

**CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA  
BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS  
WEWAHITCHKA LIBRARY  
314 N 2<sup>nd</sup> STREET  
REGULAR MEETING  
May 3, 2023  
9:00 AM**

The City Commission met on this date, May 3, 2023 at 9:00 A.M. at the Wewahitchka Library, 314 N. 2<sup>nd</sup> St, Wewahitchka, Florida. **Mayor Pro-Tem Fisher** called the meeting to order, **Tom Wynn** lead a prayer and everyone said the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Attendance**

Commissioner Fisher  
Commissioner Cox  
Commissioner Paul

**Public**

Ann Johnson  
Chuck Johnson  
Tom Wynn  
Jerry Pridgeon  
Jack Husband  
Hunter Baumgardner  
Wendy Weitzel  
Gene Hanlon  
Mary Jones  
Carol Childress

**Attorney**

Michelle Jordan

**City Manager**

Michael Gortman

**City Clerk**

Rachel Jackson

**City Finance Director**

Brittney Proctor

**City Superintendent**

Chipper Wade

**City Parks & Rec Director**

David Paul

**City Finance Clerk**

Misty Robbins

**Approval of Agenda**

**Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve the agenda, **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

**Public Recognition**

**Tom Wynn** discussed the Friends of the Library organization, stating that the organization is a 501-C3 formed in 2022 to assist the library in purchasing books and supplies, and supplying volunteers for activities. Our local library is the only library in the Northwest Florida Region without a janitorial service. **Mr. Wynn** asked about the cleaning contract for the library. **City Clerk Rachel Jackson** stated that the Attorney has not completed drafting the contract, but it will be sent to The Friends of the Library once it's completed.

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**Mr. Wynn** stated there was an incident about drones flying over private property. He stated that it is illegal for code enforcement to fly over private property without consent or a warrant. **Mayor Pro Tem Fisher** stated we will need our attorney to review. **City Manager Michael Gortman** stated he will contact code enforcement and find out what methods they are using.

**Ann Johnson** stated Sons of Confederate Veterans will be here Monday @ 11:30 to honor veterans by putting up memorial markers for headstones. They are setting 6 headstones, 2 in Jehu, 2 at Roberts, and 2 at lola and will schedule a dedication ceremony at later time. lola cemetery got bulldozed following Hurricane Michael. The historical society is trying to get permission from the owner to get access to clean it up.

**Jerry Pridgeon** stated that in February of 2022 Dixie Dandy stopped up the sewer lines with grease. Last Saturday they stopped it up again, for the 19<sup>th</sup> time, causing sewage to back up into his property. **Mr. Pridgeon** requested that their water and sewer be cut off.

**Mayor Pro Tem Fisher** stated he talked to them and told them that we were going to cut the water off. However, after speaking with the lady who has taken it over, he believes that she is going to stop the problem. **Mayor Pro Tem Fisher** stated he would like to give her a chance to correct the issue and if it happens again we will cut them off. **Mayor Pro Tem Fisher** said that he is going to go work with her to make sure that the grease trap is working properly. **Mayor Pro Tem Fisher** stated that a camera needs to be run through to see if the line is clear.

**Commissioner Paul** asked if there was a way to check the lines every so often to make sure that they aren't backing up? **City Parks and Rec Director David Paul** said we can get on a routine to use our jet pump to keep it clear once a month.

**Commissioner Paul** asked if there was anything that could be used in the lines to prevent the grease buildup? **City Manager Michael Gortman** stated yes, they also talked to Glenda about a degreaser and she ordered it. She seemed like she is going to try to correct the issue.

**Mr. Pridgeon** stated that in July 2022, in Florida Statutes there was a new law on grease disposal that is a lot more strict than the old law. It is illegal to pour grease into a grease trap. **Mayor Pro Tem Fisher** stated that Dixie Dandy is not set up that way, Glenda told him that they open it up and go in with a shovel and scoop it into a bucket, the bucket is then dumped into a reservoir near the gas pumps, and a company comes and pumps it out.

**Commissioner Paul** asked **Mrs. Ann Johnson** what did they do with their grease when they had their restaurant because they never had any issues with their grease backing up the sewer lines? **Mrs. Johnson** stated they had an outside tank that they put the grease in and a company came and pumped it out.

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**Mayor Pro Tem Fisher** asked when could they run the camera through the line? **City Parks and Rec Director David Paul** said today after the meeting, then once monthly to ensure that no more grease is getting into the line.

**Approval of Minutes**

**City Clerk Rachel Jackson** stated that the minutes needed to be approved, they were overlooked prior to public recognition. Following review of the minutes, **Commissioner Paul** made a motion to approve Regular Commission Meeting 3/30/2023 **Commissioner Cox** seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

**Agenda**

**1. Ordinance 2023-1223L – 2023 Election Ordinance (1<sup>st</sup> Reading) – City Clerk Rachel Jackson** discussed the election ordinance stating that if an election was necessary, it would be held on August 15, 2023 from 7:00 am – 7:00 pm at the Wewahitchka Library. **Mayor Pro-Tem Fisher** asked if the Gulf County Supervisor of Elections would be handling it. **City Clerk Rachel Jackson** stated yes, she would like the Supervisor to handle the election as discussed at a previous meeting last year. **City Finance Director Brittney Proctor** stated that we have budgeted for it. Following discussion, **City Clerk Rachel Jackson** read **Ordinance 2023-1223L – 2023** by title only and requested permission to advertise.

**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 of the ordinance, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve the 1<sup>st</sup> reading and advertisement of Ordinance 2023-1223L. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

**Approval of Bills**

**1. Fisher's – Unable to approve @ meeting due to absence of Mayor Gaskin and Commissioner Pettis**

**2. Charlie Pettis Pest Services – Moved to regular bills**

**3. Wewa Outdoors – Unable to approve @ meeting due to absence of Mayor Gaskin and Commissioner Pettis**

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**4. Regular Bills** – Following review, **Commissioner Paul** made a motion to approve payment of the regular (\$104,350.56), reoccurring (\$79,420.33), and additional bills (\$42,531.23), and Charlie Pettis Pest Services (\$90.00) **Commissioner Cox** seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

**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**

**City Attorney Michelle Jordan** stated that there were not many changes from the last update. Mediation dates are expected in July, but bankruptcy has stalled everything. **Mayor Pro-Tem Fisher** requested that she send an email with updates that **City Manager Michael Gortman** could pass along to the commission.

**2. Delinquent Utility Bills** – None

**3. Water Losses** – None

**4. SEWER INFILTRATION AND INFLOW** – None

**5. Ray Dickens Fish Fry for the Sr. Citizens (October 6, 2023)** – None

**6. Lift Station** – None

**7. Overtime Report broken down by pay periods** – None

**8. County LDR** – None

**9. Employee Water/Sewer License Testing** – None

**10. Senior Building** – None

**11. Cemetery Committee & Buckhorn Decorative Fencing** – None

**Other Comments**

**City Attorney Michelle Jordan** - Stated she will be out of town during the June commission meeting asked if the board would like her to call in or would they want to re-schedule so that she could attend in person. The board agreed to re-schedule the meeting for June to 22, 2023.

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**City Manager Michael Gortman** – Provided an update on the Whitehurst code enforcement hearing (property on Sesame and Pear Street). They gave him a \$500.00 fine, and gave him 30 days to remove all of the junk cars, clean up the property, and come into compliance with a septic tank or a grinder pump to go into the city sewer. If he does not meet the compliance requirements, they would then have his camper removed.

**City Manager Michael Gortman** stated that **Ann Suber** called the office upset about street name change from Lucy Drive to Lucy Circle. He wanted to clarify that it was Lucy Circle, the board confirmed that it was Lucy Circle.

**City Superintendent Chipper Wade** - None

**Parks & Rec Director David Paul** – None

**City Engineer Hunter Baumgardner** – Stated they have finished lift station #3, and presented a notice of acceptability of work. **Engineer Baumgardner** stated he recommended making final payment upon receiving as built surveys.

Following discussion, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve the acceptability of work. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

**Engineer Baumgardner** asked if the Board would like to move forward with Lift Station #4 using ARPAs funds. He stated the low bid previously received from North Florida Construction was for \$388,126.00. Following discussion, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to proceed with lift station #4 project and award to North Florida Construction. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

**Engineer Baumgardner** presented the Notice of Award for North Florida construction Lift Station # 4 for \$388,126.00 for signature. However, following review of the notice there was need of a title change on the notice of award from Mayor to Mayor Pro Tem in order for **Mayor Pro Tem Fisher** to be able to sign it. **Engineer Baumgardner** stated he would make the change.

**Engineer Baumgardner** presented and discussed a task order for Lift Station #4 for CEI inspections, assuming a 6 month construction period, in the amount of \$45,000. Following discussion, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve the task order. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

**Engineer Baumgardner** presented and discussed a preliminary estimate for Waste Water grant completed all inspections of man wholes that were accessible, have reviewed them and started cost estimate that is just under \$7 million. There were 77 manholes that were inaccessible. They have sent the list to Michael to help get access for inspections. Once they are able to access and inspect the other manholes, they will present an updated estimate.

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**Engineer Baumgardner** stated on the Water line project we are working through the environmental assessment and will be meeting with the City Clerk tomorrow to team up on the tasks to be completed on the assessment.

**City Engineer Jack Husband** – Stated we have not heard anything back from DEP about 4<sup>th</sup> Street road grants.

On the Comp plan, it was recommended for approval by planning board yesterday 4-0 and will be presented at the May Commission meeting to the board.

**Engineer Husband** stated on the transportation board that **Commissioner Paul** asked him to look at, he couldn't find a lot, but he only found a rural study on the I-10 Corridor from Escambia to Jackson County.

**Finance Director Brittney Proctor** – None

**Finance Clerk Misty Robbins** – None

**City Clerk Rachel Jackson** – None

**Mayor/Commissioners' Comments**  
**Commissioner Paul** – None

**Commissioner Cox** – None

**Commissioner Fisher** – None

**Mary Jones** asked when is the City going to fix the concaved parking lot at the library. **Parks and Rec Director David Paul** stated the trees are actually pushing the concrete up. The board directed **Parks and Rec Director David Paul** to get an estimate to correct the issue.

**Adjournment**

**Commissioner Paul** made a motion to adjourn at 10:09 am. **Commissioner Cox** seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

**CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA**

  
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**Phillip Gaskin, Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

  
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**Rachel Jackson, City Clerk**

