MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION MEETING
TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

October 7, 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

Pastor Pat Bromberek – Hope Lutheran 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; C.T. Eagle, Public Works Director; Thad Carroll, Growth Management Director; Becky Higgins, Senior Planner; Mike Burske, Parks and Recreation Director; Police Chief Steve Hunt, Lady Lake Police Department; Lt. Rob Tempesta, Lady Lake Police Department; Sgt. Heather Couch, Lady Lake Police Department; Officer Hashaam Choudri, Lady Lake Police Department; Nancy Wilson, Town Clerk; and Carol Osborne, Deputy Town Clerk.

Town Attorney Derek Schroth was also in attendance.

A. CONSENT

1. September 12, 2024 – Special Town Commission Meeting Minutes

2. September 16, 2024 – Town Commission Meeting Minutes

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

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. Consideration of Extending Towing and Recovery Services with Kling Towing (Chief Hunt)

Police Chief Hunt presented this agenda item stating that this is a two-year extension to the contract. He stated that Kling Towing has provided great service. He stated that he has been notified by other companies interested in providing towing service and suggested putting this out for bid prior to the expiration of this contract extension.

Commissioner Gourlie stated that it was his understanding to extend this contract to a four-year term.

Town Clerk Nancy Wilson explained that former Commissioner Hannan had requested that, and a two-year term was agreed upon.

Commissioner Sage stated that the contract extension expired in 2022.

Ms. Wilson explained that two years ago Town Attorney Derek Schroth advised that the contract could be extended with an addendum, at the discretion of the commission.

Commissioner Sage asked if other towing companies have inquired about providing this service and would the town benefit financially by putting this service out for bid.

Chief Hunt stated that a local company has approached him; he clarified that company is not within the Town of Lady Lake. Chief Hunt stated that competitive bids could be beneficial.

Commissioner Gourlie stated that the Town has a reserve towing company, but they do not have the amount of equipment or capacity that Kling Towing provides.

Chief Hunt stated that the bid would be written to our specifications to include the same level of service or better. He stated that Lake County has a rotating vendor list for towing services that meet their standard. However, our current contract with Kling Towing includes special services such as changing tires, etc.

Mayor Freeman stated that it is his understanding that it is too late to put this service out for bid.

Ms. Wilson stated that the commission could amend the addendum to a one-year term and place the towing service out to bid next year.

Commissioner Regan made a motion to approve the addendum with the two-year extension for the Towing and Recovery Services with Kling Towing; Commissioner Gourlie seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

2. Discussion to Decide if the Disciplinary Arbitration Panel Should Remain an Active Town Board (Nancy Wilson)

Town Clerk Nancy Wilson presented this agenda item stating that the Disciplinary Arbitration Panel (DAP) was created by ordinance in 2018. She stated it was her understanding that the board was created for the police department for disciplinary matters. At the conclusion of a disciplinary hearing several months ago and coinciding with their contract renewal, the PBA changed their grievance procedure to use a different process for arbitration.

Ms. Wilson stated that further research found that the ordinance was written for DAP to be used for general employees as well. She advised after the last arbitration concluded the members of the DAP resigned. Given that this board was not just for the police department, this board currently has no members. She stated that the board could stay intact with new volunteer members or the board could be dissolved.

Commissioner Gourlie asked how the new members would be vetted if the board is disbanded then reestablished.

Ms. Wilson clarified that the PBA would not be involved with this board going forward. The new members could be vetted by the commissioners as is done with all board member appointments.

Commissioner Roberts stated that the town has a Human Resources department and a Town Manager for employee disputes. Bringing in an outside board that is not privy to the ins and outs of the situation seems to be superfluous. She stated that she understood its purpose for a police union issue and is not in favor of keeping this board.

Commissioner Roberts made a motion to disband the Disciplinary Arbitration Panel (DAP); Commissioner Gourlie seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

3. Consideration for the Lady Lake Area Chamber of Commerce to Host their Annual Mac and Cheese Cook Off at the Log Cabin on March 8, 2025 (Mike Burske)

Parks and Recreation Director Mike Burske presented this agenda item stating that this event will be fully run and staffed by the Chamber, who have been great stewards of our property. He advised that all clean-up and break-down will be orchestrated by the Chamber. The Town will not seek fees for use of the park as it is customary for the Museum, the Chamber, and the Kiwanis to host their community activities at the park. The Chamber will provide insurance.

Commissioner Roberts made a motion to approve the Lady Lake Area Chamber of Commerce to Host their Annual Mac and Cheese Cook Off at the Log Cabin on March 8, 2025; Commissioner Sage seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

4. Consideration of Approval for the First Baptist Church of Lady Lake to Perform Christmas Carols Under the Christmas Lights at the Log Cabin on December 14th, 2024, and New Song Community Church to Perform Carols Under the Lights on December 15th and to Advertise the Caroling on Town Media Outlets (Mike Burske)

Parks and Recreation Director Mike Burske presented this agenda item and advised that these events will not be advertised on our media outlets.

Mr. Burske stated that the First Baptist Church of Lady Lake and New Song Community Church are performing for two evenings of Christmas Carols. He stated that this is a benefit to our holiday schedule; performance times have not been coordinated. He stated that neither church has asked for town assistance on the nights of the events.

Commissioner Sage made a motion to approve the First Baptist Church of Lady Lake to Perform Christmas Carols Under the Christmas Lights at the Log Cabin on December 14th, 2024, and New Song Community Church to Perform Carols Under the Lights on December 15th; Commissioner Gourlie seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

5. Hammock Oaks Subdivision Phase 2A — Final Plat Plan — Proposing 45 Single Family Lots on 14.17 Acres Zoned PUD within the Hammock Oaks Subdivision, located on the South Side of Highway 466, East of Cherry Lake Road, owned by SK Hammock Oaks, LLC, within the town limits of the Town of Lady Lake, Florida (Thad Carroll)

Growth Management Director Thad Carroll presented this agenda item stating the application was received Monday, July 8, 2024, by Aaron Hickman, PSM, of CWH, Inc on behalf of SK Hammock Oaks, LLC, for the final plat of Hammock Oaks Phase 2A Subdivision. The Future Land Use Designation is Single Family Medium Density, which is up to 4 dwelling units per acre (Policy Specific); Zoning Designation is Planned Unit Development (PUD). He stated that the property is currently vacant although site work is underway. Hammock Oaks Subdivision consists of eleven phases. Phase 2A consists of 45 market rate single family lots on 14.17 acres.

Mr. Carroll stated that this agenda item has been reviewed by Town Attorney, Derek Schroth, and the survey review by Eddie Jenkins, PSM with TetraTech.

Commissioner Regan asked approximately how many homes are permitted per acre and if green space is required.

Mr. Carroll stated the Hammock Oaks project must adhere to no more than four dwelling units per acre. He stated that cumulatively the project is required to adhere to 25% open space. He explained that the open space in the other phases of this development may differ in size. He stated that this development has met well over the 25% requirement for open space.

Commissioner Sage stated that the commission has approved approximately 4,200 homes and asked if this phase is in addition to what has been previously approved.

Mr. Carroll advised that there are three stages of approval: zoning entitlement which sets the density for the land; it is then presented as a preliminary plat which is the first proposal showing how the lots will be laid out with the open space, where the streets will be constructed, where the retention areas will be, etc. This agenda item before the commission tonight creates the document for the developer to sell the homes fee simple to the buyers. He stated that the homes in this phase are included in the 4,200 homes.

Commissioner Gourlie made a motion to approve Hammock Oaks Subdivision Phase 2A Final Plat Plan; Commissioner Roberts seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

6. Hammock Oaks Subdivision Phase 2D — Final Plat Plan — Proposing 130 Single Family Lots on 41.10 Acres Zoned PUD within the Hammock Oaks Subdivision, located on the South Side of Highway 466, East of Cherry Lake Road, owned by SK Hammock Oaks, LLC, within the town limits of the Town of Lady Lake, Florida (Thad Carroll)

Growth Management Director Thad Carroll presented this agenda item stating on Monday, July 8, 2024, Aaron Hickman, PSM, of CWH, Inc on behalf of SK Hammock Oaks, LLC, applied for the final plat of Hammock Oaks Phase 2D Subdivision. Future Land Use Designation is Single Family Medium Density, which is up to four dwelling units per acre (Policy Specific), and the Zoning Designation is Planned Unit Development (PUD). The Town Commission approved the preliminary plat of Hammock Oaks on Wednesday, January 4, 2023. The Development Order for Phase 2D was subsequently issued on Thursday, October 5, 2023. Hammock Oaks Subdivision consists of eleven phases. Phase 2D consists of 130 single family lots on 41.10 acres.

Commissioner Roberts asked if the eastern edge of this plat abuts the roundabout on Rolling Acres Road.

Mr. Carroll replied affirmatively clarifying that there is open area to the north.

Mayor Freeman asked if Via San Palo would connect to an area in the future.

Mr. Carroll stated that Lake County and the residents on Via San Palo did not want the road to be connected.

Commissioner Roberts made a motion to approve Hammock Oaks Subdivision Phase 2D Final Plat Plan; Commissioner Gourlie seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

C. TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT

1. Ordinance 2024-17 (Second and Final Reading) — An Ordinance Changing the Zoning Designation for Certain Property Being Approximately 0.538 acres Owned by Bharat Khirbat

Located at the Intersection of West Hermosa Street and West Guava Street from Light Commercial (LC) to Heavy Commercial (HC) within the Town Limits of the Town of Lady Lake, Florida (Thad Carroll)

Growth Management Director Thad Carroll presented this agenda item stating the application was received on Thursday, June 13, 2024. He stated that the property is located west of the intersection of W. Hermosa Street and Guava Street, approximately 225 feet east of Hwy 441.

Mr. Carroll stated the purpose of the Light Commercial district is to implement comprehensive plan policies for managing transitional areas between residential land uses and more intense commercial and industrial uses. The proposed Heavy Commercial (HC) district is established to implement comprehensive plan policies for managing commercial development. This district is designed to accommodate general retail sales and services and wholesale services. He stated that the properties surrounding the subject property are: North – Heavy Commercial; East – Right of Way/Planned Commercial/Single Family Medium Density (RS-6); South – Planned Commercial; West – Heavy Commercial.

Mr. Carroll advised that the origin of this request was to tie all the properties on this block under one common zoning designation as there has been a lot of redevelopments in this area. He stated that the applicant does not have a proposed use for this property at this time. However, by bringing all the property under a common zoning designation it makes options for redevelopment easier.

Commissioner Gourlie made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-17 on second and final reading; Commissioner Sage seconded.

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

Motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

2. Resolution 2024-108 — Variance — A Resolution of the Town Commission of the Town of Lady Lake, Florida, granting a Variance to Allow a Monument Sign to be Placed Less than Five Feet from the Property Line in Accordance with the Provisions of Chapter 17, Section 17-3. E). 1). D)., of the Town of Lady Lake Land Development Regulations, on Property Owned by Lady Lake 121 MP RK6, LLC, a Property Being Approximately 0.50 Acres of Land, located 465 Feet North of the

Intersection of La Plaza Parkway and North Highway 27/441, Lying West and Adjacent to La Grande Boulevard, within the Town Limits of the Town of Lady Lake, Florida. (Thad Carroll)

Growth Management Director Thad Carroll presented this agenda item stating the applicant is Harrison Cooper, of Lady Lake 121 MP RK6, LLC, on behalf of the owner, Lady Lake 121 MP RK6, LLC. Future Land Use Designation is Commercial General – Retail Sales & Services (RET). The Zoning Designation is Planned Commercial (PC), and the present use of the property is Cardiovascular Institute/Ocala Health.

Mr. Carroll stated this property is located between La Grande Boulevard and Hwy 441. He stated the variance request is to allow the existing monument sign to be placed less than five feet from the easterly property line in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 17, Section 17-4. E). 1). D). of the Land Development Regulations, a property being approximately 0.50 acres of land, located 465 feet north of the intersection of La Plaza Parkway and north Hwy 27/441, lying west and adjacent to La Grande Boulevard.

Mr. Carroll explained the applicant has stated that the existing monument sign was installed in 2016, and, during the recent sale of the property, it was discovered to be on the neighboring property. The sign was relocated intact to the correct property in the only landscaped area available and as far away from the right-of-way as possible. Further, the applicant states that the subject property is situated between LaGrande Boulevard, which provides access to the entrance of the property, and U.S. Highway 27/441. The five-foot setback area is the only location on the property abutting LaGrande Boulevard to situate the monument sign, which is very helpful to patients trying to find the medical office building. The monument sign is twenty-five inches from the back of the curb, and thirty-one inches from the edge of pavement of La Grande Boulevard. He recognized that the sign placement is not in conformance with town code.

Mr. Carroll stated he conducted a site visit and noted that traffic along this portion of La Grande Boulevard is not as busy as the other portions, and the speed limit is 25 mph. He stated the sign is elevated and protected by a curb. Staff supports this variance as it does not pose a danger to the public and the advantage of the sign placement is beneficial to the patients to locate the facility.

Mr. Carroll presented a letter from the applicant explaining that they could not travel to the meeting tonight and asked this item to be tabled should the commission have additional questions. However, if the commission feels that staff has successfully addressed any issues, they request your approval.

Commissioner Gourlie asked Mr. Carroll if he anticipates any issues with the sign in this location.

Mr. Carroll stated that he is not concerned because La Grande Boulevard is one of the oldest commercial sections within The Villages. He noted that there is a dumpster further down the road

that is nearly on the right-of-way. He stated that these developments were constructed per the old code and does not believe this sign location sets a precedent; the variance grants the applicant to place the sign in the only place available.

Commissioner Sage stated that he is concerned with oncoming traffic and asked if there enough clearance beyond the sign.

Mr. Carroll replied affirmatively due to the curvature of the road, oncoming traffic is visible.

Mayor Freeman asked if this sign will be moved from this location.

Mr. Carroll advised that the applicant is requesting to keep the sign in this location. He explained that no permits were obtained when the sign was relocated. When they applied for the building permit, it was discovered that a variance was required prior to finalizing the permits.

Commissioner Gourlie made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-108 on second and final reading; Commissioner Roberts seconded.

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

Motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Chief Hunt introduced new officer, Hashaam Choudri, who recently relocated to from Philadelphia. Chief Hunt stated that he is thankful for quality applicants.

Mr. Lawrence stated that with Hurricane Milton approaching, he encouraged everyone to sign up for emergency alerts, which can be done on the town's homepage. He stated that the alerts will go directly to your phone. He stated that Mayor Freeman signed the Declaration of Emergency and town offices will be closed Wednesday and Thursday. Public Works and the Police will have a small staff to aid in debris clean-up and emergencies. He stated sandbags are available near the ballfields on W. Hermosa Street. Tuesday, Oct. 8, is the last day sandbags are available. The Villages Elementary School is our local shelter. It is recommended that residents who live in single or doublewide mobile homes seek shelter elsewhere.

Commissioner Sage asked who is recommending people in mobile homes to evacuate.

Mr. Lawrence advised that the State of Florida and Lake County Emergency Management is recommending this.

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Gourlie stated that the commissioners received a copy of a letter regarding the noise level at Spanish Springs. The writer states that the decibel level is different for residential areas versus existing commercial areas. Commissioner Gourlie stated that the music should not stop because one person does not like to hear it past 8:30PM.

Mr. Carroll advised that the ordinance pertaining to noise was written when a new automotive repair business was near a residential area. The policy was developed so a new commercial development would not be near a residential area and create excessive levels of noise. He stated that Spanish Springs Town Square has been in existence longer than the new residential units. Also, when the apartment project was proposed, it was announced during multiple public hearings that the residents of the apartments would hear music until 9PM.

Mayor Freeman stated that whoever wrote the letter did not sign it. He stated that there is a state law in Florida that code enforcement cannot accept anonymous complaints. He stated that law should pertain to any communication. He stated that Mr. Nyce wrote a letter to the editor on Villages-News.com regarding extending commissioners' terms. He stated that Mr. Nyce always uses real name when he submits a letter to the editor. He stated that most comments posted on this site are by people using an alias. He asked journalist Meta Minton to write an article stating the "armchair commissioners" should attend a commission meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

Carol Osborne

Carol Osborne, Deputy Town Clerk

Ed Freeman, Mayor