



CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA
APRIL 2, 2024, REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MEETING MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Watford called the regular meeting of the City Council for the City of Okeechobee to order on April 2, 2024, at 6:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers, located at 55 Southeast 3rd Avenue (AVE), Room 200, Okeechobee, Florida. The invocation was offered by Pastor Don Hanna of First United Methodist Church; followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Council Member Chandler.

II. ATTENDANCE

City Clerk Lane Gamiotea called the roll. Members present to establish a quorum: Mayor Dowling R. Watford, Jr., Vice Mayor Monica M. Clark, and Council Members Noel A. Chandler, Robert "Bob" Jarriel, and David R. McAuley.

III. AGENDA AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

A. There were no modifications stated at this time. However, three pages were added to Exhibit 5, for New Business Item VI. B.

B. Motion and second by Council Members Jarriel and McAuley, to adopt the agenda as published.
Motion Carried Unanimously.

C. There were no comment cards submitted for public participation for issues not on the agenda.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Vice Mayor Clark, second by Council Member Chandler to:

A. Dispense with the reading and approve the Minutes for March 19, 2024 [as presented in **Exhibit 1**]; and

B. Reappoint Dawn Hoover and Mac Jonassaint as regular members and Dean Murray as an alternate member to the Planning Board, the Board of Adjustment, and the Design Review Board, terms being May 1, 2024, through April 30, 2027 [as presented in **Exhibit 2**].

Motion Carried Unanimously.

V. MAYOR WATFORD OPENED THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR ORDINANCE ADOPTION AT 6:02 P.M.

A. Motion and second by Council Members Jarriel and McAuley to read by title only, proposed Ordinance No. 1287, prohibiting smoking/vaping in City Parks, adding enforcement of the policy by Code Enforcement citation process [as presented in **Exhibit 3**].

Motion Carried Unanimously.

City Attorney John Fumero read into the record the title of proposed Ordinance No. 1287 as follows: "**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES AT CHAPTER 30 ENVIRONMENT; ADDING SECTION 30-47 SMOKING AT PUBLIC PARKS PROHIBITED; PROHIBITING SMOKING IN CITY PARKS; PROVIDING FOR ENFORCEABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**"

Motion by Vice Mayor Clark, second by Council Member Jarriel, to adopt proposed Ordinance No. 1287. Mayor Watford opened the floor for public comments, there were none.

Roll Call Vote: Chandler – Yea, Clark – Yea, Jarriel – Yea, McAuley – Yea, Watford – Yea.
Motion Carried Unanimously.

MAYOR WATFORD CLOSED THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:04 P.M.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Motion and second by Council Members Jarriel and McAuley to [award] a [Quote] to Streamline Paving in the amount of \$18,900.00 for repairing [two segments] of the asphalt on Southwest (SW) 11th AVE [segment one: the East 12.5-feet (ft) from SW 2nd Street (ST) Northward 50-ft; segment two: the West 12.5-ft from SW 6th ST Southward 202-ft as presented in **Exhibit 4**].

Motion Carried Unanimously.

VI. NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED

B. Motion by Vice Mayor Clark, second by Council Member Jarriel, to approve the Fiscal Year 2023-24 proposed Midyear Budget Amendments [as presented in **Exhibit 5**]. Finance Director Riedel distributed three pages that corrected pages one and two of the budget, and the one page that provided the line items and difference amount between the adopted budget to mid-year adjustment amount.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

C. Mayor Watford advised he has received numerous complaints regarding food trucks becoming permanent structures and requested the topic be discussed. City Planner Ben Smith of Morris-Depew Associates, Inc., and City Attorney Fumero provided the standards as outlined in Ordinance No. 1272 as adopted by the Council as well as the Florida Statutes (FS) mandating what authority the City has to govern food trucks. The Ordinance allows food trucks to operate within the Industrial and all Commercial Zoning Districts so long as they meet the requirements in the FS and Ordinance. The Ordinance does not address the length of time food trucks can operate in these Zoning Districts, so long as there is no more than two per site and no tables or chairs. Other Zoning Districts allow food trucks based on special event/temporary use permits.

The issue of requiring bathrooms was addressed. The three hours limit provided in the Ordinance is not the length of time a food truck can operate, but rather the length of time they can operate before bathrooms are required to be made available to the food truck's customers. City business owners Jose Cruz of Manny's Flower Shop and Jason Ferrell of Ferrell's Market addressed the Council on the issue. There was no official action taken.

VII. CITY ATTORNEY UPDATE

Discussed information included in House Bill 1365 prohibiting unauthorized camping and sleeping in public areas. The Bill provides for citizens to file suit against municipalities that do not take the appropriate measures to prevent said actions. A copy of the Bill was provided to the City Clerk and added to the official Minute File. Attorney Fumero will be providing a written summary of all new laws from the 2024 Legislative Session to the Mayor, Council, and Staff.

VIII. CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

- Thanked the Staff for the great job they did while he was out of the office [March 20-31].
- The City is working diligently to complete the real estate closings on the two properties within the Commerce Center so the new businesses can begin site planning and development.
- Reminded everyone that there are growing pains involved in the process when cities see increases in development; but that new businesses attract more new businesses to the area; the growing pains are not going to get better, changes in technology and the way the City operates will be needed. He recommended that in lieu of Department Reports, that a Workshop be scheduled prior to the next budget cycle to review the day-to-day issues each department is experiencing.

IX. COUNCIL COMMENTS

- Council Member Chandler stated he was glad to see Council Member Jarriel was able to attend the meeting in person.
- Council Member Jarriel is glad to be out of the hospital and to see that the General Services Department has been busy.
- Council Member McAuley thanked the Finance Department for their work on the mid-year Budget amendments.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of discussion, Mayor Watford adjourned the meeting at 7:09 P.M.

Submitted By:

Lane Gamiotea, CMC, City Clerk

Please take notice and be advised that when a person decides to appeal any decision made by the City Council with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, s/he may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. City Clerk media are for the sole purpose of backup for official records of the Clerk.