

**CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA
BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS
SENIOR CITIZEN BUILDING
314 N 3rd STREET
REGULAR MEETING
January 26, 2023
6:00 PM**

The City Commission met on this date, January 26, 2023 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 **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

Attorney

Michelle Jordan

Sheriff

Mike Harrison

City Manager

Michael Gortman

City Superintendent

Chipper Wade

City Clerk

Rachel Jackson

City Finance Director

Brittney Proctor

City Parks & Rec Director

David Paul

City Finance Clerk

Misty Robbins

Utility Billing Clerk

Jennifer Wright

Public

Ashton Winder
Camden Winder
Calvin Winder
Colton Winder
Tom Wynn
Gene Hanlon
David Hodson
Royce Watkins
David Buzier
Chris Bryan
Waymon Hanlon
Chuck Johnson
Wendy Weitzel
James Rish

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

Approval of Minutes – **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve the minutes for Regular Commission Meeting 1/5/23 and **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

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Approval of Minutes cont'd....

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Commissioner Fisher made a motion to approve the minutes for Workshop 1/12/23. **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Public Recognition

Mayor Gaskin asked if there was anyone that was not on the regular agenda that would like to speak. **Camden Winder** and **Colton Winder** members of Gulf County Livestock Club (4H) presented informational packets about the Livestock show that they will be participating in on March 3-4, 2023 in Quincy, FL and invited the board to become sponsors of the program. They requested either donations or purchase of the meat of the livestock that they have been raising.

Following the discussion, the board thanked Camden and Colton for the information and **City Manager Michael Gortman** stated he would take a packet to the employees' club to review.

Mayor Gaskin asked is anyone else from the public had anything, **Royce Watkins** asked if there were any updates about Corn Griffin St. **Commissioner Fisher** stated, as I said at the last meeting, I would try to get someone to attend either at this meeting or the next. No one from the county was able to attend this meeting, but hopefully they will be able to attend next meeting

Mayor Gaskin stated that he did a little research on the ad-valorem taxes, and per year the property owners on that part of the street only 1.5% of them. Out of about \$360,000 the property owners pay about \$6,000. **Mayor Gaskin** stated so you're asking for 98.5% of the other tax payers to pave your road, that you bought at a reduced priced that did not have asphalt, water, or sewer when you bought it. **Mayor Gaskin** continued, I'm concerned that you're asking for the other 98.5% of residents who paid a premium for their property of paved roads to fund your road.

Mr. Watkins asked how did the other roads get paved? **Mayor Gaskin** stated they were funded mostly with grant money. **Mr. Watkins** said the reason he asked was that when he asked 10-12 years ago, he was told that the money that the city had was not going to be used to pave Corn Griffin Street. It was going to be used to re-surface 15-20 other roads because they could re-do that on so many roads versus putting asphalt on that one road.

Mayor Gaskin stated you can't just put asphalt on that road you have to do sub-base work and base work. **Mr. Watkins** said I don't know anything about that I'm not going to get into that, what I'm saying is that there was money available, but instead of paving Corn Griffin St, 15-20 other roads were re-surfaced. **Mr. Watkins** stated those same residents that don't live on those 15-20 roads were still paying for it, so that's a mute point. **Mayor Gaskin** stated their roads were in good shape and did not need road paving. **Mr.**

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Public Recognition cont'd....

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Watkins said what we're looking at is there are 4 roads in the city limits that aren't paved or re-surfaced.

Mayor Gaskin stated there is a difference between paved and re-surfaced and asked **Engineer Jack Husband** to explain the difference between resurfacing and new construction/paving of a road. **Engineer Husband** explained that re-surfacing is an

asphalt road that was previously paved, it would be milled down and re-surface that road with new asphalt. A new construction road would be a graded road that would go a paved/newly constructed road. New construction would be new sub-base, base, asphalt, grading and all required environmental work.

Commissioner Fisher asked **Engineer Husband** if we currently have a lot of roads in the City that need to be fixed from all of the big trucks that were traveling on them after the storm? And do you feel that the bond would be used up to get them repaired. **Engineer Husband** responded yes.

Mayor Gaskin stated we would entertain something that **Commissioner Pettis** mentioned that had been done in the Cape area when they were doing a beach re-nourishment project. **Mayor Gaskin** asked **Commissioner Pettis** to discuss the project.

Commissioner Pettis explained that after the storm much of the sand/beach was washed away, so what the county did was a beach re-nourishment project, but the cost of it was assessed on the taxes of those residents in the area that was re-nourished.

Mr. Watkins stated that were just asking to be put on the road list to be paved. **City Manager Michael Gortman** explained that the road is on the list and has been on the list that was provided to the county. **City Manager Gortman** stated the county does a lot for the city and we work hand and hand with the county. Anytime we ask the county to do something, Mark or Chris try their best to get it done.

Following discussion **Mr. Watkins** asked was there anything else as citizens that they could do. **Mayor Gaskin** stated they could contact state representatives, senators, and the governor.

Mayor Gaskin asked if there was anyone else that would like to speak. **Jim Rish** stated that he was surprised that they paved lola, so he asked how they were able to get it done. **Mr. Rish** explained that he was told that there is a certain percentage of the money that has to used for areas that flood. **Mr. Rish** stated that Corn Griffin St is a way out for people when it floods, so that might be a way to get in paved.

Following discussion, **Mr. Rish** then stated he talked to Joe Paul about fund raising to get the Presbyterian Church finished. He asked if it was ok with the City to have a gospel music fundraiser in the lot between Buy Rite and the church. The board stated that would be fine as long as there was no issue with the noise ordinance.

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Agenda Items....

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Agenda

1. Campers – Commissioner Johnny Paul stated that there had been a lot of complaints about a camper on Canning Drive. **Commissioner Paul** stated that **City Manager Michael Gortman** had gotten it taken care of. **Commissioner Paul** stated there are a lot of campers coming in, the ones that are going by the rules are fine, but that camper was creating a lot of complaints.

City Manager Michael Gortman stated that he talked to the man who owns it and believes that he understands what he needs to do now. He also let the owner know that before he started any work he needed to contact the building department and let them know what his plans were.

Approval of Bills

- 1. Fisher's –** Following review, **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve Fisher's Building Supply bills (\$1,114.33). **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0, with **Commissioner Fisher** abstaining due to conflict of interest.
- 2. Charlie Pettis Pest Services –** **Commissioner Paul** made a motion to approve payment of Charlie Pettis Pest Services invoice (\$90.00) **Commissioner Fisher** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0, with **Commissioner Pettis** abstaining due to conflict of interest.
- 3. Wewa Outdoors –** **Commissioner Pettis** made a motion to approve payment of Wewa Outdoors bills (\$14.50). **Commissioner Cox** seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0, with **Commissioner Paul** abstaining due to conflict of interest.
- 4. Regular Bills –** **Commissioner Cox** made a motion to approve the regular (\$35,584.07), recurring (\$87,220.21), and additional bills (\$37,678.97). **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

City Attorney Michelle Jordan stated we were not able to have mediation in December, so mediation was supposed to be on January 24, 2023. She found out on the 20th that the bond company had cut out Tommy and his attorneys and had not coordinated with Jack's attorney, so she declined to meet with them. Mis-statements were communicated to the other attorneys by the bond company.

City Attorney Jordan stated she was not sure when to attempt mediation again. **Mayor Gaskin** stated we are not going to attempt mediation again. **City Attorney Jordan** then discussed the reason for the conference call tomorrow, 1/27/23, the federal court process, and stated that she needs permission to file the complaint.

2. **Delinquent Utility Bills – None**
3. **Water Losses – City Superintendent Chipper Wade** stated they are working on them
4. **SEWER INFILTRATION AND INFLOW – City Superintendent Chipper Wade** stated they are working on them
5. **Ray Dickens Fish Fry for the Sr. Citizens (October 6, 2023) – None**
6. **Lift Stations – Mayor Gaskin** asked what was taking so long. **Engineer Hunter Baumgardner** stated they have just received the panel this week. **Commissioner Cox** asked about erosion control, **Engineer Baumgardner** explained that sod, gravel and fencing would be placed to help with erosion issues.
7. **Overtime Report broken down by pay periods – None**
8. **County LDR – Engineer Jack Husband** said that the comp plan changes are being finalized and asked that **City Manger Michael Gortman** send over the small scale land use changes.
9. **Employee Water/Sewer License Testing – City Manager Michael Gortman** stated Blake, Kyle, and David Paul are working on them and Cory is working on his GED.
10. **Senior Building – City Manager Michael Gortman** stated we need clarification on closets, do a/c units need to come out? **City Superintendent Chipper Wade** said yes. **City Manager Michael Gortman** said we will get with Millers about it. He said we also need to replace a couple of broken windows. **City Manager Gortman** stated he has a call into the sign place in St. Joe about a new sign for the building.

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Old Business/Open Items cont'd....

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11. **Cemetery Committee & Buckhorn Decorative Fencing – Commissioner Cox** said Bro. Derek is working on prices.

Other Comments

City Attorney Michelle Jordan – stated we have to prepare for worst case scenario that the building would have to come down completely. The City must find a way to fund the worst case scenario, because the FEMA funds are tied up in litigation. One way to get the funding is to make a request to legislation for appropriations. **Attorney Jordan** recommended allowing City staff to apply for appropriations.

Following discussion, **Commissioner Fisher** motioned to allow staff to submit applications for appropriations through the State of Florida. **Commissioner Pettis** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

City Manager Michael Gortman – Stated MasTec put up lights for free at TL James foot ball field. **City Manager Gortman** said he spoke to Timmy last week about the poles, he said that there was no way the Co-op could get to them by ball season. Timmy suggested seeing if MasTec could get to the first two poles. **City Manager Gortman** said he talked to Barlow and is waiting on a quote for the two poles.

City Manager Gortman said he got a quote for the patch on W River Road from Roberts & Roberts. It was \$7,500. He is going to get additional quotes and would like permission to move forward with the repair the lowest quote.

Commissioner Cox made a motion allow **City Manager Michael Gortman** to do the road repairs with the lowest quote. **Commissioner Fisher** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

City Manager Michael Gortman stated that Gary, Jennifer, and Dan have passed their 6 months probation and requested that they be hired permanently.

Commissioner Cox made motion to permanently hire Gary Harrelson, Jennifer Wright, and Dan Calareso. **Commissioner Paul** seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

City Manager Michael Gortman requested that time limits be set for public speaking, he stated that in the past we've had issues with meetings extending an hour or longer than they should have. Following discussion, the board directed **City Attorney Michelle Jordan** to draft a resolution for review.

City Superintendent Chipper Wade – None

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City Parks & Rec Director David Paul – Stated he felt like we should do a Memorial for Billy. Following discussion, the board agreed.

Sheriff Mike Harrison – None

City Engineer Jack Husband – None

City Engineer Hunter Baumgardner – provided a grants update spreadsheet and discussed the projects. He stated:

- Lift Station #3 is under construction and should be putting in the panel soon.
- On the Waterline project the plans are completed, the surveys are back and we are internally reviewing them, and will be finalizing them for review by the City Manager and the Board to get in for permits. We should have permits back within a few months and will be ready to bid out the project.
- For the Waste Water Repair Project we have been working to do a city wide assessment of the manholes to trace the I & I problems. About 90% of those are
- complete, as well as looking through lift station logs to determine which ones are the worst when it comes to rain fall and run times.
- On the Storm Sewer grant we have the fully executed agreement back between DEO and the City last week, we are working on a task order to present at the next meeting.

City Finance Director Brittney Proctor – None

City Clerk Rachel Jackson – None

City Finance Clerk Misty Robbins – None

City Utility Billing Clerk Jennifer Wright – None

Commission Comments

Commissioner Cox – None

Commissioner Paul – None

Commissioner Pettis – None

Commissioner Fisher – Stated he just appreciates **Attorney Jordan**

Mayor Gaskin – None

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Adjournment

Commissioner Fisher made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 pm.
Commissioner Pettis seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0. **Mayor Gaskin** objected to adjourning.

CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA



Phillip Gaskin, Mayor

ATTEST:



Rachel Jackson, City Clerk

