

MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION MEETING TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

August 19, 2024

The regular meeting of the Lady Lake Town Commission was held in the Commission Chambers at Lady Lake Town Hall, 409 Fennell Blvd., Lady Lake, Florida, with Mayor Freeman presiding. The meeting convened at 6:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION

Reverend Derick Dimry — New Song Community Church

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Mayor Freeman

ROLL CALL

Commissioner (Ward)	Present
Regan (Four)	YES
Gourlie (Two)	YES
Roberts (One)	YES
Sage (Five)	YES
Freeman (Three)	YES

STAFF PRESENT

Bill Lawrence, Town Manager, Thad Carroll, Growth Management Director; C.T. Eagle, Public Works Director; Pam Winegardner, Finance Director; Mike Burske, Parks and Recreation Director, Police Chief Steve Hunt, Lady Lake Police Department; Lt. Rob Tempesta, Lady Lake Police Department; Becky Higgins, Senior Planner; Elisha Pappacoda, Communications Director; Nancy Wilson, Town Clerk; and Carol Osborne, Deputy Town Clerk.

Town Attorney Derek Schroth was also in attendance.

A. CONSENT

- 1. August 5, 2024 – Town Commission Meeting Minutes**
- 2. Consideration of Approval of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Holiday Schedule (Tamika DeLee)**

- 3. Consideration of Approval of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the North Central Florida Police Benevolent Association (PBA) and the Town of Lady Lake (TOLL) for the Period of October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2027. (Tamika DeLee)**
- 4. Consideration of Approval of the Extension of the Professional Services Agreement between the Town of Lady Lake and Charles Abbott Associates, Inc. for Building Inspection and Plan Review Services. (Thad Carroll)**
- 5. Consideration of Approval to Award a Contract to Kerry Barnett Fire Safety Consulting in Response to Request for Proposal (RFP) 2024-002, Providing for Contracted Part-Time Fire Inspection, Plan Review, and Related Support Services for the Town of Lady Lake. (Thad Carroll)**
- 6. Consideration of Mutual Agreement for Pavement Management-Preservation Services for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Annual Street Resurfacing Project. (C.T. Eagle)**

Commissioner Roberts made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Commissioner Gourlie seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

B. NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Consideration of Approval of FY 2024-2025 Benefits (Medical, Dental, Life Insurance, Long Term Disability, Short Term Disability, Critical Illness, Accident Coverage) (Tamika DeLee)**

Commissioner Roberts made a motion to table this agenda item until the September 4, 2024, commission meeting; Commissioner Sage seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

- 2. Consideration of the Lady Lake Dog Park Association's Proposed Lease Renewal. (Mike Burske)**

Parks and Recreation Director Mike Burske presented this agenda item stating at the August 5, 2024, meeting the commission voted to table this item to a later date while more information is gathered.

Commissioner Roberts asked Mr. Burske why the dog park is not open until sundown as with the other parks in town. She suggested extending the hours to sundown on a trial basis.

Mr. Burske stated that initially the dog park closed at noon as a courtesy to the neighbors that abut the dog park. He stated that he is willing to move forward with extending the dog park hours to sundown.

Kathy Hixon, 158 Palermo Pl., Secretary of the Lady Lake Dog Park Association

Ms. Hixon stated that many people would appreciate having the hours extended.

Commissioner Roberts asked how many members are with the dog park association.

Ms. Hixon stated that there are 130 members.

Commissioner Sage asked if an attendant would need to be present if the hours are extended.

Ms. Hixon stated that extending the hours were not approved until recently. She verified that the dog park association carries insurance.

Commissioner Roberts stated that she would like the commission to consider, for the next fiscal budget, adding a public dog park to the southern area of town.

Mayor Freeman asked Ms. Hixon how the membership money is spent.

Ms. Hixon listed the following annual expenses:

insurance — \$838.96; trash collections — \$626.00; trash bags — \$27.00; dog waste bags — \$235.00; application photocopies — \$56.98; computer ink — \$202.00; first aid supplies — \$13.84; lawn tools — \$173.00; wading pool and weed killer — \$33.00; diatomaceous earth — \$37.38; two new gates — \$727.88

Commissioner Gourlie asked how the park is monitored assuring only members utilize the park.

Ms. Hixon stated many of the members volunteer to monitor the park.

Commissioner Roberts verified with Ms. Hixon that there is a coded gate for the members to enter the dog park.

Commissioner Sage asked if anyone can be a member of the dog park.

Ms. Hixon stated that the dog park is open to anyone who pays the membership fee. She stated that the benefit of a membership park is the Town of Lady Lake requires the members' dogs to be immunized.

Commissioner Roberts reiterated her desire for a public dog park for those who cannot afford a membership and for those who work and cannot utilize the Lady Lake dog park during the day.

Commissioner Roberts made a motion to approve the Lady Lake Dog Park Association's Proposed Lease with the adjustment to the park hours of operation; Commissioner Sage seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

3. Review of the Lady Lake Chamber of Commerce's Proposed Lease Renewal. (Mike Burske)

Parks and Recreation Director Mike Burske presented this agenda item stating at the August 5, 2024, meeting the commission voted to table this item to a later date while more information is gathered.

Commissioner Regan asked Mr. Burske what the monthly utility costs are.

Mr. Burske stated the utilities were \$1,684.72 in 2023, and water expenses are not included in this lease.

Mayor Freeman stated that it is appropriate for the Chamber to pay their electric costs. He acknowledged that it is very generous of the commission to charge \$10 annually for the Chamber to utilize the Log Cabin. He recognized that the present building is small. He stated that the Town is a member of the Chamber and spends a lot of money on its membership and feels it is appropriate to increase the rent.

Commissioner Roberts stated that when she was at the League of Cities conference, she discussed with other commissioners how they interact with their local Chamber of Commerce. She stated that the Town became a Chamber partner to help it become established. She stated that because the number of businesses in town have grown immensely, she is unsure if participation at the top level is appropriate. She stated that the Chamber should pay for the electric cost of the building and proposes that the Town reduce its membership to the Executive Membership. She suggested discussing increasing the rental fee at a later date.

Mayor Freeman agreed with Commissioner Roberts. He stated that he discussed this issue with the mayor of Clermont who stated that their city rents a space in town to their local Chamber at a reduced rate.

Mr. Burske suggested the commission reduce the lease to one year and require the Chamber to pay the electric starting immediately. He stated this will allow him time to prepare a comparative market analysis on rent.

Commissioner Gourlie suggested that if the town reduces the cost of its membership, to leave the rent as is, and have the Chamber pay for their utilities.

Jeanne Lazo, President of the Chamber and with United Southern Bank

Ms. Lazo stated that the Chamber is also the Welcome Center for the town. She stated that they compile the visitor's guide and does all the mailing.

Commissioner Roberts asked how many members of the Chamber are there currently.

Ms. Lazo stated there are 270 members.

Mayor Freeman suggested rewriting the lease with the amendments.

Commissioner Sage asked for a history of the Chamber, how the Town offered space and paid the for the electric.

Mr. Burske stated that the Chamber began in the 1980's and over the years the town has had a strong relationship with the Chamber.

Ms. Lazo stated that there are records indicating that the building was the town hall and the Chamber of Commerce prior to the 1980's.

Commissioner Gourlie acknowledged that it is the commission's desire to make certain changes to the current lease. He cautioned that changes should not be made to the point that the Chamber is no longer viable.

Commissioner Roberts agreed with Commissioner Gourlie adding that the Chamber provides a valuable service, yet the Town of Lady Lake has grown. She added that the commission is proposing a slight increase in the millage, and consideration of all parts of the budget must be made to ensure the commission maximizes the public's money.

Commissioner Roberts made a motion to approve the Lady Lake Chamber of Commerce's Proposed Lease for One Year at \$10; the Chamber will pay for the electric cost of the building; Reduce the Town's membership with the Chamber to an Executive Membership at a cost of \$1,675.00; Commissioner Sage seconded. Motion carried 4-1 (Gourlie)

4. Consideration of Approval for the Lady Lake Medical Office Major Site Plan MJSP 04/24-001 – Proposing a 7,130 Square Foot Medical Office with 48 Parking Spaces, on a 1.50-Acres Property Zoned Planned Commercial (CP), owned by XM Holding The Villages, LLC, Addressed as 151 La Grande Boulevard, Located on La Plaza Grande Approximately 650 Feet North of La Plaza Parkway, within the Town Limits of the Town of Lady Lake, Florida. (Thad Carroll)

Growth Management Director Thad Carroll presented this agenda item stating that the applicant is Bob Morris on behalf of property owner XM Holdings The Villages LLC. The zoning designation is Planned Commercial, the property is currently vacant, and the staff recommendation is for approval. He stated that this area is primarily medical offices, along with other commercial uses. He advised that the application and plans for this project were received on Thursday, April 25, 2024, by Walker Owen, Professional Engineer with CHW, Inc.

Mr. Carroll stated that the applicant is proposing a 7,130 square-foot medical office, 48 parking spaces, and a dumpster enclosure. He stated that based on the proposed uses and square footage, the project is anticipated to generate 27 total PM peak hour trips according to the ITE Trip Generation, 11th edition. La Grande Boulevard is a private road maintained by The Villages. An environmental assessment and wildlife survey is not required for this project as it is under ten acres. This property is within the flood zone "X" and contains no special flood hazards or wetlands. Because utilities to this project are provided by The Villages, plans are reviewed for compliance through their department. The St. John's River Water Management District Environmental Resource Permit No. 19062-7 is under review.

Mr. Carroll advised that the applicant is requesting a tree waiver from the commission due to existing utilities and large Live Oaks on adjacent parcels. The applicant is requesting a reduction in nine required understory trees. He stated that planting understory trees under mature oak trees will hinder their growth due to lack of sufficient sunlight. Staff is in support of this waiver because the developer is planting a total of 328 tree caliper inches. Town code requires 240 tree caliper inches.

Mr. Carroll advised that the applicant is also requesting a commercial design waiver to allow parking behind the building face.

Mr. Carroll advised that at the July 10, 2024, meeting, the Parks, Recreation, and Tree Committee voted 4-0 to forward the Lady Lake Medical Office site plan to the Town Commission with the recommendation of approval of the tree waiver.

Commissioner Roberts asked Mr. Carroll if the waivers need to be presented separately.

Mr. Carroll clarified that tree variances are presented separately as a resolution. He stated that waivers are included in the motion for approval.

Commissioner Gourlie made a motion to approve the Lady Lake Medical Office Major Site Plan 04-24-001, with the landscaping waiver and the commercial design waiver; Commissioner Roberts seconded. Motion carried 5-0

5. Discussion Regarding Use of the Community Building by the AA Group on Sunday Evenings after 6:00PM. (Commissioner Sage)

Commissioner Sage presented this agenda item stating that in 2023 the commission at that time amended the ordinance regarding community building rentals to reflect new rate structures and rental requirements. The desire was for the community building rentals to garner revenue or to at least break even. Other requirements are no repeated use on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday afternoons or evenings to allow for one-time events, and a minimum rental of four hours is required on the weekends. Some civic organizations that met during the week were granted exemptions. The Alcoholics Anonymous group that met on Thursday evenings was granted a reduced rate. However, the Alcoholics Anonymous group that met at the community building on Sunday evenings was no longer permitted to use the building. The group was able to meet at a local church on Sunday evenings and the attendance dropped significantly. He stressed that AA saves lives and this group has been meeting in Lady Lake for 40 years.

Commissioner Regan verified with Commissioner Sage that this group is requesting to meet every Sunday night. He stated that it would not be fair to anyone else who would like to rent the community building on a Sunday night.

Commissioner Sage stated that the meetings are one hour, and members are accustomed to attending meetings on certain nights.

Mayor Freeman stated that he has been involved in PTSD group therapy and knows the importance of regularly scheduled meetings at a specific location. He acknowledged that AA members would feel the same. He stated that he voted against allowing AA to meet on Sunday evenings in 2023.

Mr. Lawrence stated that if it is the desire of the commission to allow AA to meet on Sunday nights, the ordinance would need to be amended. He stated that the revenue generated from renting the community building offsets taxes. He explained when the ordinance regarding the community building rental was amended in 2023, the commission at that time did not feel it was appropriate to use taxpayers' money to fund social organizations. He stated that another night was offered to the AA group that met on Sunday evenings and it was turned down. He stated that the commission looks at various ways to increase revenue and community building rentals are part of that. If the community building rentals do not at least break even, then it falls on the taxpayers to fund the community building and the social organizations who meet there.

Commissioner Sage stated that the AA group was paying \$10 per week, \$520 annually. The town leases a few buildings to other organizations for \$10 annually, and the ballfields for \$500.00 bi-annually. He stated that the town spends more money to maintain the ballfields than what is receives in rent money.

Commissioner Roberts made a motion to table this agenda item for further review;

Commissioner Regan seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Bill Lawrence stated the Lake County Board of Commissioners awarded the Lady Lake Library with a \$1-million grant for the Children's Library expansion. He acknowledged the Lady Lake Library Director, Aly Herman, for her efforts pursuing this grant.

The Father-Daughter Disco Party is September 7, 2024, from 6PM-8PM at the community building.

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Regan thanked everyone who came to tonight's meeting.

Commissioner Roberts stated that she attended the Florida League of Cities annual conference. She stated it is a valuable experience and she came away with visions for the Town of Lady Lake, and connections and information from other commissioners.

Mayor/Commissioner Freeman stated that he also attended the conference and agreed with Commissioner Roberts' comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Richard Masso, 373 Carriage Lane

Mr. Masso expressed his concerns regarding annexations, the proposed Grand Oaks development, increased taxes, and proposed workshops regarding annexations and other projects in town.

Ruth Kussard, 424 Loma Paseo Dr.

Ms. Kussard expressed her concern regarding paying volunteers for their service on town boards.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:03 p.m.



Carol Osborne, Deputy Town Clerk



Ed Freeman, Mayor