

**CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA
BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS
SENIOR CITIZEN BUILDING
314 N 3rd STREET
REGULAR MEETING
March 28, 2024
6:00 PM**

The City Commission met on this date March 28, 2024 at 6:00 P.M. at the Senior Citizen Building, 314 N. 3rd St, Wewahitchka, Florida. **Mayor Gaskin** called the meeting to order, asked **Sheriff Harrison** to lead a prayer, and everyone said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance

Mayor Phillip Gaskin
Commissioner Ralph Fisher
Commissioner Charlie Pettis
Commissioner Johnny Paul
Commissioner Brian Cox

Public

Ann Johnson
Rebecca Perry
Justin Barnes
Gene Hanlon
Chuck Johnson
Hunter Baumgardner
Clay Murphy
Jack Husband
Patricia Dunlap
Bruce Dunlap

City Manager

Michael Gortman

City Attorney

Michelle Jordan

City Superintendent

Chipper Wade

City Clerk

Rachel Jackson

City Parks & Rec Director

David Paul

City Finance Director

Brittney Proctor (via phone)

City Finance Clerk

Misty Robbins

Sheriff

Mike Harrison

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve the agenda. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Approval of Minutes

Following review, **Commissioner Paul** made a motion to approve Regular Meeting 2/29/24 minutes. **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Recognition

Mayor Gaskin asked if there was anyone from the public that was not on the agenda that would like to speak.

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Public Recognition cont'd....

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Rebecca Perry, with the Conservation Fund, discussed the organization that she represents, Inca Investment Forest Assets, and an informational packet regarding a conservation project, "Tupelo Honey Timberlands," that they are requesting a letter of support for. **Ms. Perry** stated they are submitting the project to the Florida Forever Program for a conservation easement. She explained that the Tupelo Honey Timberlands is comprised of 2,214 acres located west of the City of Wewahitchka, including approximately 220 acres within the city limits.

Ms. Perry stated incorporating Tupelo Honey Timberlands into the Florida Forever program will create the opportunity to support the water quality and woodlands that contribute to our city's natural resource economy. In addition, future protection of this property will support the resiliency of the City and surrounding communities by safeguarding the property's pine forests that provide flood protection, aquifer recharge and habitat for wildlife moving through the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

Following discussion, the board decided to review and discuss the project more prior to providing a letter of support.

Mayor Gaskin asked if there was anyone else in the public that would like to speak. **Mr. Gene Hanlon** expressed appreciation for use of tables and chairs during his time of loss.

Mrs. Ann Johnson asked if it would be possible to get a light near the corner of the road at the Senior Building. She stated when they had the Bingo event for Friends of the Library, it was really dark outside and made it hard for people to see. Following discussion, the board instructed **City Manager Michael Gortman** to see about getting a light out there.

Agenda

1. Ordinance 2024-1228L Homewood Dr. Operational & Maintenance Abandonment
(Final reading) – **Mayor Gaskin** by title only **Ordinance 2024-1228L:**

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-1228L

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA, FLORIDA, VACATING A PORTION OF HOMEWOOD DRIVE; PROVIDING FOR CESSATION OF OPERATIONAL AND MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES; PROVIDING FOR REVERSION OF VACATED REAL PROPERTY TO THE ADJOINING PROPERTY OWNER; PROVIDING FOR CORRECTION TO PUBLIC RECORDS OF THE CITY; PROVIDING FOR FILING OF THE ORDINANCE WITH GULF COUNTY CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND DECLARING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

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Following reading, **Commissioner Fisher** made a motion to accept **Ordinance 2024-1228L**. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

2. Ordinance 2024-1229L – Ward I, Ward II Elections (1st reading) – City Clerk Rachel Jackson provided election information for the upcoming Ward I and Ward II elections. She stated that the qualifying starts noon June 10, 2024 (ct) and ends noon June 14, 2024 (ct). The qualifying fee is \$85.00, books close July 22, 2024, and election day is August 20, 2024.

Mayor Gaskin asked City Clerk Rachel Jackson to read by title only **Ordinance 2024-1229L**. **City Clerk Rachel Jackson** read **Ordinance 2024-1229L**.

NOTICE OF CITY ELECTION
ORDINANCE NO. 2024-1229L

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA PROVIDING FOR A CITY ELECTION, PROVIDING FOR QUALIFYING DATES AND A QUALIFYING FEE, DESIGNATING POLLING PLACE(S), AUTHORIZING THE APPOINTMENT OF ELECTION OFFICERS, STATING WHO MAY VOTE, PROVIDING FOR VOTE BY MAIL BALLOTS, PROVIDING FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A CANVASSING BOARD AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Following reading, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve the advertisement and first reading of **Ordinance 2024-1229L**. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

3. Webber Right of Way Maintenance Agreement – City Manager Michael Gortman presented and discussed the maintenance agreement for Hwy 22 & Hwy 71, stating it is changing from Ferrovial to Webber.

Following discussion **Commissioner Fisher** made a motion to approve and allow signature of the Webber Right of Way Maintenance Agreement. **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor Gaskin stated he would like to add the LDR ordinance onto the agenda.

Commissioner Fisher made a motion to add **LDR Ordinance 2024-1230L** onto the agenda. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor Gaskin read by title only:

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-1230L

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA, FLORIDA, REPEALING EXISTING LAND USE

REGULATIONS AND ADOPTING NEW LAND USE REGULATIONS FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF NOTICE AND PUBLIC HEARING; PROVIDING FOR AUTHORITY; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF PRIOR INCONSISTENT ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Following reading, **Commissioner Paul** made a motion to approve the 1st reading and advertisement of **Ordinance 2024-1230L**. **Commissioner Fisher** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Approval of Bills

1. Fisher's Building Supply – Following review, **Commissioner Paul** made a motion to approve payment of Fisher's Building Supply bills (\$721.55) **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0, with **Commissioner Fisher** abstaining due to conflict of interest.

2. Charlie Pettis Pest Services – Following review, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve payment of Charlie Pettis Pest Services invoice (\$90.00). **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0, with **Commissioner Pettis** abstaining due to conflict of interest.

3. Wewa Outdoors – Following review, **Commissioner Fisher** made a motion to approve payment of Wewa Outdoors bills (\$582.98) **Commissioner Cox** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0, with **Commissioner Paul** abstaining due to conflict of interest.

4. Regular Bills – Following review and discussion, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve payment of the regular bills (\$62,713.60) re-occurring bills (\$90,937.46) and additional bills (\$28,923.33) **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Old Business/Open Items

1. Fire station/old City Hall –

(Original Substantial Completion Date 9/4/21, Original Work Completion Date 10/11/21)

(Change Order #3-7/29/21-Changed Substantial Comp. Date 11/17/21, Work Completion Date 12/25/21)

CHANGE ORDER #4-10/28/21 – SUBST. COMPLETION DATE 12/9/21, WORK COMPLETION DATE 1/15/22

Engineer Hunter Baumgardner stated we had a good pre-bid meeting. Contractors questions were answered and any that were not able to be answered at the meeting are we getting responses back now. Four different contractors came to the mandatory bid meeting. The bids are due noon April 26, 2024.

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Mayor Gaskin discussed items that he felt needed to be removed from the bid tab because they could be purchased by the City at a later date for less money.

Following discussion, **Commissioner Fisher** made a motion to have an addendum sent out on the fire station bid tab removing the following items: washer, dryer, chairs, table, island, air compressor, bottle filler, and lockers **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

2. **Delinquent Utility Bills** – None
3. **Water Losses** – **City Superintendent Chipper Wade** stated they are working on it
4. **SEWER INFILTRATION AND INFLOW** – **City Superintendent Chipper Wade** stated they are working on it
5. **Ray Dickens Fish Fry for the Sr. Citizens (October 4, 2024)** – None
6. **Lift Station** – **Engineer Hunter Baumgardner** stated the electrician is putting in the panel and looks like they will meet the deadline.
7. **Overtime Report broken down by pay periods** – None
8. **LDR's** – None
9. **Employee Water/Sewer License Testing** – **City Manager Michael Gortman** provided updates on the employee water/sewer license testing:
 - Kyle Whitfield – Working on them
 - David Paul – Working on them
 - Blake Gilmore – 2 more tests sent off
10. **Senior Building** – **City Parks and Rec Director David Paul** stated they have the new sign out front and new light on porch.
11. **Cemetery Committee & Buckhorn Decorative Fencing** – **Mayor Gaskin** discussed the pole barn and asked **City Superintendent Chipper Wade** to put up stakes. **City Superintendent Chipper Wade** stated that he already had it flagged. **Mayor Gaskin** said they would go up and look at it one day.

Other Comments

City Attorney Michelle Jordan – None

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City Manager Michael Gortman – Stated we got an email from Brooks Baldwin, they have some gas well on the old Pridgeon property and would like access for gas well monitoring. Following discussion the board approved signature of the access agreement.

City Superintendent Chipper Wade – None

City Parks & Rec Director – Met with Johnathan Melvin at the TL James bathrooms. He provided a quote of \$3,800 for labor. It should take about 2 days.

Following discussion, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to move forward with block work. **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Commissioner Fisher asked about accessing the restrooms during the work. **City Parks and Rec Director David Paul** discussed the plan for keeping the restrooms accessible or possibly getting a port-a-toilet if necessary.

Sheriff Mike Harrison – Stated he couldn't help overhearing the questions about the the sex offender ordinance and asked if there were any issues with it?

Mayor Gaskin stated there is a sexual predator on Johnson Lane asked about his being close to bus stop. **Sheriff Harrison** stated he had sent out a notification earlier this afternoon, but he was not a child sex offender. **Sheriff Harrison** stated it is difficult working off of 3 different ordinances and he would love if all 3 areas could agree on the same regulations.

Following discussion, the board instructed city staff to get a copy of the sex offender ordinance for review at the next meeting.

City Engineers – **County Commissioner Jack Husband** stated he could go ahead and talk about the information that the **Mayor** requested at last meeting or wait until the Mayor's time to talk. **Mayor Gaskin** told him to go ahead. **County Commissioner Husband** stated that he found out about the Triumph money, it was used for three projects: Sheriff's Office, Beach Renourishment, Howard Creek Boat Ramp

Mayor Gaskin asked if he had amounts for that. **Commissioner Husband** stated he did not, but he will get those amounts. **Commissioner Husband** stated he was told that the County had hired a grant manager and the process took 12-18 months. He has told that the City can apply for it just like the County had. **Mayor Gaskin** and **Commissioner Paul** stated that was not what the City was told. They were told that the County would receive the City's portion of the money and then they would give it to the City.

Commissioner Husband provided updates on other projects:

- He stated they got the sand for playground taken care of

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- Got reflectors for Old Dairy Farm Rd in and requested that the City work with the county getting those installed on the road
- At the last County Commission meeting we gave \$40,000 to the City for a pickle ball court. **Commissioner Husband** met with **Commissioner Paul, City Parks & Rec Director David Paul**, and **City Manager Michael Gortman** to discuss the project. **David Paul** had it all laid out and the county should be dropping limerock off. Once the asphalt is completed there should be about \$8,000 left for hardware, nets, etc.
- Received approval for the Gulf County Sheriff's Office in Wewa to be painted and for the flower beds to be done.
- Provided update on re-paving of Court St.

Engineer Hunter Baumgardner got the DOT application submitted for 2nd St.

Engineer Clay Murphy presented and discussed a preliminary plat for a 7.3 acre parcel on Old Dairy Farm Road. **Engineer Murphy** stated they are asking for 8 units to be approved to continue their process.

Discussion of access roads, driveways, and a culdesac followed. Following discussion, **Commissioner Fisher** made a motion that the developer add a road with a culdesac to the plans in order to move forward. **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

City Finance Director Brittney Proctor – None

Mayor Gaskin asked for a financial report for the next meeting. **City Finance Director Brittney Proctor** stated she would have it ready.

City Finance Clerk Misty Robbins – None

City Clerk Rachel Jackson – Discussed issues with the current phone system and presented an estimate for an alternative system.

Following discussion, **Commissioner Fisher** made a motion to allow **City Clerk Rachel Jackson** to proceed with changing phone systems. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor/Commissioners' Comments

Commissioner Cox – Stated we need to look at backup power source for City Hall, would like to get quotes for next meeting

Commissioner Paul – asked about repairing the horse arena roof, **City Parks and Rec Director David Paul** discussed getting the repairs completed.

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Commissioner Paul asked **Engineer Husband** about the waterline project. **Engineer Husband** stated they are held up in environmental permitting.

Commissioner Paul discussed issues with speeding on Lake Grove Rd and asked **Sheriff Harrison** if he could put someone out there near school times to slow them down. **Sheriff Harrison** stated he would.

Commissioner Paul discussed the need for an additional traffic light on Highway 71. **City Attorney Michelle Jordan** stated she would get DOT contact information.

Commissioner Pettis – stated **Bro. Gene** has cemetery lots at Jehu that he would like to trade for some at Buckhorn.

Following discussion, the board directed **City Attorney Michelle Jordan** to look into it to see if it is allowable.

Commissioner Fisher – None

Mayor Gaskin – Asked **Engineer Jack Husband** about Burger King. **Engineer Husband** stated he got with Brad and will see what he found out.

Adjournment

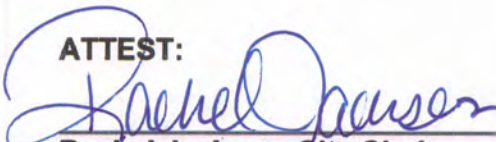
Commissioner Pettis made a motion to adjourn at 7:47 pm. **Commissioner Cox** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA



Phillip Gaskin, Mayor

ATTEST:



Rachel Jackson, City Clerk

