



**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
of THE MARY ESTHER CITY COUNCIL
November 6, 2023 - 6:00 PM**

195 Christobal Road – North, Mary Esther, FL 32569

CITY COUNCIL PRESENT

Chris Stein, Mayor
Jan Lipscomb, Councilmember

Larry Carter, Mayor Pro Tem
April Sutton, Councilmember
Bernie Oder, Councilmember

CITY STAFF PRESENT

Jared Cobb, City Manager
Hayward Dykes, City Attorney
Dillon Morris, Administrative Coordinator

Valerie Broxson, City Clerk
Kelvin Cherry, Code Compliance Officer
Heather Day, Finance Director
Shawn Lindsey, Public Works Director

OTHERS PRESENT

Grady Carpenter, OSCO Captain

Mark Bundrick, OCWFD Chief

1. INVOCATION

Deputy Chief Jeff Wagner, Ocean City Wright Fire Control District, provided the invocation.

2. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Stein at 6:00 p.m.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Stein led the pledge of allegiance.

4. ROLL CALL

The City Clerk called the roll as reflected above.

5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Stein asked if the council wished to make any changes to the agenda. Hearing none, Mayor Stein asked for a motion. Councilmember Sutton initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Lipscomb. The motion passed 4 to 0.

RESULT:	PASSED (4-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember April Sutton
SECOND:	Councilmember Janice Lipscomb
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, Janice Lipscomb, April Sutton
NAYS:	None

6. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

6.1. NWF Aquatic Center Presentation by the City of Niceville

Amy Hanson and Kathy Heapy presented information to gain support for building an aquatic center in the area. The Council discussed the potential effects of supporting or not supporting the aquatic center.

After the discussion, Mayor Stein called for a motion to support the NWF Aquatic Center by adding the City of Mary Esther to Section 2 of the Cooperative Agreement. A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Carter, seconded by Councilmember Oder. The motion passed 3-1.

RESULT:	PASSED (3-1)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Larry Carter
SECOND:	Councilmember Bernie Oder
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, Janice Lipscomb
NAYS:	April Sutton

6.2. Epilepsy Awareness Month Proclamation

Mayor Stein read a proclamation asking for November to be proclaimed epilepsy awareness month.

Upon hearing no discussion, Mayor Stein called for a motion to authorize the mayor to sign the proclamation, declaring November epilepsy awareness month. A motion was made by Councilmember Oder, seconded by Councilmember Sutton. Motion passed 4-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (4-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Bernie Oder
SECOND:	Councilmember April Sutton
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, Janice Lipscomb, April Sutton
NAYS:	None

6.3. Yard of the Month for November 2023.

Mayor Stein informed the council that a resident had applied to be the November "Yard of the Month" winner. The council discussed the location, then chose 1 Kingston Court as the November winner.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Stein asked if the council wished to make any changes to the consent agenda. Hearing none, Mayor Stein asked for a motion. Mayor Pro Tem Carter initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Lipscomb. The motion passed 4 to 0.

7.1. Approval of the Minutes

7.2. Financial Report

7.3. Maintenance Report

7.4. Library Report

7.5. Fire Department

7.6. Code Compliance Report

7.7. Jacobs Report

8. CITIZENS WHO HAVE REQUESTED TO BE PLACED ON THE AGENDA

None.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)

The Ocean City Wright Fire Chief Mark Bundrick informed council that he would be retiring and Deputy Chief Wagner will be taking over as the Fire Chief.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

10.1. Lease or Acquisition of Property Located at 302 Mary Esther Boulevard

City Manager Cobb gave council information relating to the acquisition of the property located at 302 Mary Esther Boulevard. City Manager Cobb showed a powerpoint (see attachment) showcasing the current price of the initial purchase, renovations, as well as disclosing that the city would use reserves as well as a loan to make the purchase.

Council had a discussion and brought up all of the city's current outstanding projects and gave a rough estimate of all the current costs tied to the projects.

The Council deliberated about the information presented, the location of the current city hall and the location of the proposed property being in the center of the city. City Manager Cobb stated that one of his concerns was not about the cost of the bank but the amount of current projects the city has going on.

The Council discussed the current state of the city hall and the current infrastructure of the building.

After deliberation, the Council decided to delay the discussion until all councilmembers could be present to vote. Mayor Stein called for a motion to delay the discussion of lease or purchase of the bank until December 2023. A motion was made by Councilmember Oder, seconded by Councilmember Sutton. Motion passed 4-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (4-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Bernie Oder
SECOND:	Councilmember April Sutton
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, Janice Lipscomb, April Sutton
NAYS:	None

10.2. Holiday Closing Schedule

City Manager Cobb stated that he had a discussion with the library about the closing schedule and that many of the staff already made plans regarding the presumed holiday closing schedule. City Manager Cobb said that the library could still be open this holiday if the council decides and that if council wants to have the library remain open next year then to have the discussion earlier in the year.

Upon hearing no discussion, Mayor Stein called for a motion to authorize the closing of city facilities during the holiday period beginning December 21st, 2023 at noon to January 2nd, 2024. A motion is made by Councilmember Oder and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Carter. Motion passed 4-0.

11. NEW BUSINESS

11.1. 2024 Regular City Council Meetings

City Clerk Broxson said that the meeting schedule presented will have city council meetings on the first Monday of every month in the calendar year 2024, with the exception of January, September, and December being held on Tuesday due to holidays and community events.

Upon hearing no discussion, Mayor Stein called a motion to approve the 2024 Regular City Council Meeting dates as proposed. Councilmember Sutton made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Lipscomb. Motion passed 4-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (4-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember April Sutton
SECOND:	Councilmember Janice Lipscomb
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, Janice Lipscomb, April Sutton
NAYS:	None

11.2. FDEP Consent Order Amendment

City Manager Cobb presented information about an amendment to the consent order to close the existing waste water plant. This would extend to whether the city would like to proceed with the project in order to gather funding for the project.

City Manager Cobb also stated that a penalty fee had been added by FDEP. The City Council could pay the fine or complete an in-kind project. City Attorney Dykes provided clarification as it related to penalties and fines.

The Council had a discussion and summarized that as the plan is being presented, that the city has until the end of 2024 to gather funding for the project and if the city can not gather the funding, the city can rehab the current plant.

Mayor Stein called for a motion to approve the amended consent order dated November 2, 2023, with the FDEP. A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Carter, seconded by Oder. Motion passed 4-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (4-0)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Larry Carter
SECOND:	Councilmember Bernie Oder
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, Janice Lipscomb, April Sutton
NAYS:	None

11.3. State Revolving Fund Loan Agreement Amendment (WW460201)

Finance Director Day stated that the amendment modified the existing construction loan, increasing the loan for sewer improvements in the Azelia Park neighborhood.

Upon hearing no discussion, Mayor Stein called for a motion to approve amendment to loan agreement WW460201. Councilmember Oder makes a motion, seconded by Councilmember Sutton. Motion passed 4-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (4-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Bernie Oder
SECOND:	Councilmember April Sutton
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, Janice Lipscomb, April Sutton
NAYS:	None

11.4. CDBG Grant Agreement Amendment

City Manager Cobb stated the city was informed that the CDBG-CV program had additional funding. Staff applied and the city had been awarded additional funding for the Springdale Neighborhood sidewalks.

The deadline has also been extended through September 30th, 2024.

After a small discussion, Mayor Stein called for a motion to approve modification 1 to the sub-grant agreement between the Department of Commerce and the City of Mary Esther H2508. A motion was made by Councilmember Sutton and seconded by Councilmember Lipscomb. Motion passed 4-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (4-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember April Sutton
SECOND:	Councilmember Janice Lipscomb
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, Janice Lipscomb, April Sutton
NAYS:	None

11.5. FPL LED Streetlight Conversion Agreement

City Manager Cobb stated that FPL converted some lights in the Azalea Park neighborhood to LED fixtures and that they want to change the remainder of the lights to LED fixtures.

Hearing no discussion, Mayor Stein called for a motion to approve the FPL LED Lighting agreement and authorize the mayor to sign the contract. Motioned by Mayor Pro Tem Carter, seconded by Councilmember Lipscomb. Motion passed 4-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (4-0)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Larry Carter
SECOND:	Councilmember Janice Lipscomb
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, Janice Lipscomb, April Sutton
NAYS:	None

11.6. FDEP Grant Agreement for Stormwater Improvements (LPA 0573)

City Manager Cobb stated that the city submitted a legislative appropriation request for Ray's Pond and for storm water ditch improvements. He recommended council to accept the appropriation and authorize the mayor to sign the agreement.

Upon hearing no discussion, Mayor Stein called for a motion to accept an appropriation in the amount of \$500,000 and to authorize the mayor to sign the grant agreement with FDEP. A motion is made by councilmember Oder, seconded by Councilmember Sutton. Motion passed 4-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (4-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Bernie Oder
SECOND:	Councilmember April Sutton
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, Janice Lipscomb, April Sutton
NAYS:	None

11.7. Legislative Discussion

The council discussed the recent event to discuss legislative appropriations. They requested talking points for future events. City Manager Cobb agreed to provide them for future events.

11.8. Resolution 23-06, SRF Loan Application for Azalea Park Neighborhood Water Improvements

City Clerk Broxson read Resolution 23-06 by title as follows:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MARY ESTHER, FLORIDA, RELATING TO THE STATE REVOLVING FUND LOAN PROGRAM; MAKING FINDINGS; AUTHORIZING THE LOAN APPLICATION; AUTHORIZING THE LOAN AGREEMENT; ESTABLISHING PLEDGED REVENUES; DESIGNATING AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES; PROVIDING ASSURANCES; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS, SERVABILITY, AND EFFECTIVE DATE.

Finance Director Day stated that resolution 23-06 authorizes staff to create and submit an SRF Loan application for water improvements in the Azalea Park neighborhood project.

Mayor Stein called for a motion to approve resolution 23-06 authorizing SRF Loan application for the water portion of the Azalea Park Neighborhood Infrastructure Improvements. A motion was made by Councilmember Lipscomb, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Carter. Motion passed 4-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (4-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Janice Lipscomb
SECOND:	Mayor Pro Tem Larry Carter
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, Janice Lipscomb, April Sutton
NAYS:	None

12. COUNCILS' STANDING COMMITTEE STATUS REPORTS AND OTHER COMMENTS

Mayor Stein opted to combine item 12, Councils' Standing Committee Status Reports, and item 13, additional comments.

Councilmember Sutton reminded the public about Mary Esther's Veterans Day Parade and event. Councilmember Sutton also mentioned that our state representative Patt Maney will also be there.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter had no additional comments.

The Mayor reiterated what Councilmember Sutton said about the Veterans Day Parade.

Councilmember Lipscomb brought to attention that Okaloosa County does not carry a drug to prevent against Hepatitis, HIV, other serious illnesses. Councilmember Lipscomb is pushing for our county to have this drug more readily available to healthcare providers.

Councilmember Oder stated that at the upcoming legislative committee meetings, he will be filling in for

the Northwest Florida League of Cities. Councilmember Oder also talked about the online graduation program which had 12 people graduate. Councilmember Oder talked about the success of the library's Trunk-or-Treat and the library cooperative meetings are being changed to start at 2 PM instead of 4 PM. Councilmember Oder thanked the fire department.

City Attorney Dykes had no additional comments.

City Clerk Broxson stated that she has sent out a letter of resignation so council can discuss how to proceed with filling the soon-to-be vacant position.

City Manager Cobb thanked Captain Carpenter for his service to the city.

13. ADJOURN

The council meeting adjourned at 7:24 PM.


Interim City Clerk, Dillon Morris

Meeting approved on

1/16/24

