

**CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA
BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS
SENIOR CITIZEN BUILDING
314 N 3rd STREET
REGULAR MEETING
September 30, 2021
6:00 PM**

The City Commission met on this date, September 30, 2021 at 6:00 P.M. at the Senior Citizens/Community Building, 314 N. 3rd St, Wewahitchka, Florida. **Mayor Gaskin** called the meeting to order, asked **Bro. Derek Gerber** to lead a prayer and everyone said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance

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

Sheriff

Mike Harrison

City Attorney

Michelle Jordan

City Manager

Michael Gortman

City Superintendent

Chipper Wade

City Clerk

Rachel Jackson

Finance Director

Brittney Proctor

Utility Billing Clerk

Misty Robbins

Public Present

Ann Johnson
Dianne Semmes
Tom Semmes
Eddie Haddock
Jack Husband
Hunter Baumgardner
Tom Wynn
Gene Hanlon
Wendy Weitzel
Derek Gerber

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve the agenda. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0, as **Commissioner Pettis** entered the meeting at a later time.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve:

Budget workshop minutes – 8/25/21 and 9/1/21
Regular Commission Meeting Minutes – 8/26/21
Special Meeting Minutes – 9/1/21
Budget Hearing Minutes – 9/14/21 and 9/23/21

Commissioner Paul seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

Public Recognition

Mayor Gaskin asked if there was anyone in the public who was not on the agenda that had anything to discuss.

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Public Recognition Cont'd....

Eddie Haddock stated that his water bill was almost \$700.00 and he talked to **City Manager Michael Gortman** about it, **Mr. Haddock** stated, "Michael told him the next step would be to come to the board about it." **Mr. Haddock** stated that there were 0 usage readings for 21 months and believes that the meter was not reading correctly. **City Manager Michael Gortman** asked him if he had a well. **Mr. Haddock** stated that he does, but it was only for watering his garden. **City Manager Michael Gortman** stated that he misunderstood and thought that **Mr. Haddock** had a well that he had been using for water in his home.

Mayor Gaskin asked **City Superintendent Chipper Wade** about the situation, to which he replied that he had been out to re-read the meter. **City Superintendent Chipper Wade** stated that the meter was turning when he sent Kyle and Cory out to read it. **Mayor Gaskin** directed **City Superintendent Chipper Wade** and **City Manager Michael Gortman** to check the meter and replace it if necessary, to see if that will correct the issue.

Ann Johnson stated that Save Old Gulf County is going to do Christmas at the Courthouse again this year. She requested that the area in front of the court house be blocked off to traffic and that the parade go the courthouse. After discussion, the board agreed.

Mayor Gaskin asked if there was anyone else in the public with comments, there was none.

Agenda

1. New Dixie Dandy Property-464 Hwy 22-Parcel # 01830-050R – City Manager Michael Gortman, stated that **Commissioner Ralph Fisher** told him earlier that Will was originally looking at the opening the Dixie Dandy up at the new location, but he is now looking at selling it to the Co-Op for an office space, so there is no need for further discussion.

2. RV Ordinance 2021-1213L – City Attorney Michelle Jordan, stated that hopefully by now everyone has had time to review the ordinance and now is the time to provide comments, concerns, or questions about the ordinance.

Mayor Gaskin asked **Gene Hanlon** if he had time to review it to which he said he had not, he reviewed an ordinance that he thought was the RV ordinance, but it was a different one.

Mayor Gaskin then asked **Tom Wynn** if he had reviewed it. **Mr. Wynn** stated that he had and he left a note for the City Manager about it. **City Manager Michael Gortman** stated he sent the notes to the City Clerk and City Attorney, but it appeared that the changes that **Mr. Wynn** suggested were a matter of word choice rather than substantive changes.

City Attorney Michelle Jordan explained that she does not take directives from the public due to the cost to the City, but would review it if the board directed her to.

After further discussion, the board agreed to review the ordinance and make a decision about it at the next meeting.

3. Code Enforcement Ordinance 2021-1215L (1st reading) – Mayor Gaskin read by title only

Ordinance 2021-1215L

AN ORDINANCE OF CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA, FLORIDA PERTAINING TO PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY; DECLARING CERTAIN CONDITIONS ON LOTS, PARCELS, AND TRACTS WITHIN THE CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA BOUNDARIES TO BE A PUBLIC NUISANCE AND THREAT TO THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF THE CITIZENS AND RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA; PROHIBITING CERTAIN CONDITIONS THAT CONSTITUTE AN IMMINENT THREAT TO PUBLIC HEALTH; AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA TO UNDERTAKE IMMEDIATE ABATEMENT AND REMEDY OF IMMINENT PUBLIC HEALTH THREATS; AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA TO ABATE AND REMEDY PUBLIC NUISANCE AFTER PROPER NOTICE WHEN IMMINENT PUBLIC HEALTH THREATS EXIST; AUTHORIZING THE ENFORCEMENT OF THIS ORDINANCE BY GULF COUNTY, FLORIDA; AUTHORIZING THE IMPOSITION AND LEVY OF SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS BY THE CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA; ESTABLISHING THE CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA AS A SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT; AUTHORIZING THE LEVY OF NON-AD VALOREM ASSESSMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH VIOLATIONS OF THIS ORDINANCE.

Mayor Gaskin then asked if anyone had any questions or comments about the ordinance.

City Attorney Michelle Jordan stated that this ordinance was drafted directly from the county ordinance, since they handle code enforcement for the city. **City Attorney Michelle Jordan** said that in the future the board would need to adopt an additional ordinance authorizing the levy of these special assessments. The levy would allow fines to be collected on tax bills beginning in 2022. The county is also doing this.

Gene Hanlon cited section 6 of the ordinance and asked if it means that the property owner would have to take care of the property up to the paved street?

Tom Wynn asked if in paragraph 3 of the ordinance Chapter 197, Florida Statutes needed to provide a more specific section? **City Attorney Michelle Jordan** explained that it was best not to make it too specific, because the sections within the chapter change often and every time there was a change to the sections, the ordinance would have to be updated.

Tom Semmes stated that excessive growth was not defined. **City Clerk Rachel Jackson**, stated that in section 3 Definitions, "excessive growth" is defined as "grass, weeds, rubbish, brush, branches, or undergrowth that has reached a height of eight inches or more".

Following discussion, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve the 1st reading and advertise Ordinance 2021-1215L for final reading, with striking the wording in section 6

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“and on that portion of the adjoining public right-of-way between the property and the paved or graded street.” Commissioner Pettis seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

4. Resolution 2021-1182R- 2021 Homecoming Parade – City Clerk Rachel Jackson discussed Resolution 2021-1182R, stating that Wewahitchka High School was requesting to hold the homecoming parade on October 15, 2021 at 2:00 pm ct. **City Clerk Rachel Jackson** requested that the resolution be adopted in order to apply for the FDOT permit to temporarily close Hwy 71 to traffic for the parade.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to adopt Resolution 2021-1182R. **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

5. Senior Building Lease Agreement – City Attorney Michelle Jordan stated that she made the changes to make the renewal annual, the inventory from the previous lease was incorporated, and everything else was fine. **Commissioner Brian Cox** asked if the lease could be approved and then get an updated inventory? **City Attorney Michelle Jordan** stated the inventory could be updated at a later time.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve the lease agreement. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

6. Halloween – City Manager Michael Gortman stated that Halloween was on Sunday, October 31, 2021 and asked if the board wanted to have Halloween on Sunday or Saturday. The board stated to hold Halloween on Sunday, from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm. Additionally, **City Manager Michael Gortman** asked if the board wanted to rent lights for 2nd St as they did for Halloween last year, the board agreed to rent the lights.

7. COVID-19 –City Clerk Rachel Jackson stated that she needed the board to provide guidance on what projects they wanted to do with the American Rescue Plan Funding that the City was awarded, as reports are due October 31, 2021. **City Engineer Jack Husband** discussed proposed water and sewer projects, including water lines at Jehu Rd., and lift station #'s 8, 6, 18, 10, & 17. Following discussion, the board agreed to plan to use the funds for those projects.

Approval of Bills

1. Fisher's – In Commissioner Fisher's absence, approval of Fisher's Building Supply invoices were moved into regular bill approval.

2. Wewa Outdoors – Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve payment of Wewa Outdoors invoice (\$69.99). **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0, with **Commissioner Paul** abstaining due to conflict of interest.

3. Charlie Pettis Pest Services – Commissioner Paul made a motion to approve payment of Charlie Pettis Pest Services invoice (\$90.00). **Commissioner Cox** seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0 with **Commissioner Pettis** abstaining due to conflict of interest.

4. Regular Bills – After reviewing bills, Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve payment of **Commissioner Fisher's** invoices (\$398.26) Regular Bills (\$41,726.99), Monthly Re-occurring Bills (\$48,481.76), and additional bills, (\$36,560.20). **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

Old Business/Open Items

1. Fire station/old City Hall

(Original Substantial Completion Date 9/4/21, Original Work Completion Date 10/11/21)
(7/29/21-Changed Substantial Comp. Date 11/17/21, Work Completion Date 12/25/21) – **City Engineer Jack Husband** stated that they received the anchor bolt letter from the engineer, they sent it to the building department and it was approved yesterday.

City Engineer Jack Husband presented plans for a flagpole for review and approval. After review and discussion, **Engineer Husband** asked if the board was agreeable to a 40' flagpole. **Mayor Gaskin** asked if it was included in the bid price? **Engineer Husband** stated it was included. The board agreed to move forward with the flagpole.

City Engineer Jack Husband stated that he had been reviewing rain days in preparation for the contractor requesting a change order. He stated that since the slab is there the contractor should be there working, however he is not making a real attempt to work. **City Engineer Husband** said typically if it has rained greater than 1" in a day then the contractor would be allowed 1 rain day. Based on his calculations that would be about 5 rain days from July 29th through Sept 30th.

After further discussion about the building construction, change orders, and payments previously made to the contractor, **City Engineer Jack Husband** presented and discussed pay request #4 from the Winterfell Construction for \$26,844.57

Mayor Gaskin asked if the contractor had provided a construction schedule on the project. **City Engineer Husband** stated a construction schedule has not been provided.

After further discussion, **Commissioner Pettis** made a motion to approve pay request #4 contingent upon the contractor providing a construction schedule. **Commissioner Cox** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

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 2, 2021) – Moved to 2022 due to COVID

6. Lift Station – City Engineer Hunter Baumgardner presented plans for the DEO lift stations #'s 3, 4, 5, & 11. He stated that Michael has reviewed them and he will need approval to submit for permitting to stay on schedule. **City Attorney Michelle Jordan** asked if the engineers had the legal descriptions? **City Engineer Hunter Baumgardner** stated yes he had them with him and will provide them to her. **Mayor Gaskin** stated he would like a copy of the plans to review, **City Engineer Baumgardner** gave him a copy of the plans for review.

7. Overtime Report broken down by pay periods – None

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8. **Buckhorn Archway** – **City Manager Michael Gortman** stated that Ralph's lull is still down. **Commissioner Brian Cox** stated that he is going to check with the co-op and see if they can do it.
9. **County LDR** – **City Attorney Michelle Jordan** stated that she is still working on the LDR's
10. **Employee Water/Sewer License Testing** – **City Manager Michael Gortman** stated that David Paul is still trying to get his test re-scheduled.

Other Comments

City Superintendent Chipper Wade – None

City Manager Michael Gortman – Discussed the water and sewer rate increases, asked if the board wished to do the rate increases at the same time as they had last year? The board agreed. **City Clerk Rachel Jackson** stated she would review the ordinance and consult with **City Attorney Michelle Jordan** to ensure proper advertisement/notification of the rate increase.

City Manager Michael Gortman then discussed Michael Week's property abandonment request. **City Manager Gortman** explained that Mr. Week's bought a parcel next to his property of E River Road. He would like to adjoin the two parcels, however due to the storm water pipe that runs back to Pine St. Mr. Week's can't adjoin the parcels unless the City abandons the property. **City Manager Michael Gortman** stated that Mr. Week's has no issue maintaining it. **City Attorney Michelle Jordan** advised that the abandonment could be done, with an easement for maintenance. Following discussion, the board instructed City Manager Michael Gortman to check set up a conference call with Mr. Week's and City Attorney Michelle Jordan regarding the process and legal fees for abandoning the property.

City Manager Michael Gortman stated that the Fall Festival is tomorrow and discussed the number of vendors attending.

City Manager Michael Gortman then discussed repairs needed on the backhoe and asked if it could be sent for diagnostic testing if the problems is not the hydraulic filter. The board agreed to approve the diagnostic testing if necessary.

Finance Director Brittney Proctor – Discussed the November meeting date since it falls on Thanksgiving. After discussion, **Commissioner Pettis** made a motion to move the November meeting to Monday, November 22, 2021 at 6:00 pm. **Commissioner Cox** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

City Finance Director Brittney Proctor presented and discussed the FLAIR report stating that all of them came in above budget.

City Clerk Rachel Jackson – Discussed an email received from **Rep. Jason Shoaf's** office regarding applying for state appropriations. **City Clerk Rachel Jackson** stated that application is due by November 1st, one idea for a project was construction of a new City Hall. **City Engineer Jack Husband** stated that he would work on plans and a cost estimate if the board wished to submit an application for the project. After discussion regarding the location of the proposed City Hall project, the board agreed to move forward with an application for the project.

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City Clerk Rachel Jackson then stated that the Waste-Pro contract would be expiring on February 28, 2022 and asked if the board wished to renew the contract or go out for bid? **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to go out for bid. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

City Clerk Rachel Jackson stated that Carol Wood with the 1st Presbyterian Church contacted her about requesting a letter of support from the board for a grant from T-Mobile they are applying for to help with repairs to the church from hurricane damage that their FEMA grant would not cover. **City Clerk Rachel Jackson** presented the letter to the board for review. After review, the board agreed to provide the letter of support.

Utility Billing Clerk Misty Robbins – None

City Attorney Michelle Jordan – None

Sheriff Mike Harrison – Stated that Rep. Shoaf's office had also contacted him regarding appropriations, he suggested that along with a City Hall the board consider adding an area for a future police chief's office and in the current a sheriff's substation/public safety office. The board agreed, and directed **City Manager Michael Gortman** and **City Engineer Jack Husband** to work with **Sheriff Harrison** to incorporate that into the plan.

Mayor Gaskin asked **Sheriff Harrison** if the open borders was increasing the influx of illegal aliens in the county. **Sheriff Harrison** stated that they are seeing more of an increase in drugs rather than illegal aliens.

City Engineer Hunter Baumgardner – Stated that the applications for CDBG-DR DEO Infrastructure Round II projects have been submitted.

City Engineer Hunter Baumgardner stated that City of Wewa has been awarded for the water line project that was submitted during Round I. In a webinar held earlier in the week, DEO stated they will be sending out sub-recipient grant agreements in the next couple of months for review and approval.

Mayor/Commissioners' Comments

Commissioner Brian Cox – Stated that he will be out of town during Halloween this year, but the City is welcome to use the area in front of his shop to hand out candy.

Commissioner Johnny Paul – Discussed the pickle ball court idea for T.L. James Park. **City Engineer Hunter Baumgardner** stated that it was included in the grant application for T.L. James Park lighting and improvements.

Commissioner Johnny Paul also noted that the county has been doing a lot of patching in the city that was needed.

Commissioner Johnny Paul also stated that we need to begin taking applications for a maintenance employee. The board discussed adding a requirement for water and sewer licenses to the application.

Commissioner Charlie Pettis – None

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Mayor Phillip Gaskin – None

Adjournment


At 7:30 pm, **Commissioner Paul** made a motion to adjourn. **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA



Phillip Gaskin, Mayor

ATTEST:



Rachel Jackson, City Clerk

