants to understand the difference between what he does versus what we do. City Manager Hayes stated she believes there is a conflict of interest with the code enforcement officer, and that she has noticed it ever since she started with the City when you have the Sheriff's Office going and doing code enforcement, because you have 2 different entities representing the Sheriff's Office and the City for Code Enforcement. Mayor Hendrix explained that she has had a conversation with the code enforcement officer regarding the forms and explained that the City does not fill out the forms, and that these issues should be getting identified before the City Manager reports them to code enforcement. City Manager Hayes clarified that when they discussed the sheds and campers at the budget workshop, she wanted to make sure the Board was in agreement to proceed with

enforcement, she wanted to be clear that it would be fair across the board, and that this is a concern of hers. Mayor Hendrix explained that the code enforcement position is a day-to-day operation and is the City Manager's call. Vice-Mayor Huggins asked about how many people are living in sheds, and how many people we will be affecting, but that the ordinance is an ordinance. Mayor Hendrix referenced the paper that was given to the Board that it is illegal to live in a shed and is a state statute. Vice-Mayor Huggins reiterated he is just trying to understand the indifference in the services that the City is paying for regarding code enforcement.

- Mayor Hendrix – Referenced the good news that she will be going to Arcadia because the City was awarded the \$2.8 million, so she will be going down there to represent the City, and recapped that the City has received an additional \$4.2 million a few months ago, and was also awarded the \$2.8 million, and thanks the staff for the hard work that is put in for this funding.

## 23. 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 8:33pm.