

**CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA
BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS
Senior/Community Building
REGULAR MEETING
August 28, 2025
6:00 PM**

The City Commission met on this date August 28, 2025 at 6:00 P.M. at the Wewahitchka Senior/Community Building, 314 N. 3rd St, Wewahitchka, Florida. **Mayor Pro-Tem Fisher** called the meeting to order, asked **Sheriff Harrison** to lead a prayer, and everyone said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance

Mayor Pro-Tem Ralph Fisher
Commissioner Johnny Paul
Commissioner Brian Cox
Commissioner Charlie Pettis

City Manager

Michael Gortman

City Attorney

Michelle Jordan

City Clerk

Rachel Jackson

City Superintendent

Chipper Wade

City Finance Director

Brittney Proctor

City Engineer-SCE

Hunter Baumgardner

Jack Husband

Sheriff's Office

Mike Harrison

Public

Ann Johnson
David Brown
Catherine Lee
David Lee
Chuck Johnson
Tom Wynn
Chris Wynn
Jo Ellen Campbell
Eddie Fields
Harvey Campbell
Gene Hanlon

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Pettis made a motion to approve the agenda. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

Approval of Minutes

After review, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve 7.31.25 Regular Meeting with addition of the word "water" on page 6 paragraph nine due to scribes error, 8.12.25 Workshop, 8.12.25 Special Meeting, and 8.19.25 Workshop minutes. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

Public Recognition

Catherine Lee provided updates for the friends of the library, including number of patrons, library cards issued, library item circulation, program attendance and outreach efforts, mobile library, notary services, and participation in 1000 books before kindergarten.

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Public Recognition Cont'd...

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David Brown resident of 208 Corn Griffin Street stated that culverts are stopped up in the ditches creating water drainage problems. Additionally, **Mr. Brown** discussed issues with the road and asked about the possibility of it getting paved with the road bond money and about other solutions, such as gravel or crushed concrete.

Mayor Pro-Tem Fisher explained that the road bond money was not enough to pave it as there are many other roads throughout the city that need attention. Efforts to find a grant have been made, however none have been found yet. **Mayor Pro-Tem Fisher** stated all we can do at this time is continue grading and maintaining it.

City Manager Michael Gortman said that he will get with the county about getting the ditches and culverts cleaned out.

Mr. Brown asked if there is a way to de-annex? **City Attorney Michelle Jordan** stated yes. The property owners would need to petition the commission and we would have to look at a map of the area to ensure that it would not create an enclave.

Ann Johnson said Sasha at the Hitch may be getting with the board about starting a beautification committee.

Mrs. Johnson asked about possibility of the City implementing a sales tax to help with roads? Discussion followed about sales tax. **Commissioner Paul** stated it would be something that the citizens would have to vote on.

Gene Hanlon stated he had a question concerning the sign at City Hall. **Mayor Pro-Tem Fisher** stated we do have insurance on it, and it will be voted on tonight.

Agenda

1. **Resolution 2025-1221R – 2025 Water & Sewer Rate Increase – City Manager Michael Gortman** read Resolution 2025-1221R by title only. **Mayor Pro Tem Fisher** discussed the rates and explained the need for the increase.

Tom Wynn asked about BP oil spill money earmarked for water and sewer projects. **Engineer Jack Husband** explained that the funds are not specifically for water and sewer projects, they are more for environmental protection mitigation projects and there are additional requirements and restrictions to get the funds. He explained that the City has hired a grant consultant and they had a meeting earlier today to begin the process.

Following discussion, **Commissioner Paul** made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-1221R. **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

2. **Resolution 2025-1222R – Purchasing Policy Amendment – City Manager Michael Gortman** discussed the changes to the purchasing policy allowing items up to \$50,000 to be purchased with 3 quotes. **Mayor Pro-Tem Fisher** asked him to read by title only **Resolution 2025-1222R**.

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Following reading and discussion, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-1222R. **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

Approval of Bills

1. **Fisher's Building Supply – Mayor Pro-Tem Fisher** passed the gavel to **Commissioner Pettis** due to conflict of interest. Following review, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve Fisher's Building Supply bills (\$483.33). **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0, with **Commissioner Fisher** abstaining due to conflict of interest. **Commissioner Pettis** then passed the gavel back to **Mayor-Pro Tem Fisher**.
2. **Charlie Pettis Pest Services** – Following review, **Commissioner Paul** made a motion to approve Charlie Pettis Pest Services bill (\$90.00) **Commissioner Cox** seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0, with **Commissioner Pettis** abstaining due to conflict of interest.
3. **Wewa Outdoors** –Following review, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve payment of Wewa Outdoors bills (\$31.49) **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0, 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 (\$40,740.22), re-occurring bills (\$42,902.98) and additional bills (\$56,188.70). **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.
5. **Monthly Budget Update** – **City Finance Director** explained they were not included in the package due to the budget workshops.

Old Business/Open Items

1. **Delinquent Utility Bills** – None
2. **Extension List** – None
3. **Bad Debts** – None
4. **Water Losses** – **City Superintendent Chipper Wade** said they are working on it.
5. **SEWER INFILTRATION AND INFLOW** – **City Superintendent Chipper Wade** said they've fixed several of them.
6. **Ray Dickens Fish Fry for the Sr. Citizens (October 3, 2025)** – None
7. **Overtime Report broken down by pay periods** – None

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8. Employee Water/Sewer License Testing – City Manager Michael Gortman provided updates stating that Blake got his sewer license certificate and asked to get his water books ordered.

- Kyle Whitfield – Water – has finished his books and scheduled to take his water test on September 19th.

9. Senior Building – City Manager Michael Gortman stated we have to get the air conditioner closets requoted since it has been a year, and we will get them done when the weather gets cooler.

10. Cemetery Committee & Buckhorn Decorative Fencing – City Engineer Jack Husband said they have some pictures from an area behind Florida State University in Panama City for the board to look at. He stated they look really nice and feels like they will be a good option.

11. TL James Ballfield Lights – City Manager Michael Gortman stated the Co-op will be putting up 2 samples tomorrow for board to look at them and see which one they like best. The Co-op will start tear down shortly after the rodeo, and Kenny has started ordering his part for the project.

Other Comments

City Attorney Michelle Jordan – None

City Manager Michael Gortman – City Manager Michael Gortman stated that the sign was quoted at approximately \$35,500. The insurance company has sent a check for \$21,000 and will send the remainder, less the \$2,500.00 deductible, after the project is completed. The vendor requires a deposit of \$17,750.00

Following discussion **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve payment of the deposit for the sign replacement. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

City Superintendent Chipper Wade – None

Sheriff Mike Harrison – Provided stats for July, stating it was a pretty busy month. He stated there were 556 calls, 126 in the city of wewa, which is 23% of all calls. There were 87 traffic stops. **Sheriff Harrison** noted they are short staffed, but are working to fill the positions.

Engineer Hunter Baumgardner – Presented 850 Construction Services pay request for \$138,101.16 for the water line project, M0018. **Engineer Baumgardner** discussed the progress on the project and made a recommendation to approve the pay request.

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Following discussion, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve the 850 Construction Services pay request for \$138,101.16 contingent on the City receiving funds from Florida Commerce. **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

Engineer Baumgardner discussed the Florida Commerce 23-24 storms grants and stated we need a public hearing to get public input on the projects. He requested a public hearing be scheduled to follow the Tentative Budget hearing on September 9th. The board approved holding the hearing at that time.

Engineer Baumgardner stated we need to schedule a special meeting for a bid opening on the Waste Water project M0118. The board agreed to schedule the bid opening for October 2nd at 8:00 am at the fire station.

Engineer Baumgardner stated that the storm sewer project bid will follow within a couple of weeks to a month.

Engineer Baumgardner discussed the FDEP resiliency grants stating that we have to apply for a planning grant first in order to apply for an implementation grant. He requested permission to apply for the FDEP resiliency planning grant.

Following discussion, **Commissioner Pettis** made a motion to allow **Engineer Baumgardner (SCE)** to apply for the FDEP resiliency planning grant on behalf of the City. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

City Finance Director Brittney Proctor – None

City Clerk Rachel Jackson – None

Gulf County Commissioners – Gulf County Commissioner Jack Husband stated they have got the road bond started and are working with the City on road list.

Commissioner Paul asked how much money the city was supposed to get? **Gulf County Commissioner Jack Husband** stated between \$700,000 and \$900,000 and discussed possible projects to make the most impact.

Mayor/Commissioners' Comments

Commissioner Cox – None

Commissioner Paul – None

Commissioner Pettis – stated he would like to get more information about a .5 sales tax to fix roads. **City Finance Director Brittney Proctor** stated she will look into it and schedule a workshop about it.

Mayor Pro-Tem Fisher - None

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Adjournment

Commissioner Pettis made a motion to adjourn at 7:07pm. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA

By Ralph Fisher, Mayor / Pro Tem

ATTEST:

Rachel Jackson
Rachel Jackson, City Clerk

