



MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
of THE MARY ESTHER CITY COUNCIL
October 7, 2024 - 6:00 PM

195 Christobal Road – North, Mary Esther, FL 32569

CITY COUNCIL PRESENT

Chris Stein, Mayor
Susan Coxwell, Councilmember
Richard Lawson, Councilmember

April Sutton, Mayor Pro Tem
Larry Carter, Councilmember (Virtually)
Bernie Oder, Councilmember

CITY STAFF PRESENT

Jared Cobb, City Manager
Hayward Dykes, City Attorney
Dillon Morris, City Clerk

Kelvin Cherry, Code Compliance Officer
Shawn Lindsey, Public Works Director
Sheila Ortyl, Library Director

OTHERS PRESENT

Chad Rewis, OSCO Captain

1. INVOCATION

No invocation was given.

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.

Mayor Stein asked for a motion to approve Councilmember Carter's attendance virtually. Councilmember Coxwell initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Lawson. The motion passed 4-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (4-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Susan Coxwell
SECOND:	Councilmember Richard Lawson
AYES:	Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	None

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. Mayor Pro Tem Sutton initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Coxwell. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem April Sutton
SECOND:	Councilmember Susan Coxwell
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell

NAYS:	None
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6. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

6.1. Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of the Emerald Coast Proclamation

Mayor Stein read a proclamation declaring October 2024 as "Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Month" in Mary Esther. After reading, he asked for a motion to authorize the mayor to sign the proclamation, declaring October 2024 as "Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Month" in Mary Esther. Mayor Pro Tem Sutton initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Coxwell. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem April Sutton
SECOND:	Councilmember Susan Coxwell
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	None

Jean Grieve, American Cancer Society, spoke about the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk being organized and how the organization has received proclamations from five municipalities showing support. She also discussed her upcoming poker tournament fundraiser for breast cancer. After that, she, Mayor Stein, Mayor Pro Tem Sutton, and Library Director Ortyl took a picture together.

6.2. National Pedestrian Safety Month Proclamation

Mayor Stein read a proclamation to declare October 2024 as "National Pedestrian Safety Month" in Mary Esther. After reading, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to authorize the Mayor to sign the proclamation, declaring October 2024 as "National Pedestrian Safety Month" in Mary Esther. Councilmember Coxwell initiated the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Sutton. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Susan Coxwell
SECOND:	Mayor Pro Tem April Sutton
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	None

Ida Kreiser thanked the mayor and council for the proclamation and discussed there will be a tree planting on November 7th, and World Remembrance Day on November 18th. After that, she, Mayor Stein, and Citizen McLemore took a picture together.

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. Councilmember Oder initiated the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Sutton. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Bernie Oder

SECOND:	Mayor Pro Tem April Sutton
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	None

- 7.1. **Financial Report**
- 7.2. **Public Works Report**
- 7.3. **Library Report**
- 7.4. **Fire Department Report**
- 7.5. **Community Development Report**
- 7.6. **Jacobs Report**
- 7.7. **Law Enforcement Report**
- 7.8. **Minutes of the September 4th, 2024, Local Planning Agency Meeting**
- 7.9. **Minutes of the September 4th, 2024 Regular Council Meeting**
- 7.10. **Minutes of the September 24th, 2024 Special Council Meeting**

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

None.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT (NON-AGENDA ITEMS)

None.

10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

10.1. Ordinance No. 2024-02 and No. 2024-03, Consider a Small-Scale Future Land Use Map Amendment from Commercial (Com) and Low Density Residential (LDR) to Public Lands (PL) and a Rezone from C-2 General Commercial and R-1 Single Family Residential to Public Lands (PL) for approximately 0.74 acres. (Okaloosa County BCC, Applicant) (Tyler Reed, Community Development Director)

Mayor Stein opened the public hearing on October 7th at 6:16 p.m. Community Development Director Reed led the discussion on Ordinance 2024-02 and Ordinance 2024-03 to change the city's future land use map. After the discussion, Mayor Stein opened the public comment. Upon hearing no comment, Mayor Stein closed the public comment and public hearing on October 7th at 6:20 p.m. and asked City Clerk Morris to do a second reading of the ordinance's title. After reading the title of the ordinance, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to approve the ordinance. Mayor Pro Tem Sutton initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Coxwell. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem April Sutton
SECOND:	Councilmember Susan Coxwell
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	None

After that, Mayor Stein asked City Clerk Morris to conduct a second reading of Ordinance 2024-03. After the reading, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-03. Mayor Pro Tem Sutton initiated the motion seconded by Councilmember Lawson. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem April Sutton
SECOND:	Councilmember Richard Lawson
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	None

10.2. First Reading, Ordinance 2024-01, Vacation Rentals

City Manager Cobb led the discussion, stating that the city is seeking direction on the ordinance. Mayor Pro Tem Sutton voiced to dismiss the ordinance altogether. Councilmember Oder voiced that he would like to proceed with the Ordinance. Councilmember Coxwell cited that she would like to see the ordinance simplified. Councilmember Lawson wanted to see it improved but not go away. Councilmember Carter voiced that he believes no ordinance is not the solution, but it should not be too overreaching. After some discussion, mayor and council came to the consensus that they will provided feedback by the end of October, review in November, and the city will bring it back in December.

11. NEW BUSINESS

11.1. Jacobs Settlement Agreement

City Manager Cobb stated the agreement was not finalized.

11.2. RFB 2024-08, Ray's Pond Stormwater Improvements

Public Works Director Lindsay led the discussion on bids received for the Ray's Pond Stormwater Improvements. He recommended awarding the bid to Chavers Construction for an amount not to exceed \$598,868.05. After discussion, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to ward the bid to Chavers Construction Inc. for an amount not-to-exceed \$598,868.05. Councilmember Oder initiated the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Sutton. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Bernie Oder
SECOND:	Mayor Pro Tem April Sutton
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	None

11.3. City Council Committee Appointments

City Clerk Morris led the discussion on the city council committee appointments. After some discussion, Mayor Stein was appointed the alternative representative for the Emerald Coast Regional Council. Mayor Stein asked for a motion to approve the committee appointments. Mayor Pro Tem Sutton initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Coxwell. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem April Sutton
SECOND:	Councilmember Susan Coxwell
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	None

11.4. 2025 Regular Council Meeting Calendar

City Clerk Morris led the discussion on the 2025 regular council meeting calendar. After some discussion, the dates we agreed as follows:

- January 21st - Moved due to New Years and Martin Luther King Jr Day.
- February 3rd
- March 3rd
- April 7th
- May 5th
- June 2nd
- July 7th
- August 4th
- September 2nd - Moved due to Labor Day
- October 6th
- November 3rd
- December 8th - Moved due to local events

Mayor Stein asked for a motion to approve the 2025 regular city council meeting dates as proposed. Councilmember Coxwell initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Sutton. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem April Sutton
SECOND:	Councilmember Susan Coxwell
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	None

11.5. FY 2025 Library Interlocal Agreement

Library Director Ortyl led the discussion on the 2025 Library Interlocal Agreement. After some discussion, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to approve the 2025 OCPLC Interlocal Agreement. Councilmember Oder initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Lawson. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Bernie Oder
SECOND:	Councilmember Richard Lawson
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	None

11.6. FY 2025 City Manager Salary Adjustment

City Manager Cobb led the discussion for the 2025 City Manager Salary Adjustment. He requested a 5% salary increase with additional funding for professional development. After some discussion, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to approve the 5% pay raise and additional funding. Councilmember Oder initiated the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Sutton. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
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MOVER:	Councilmember Bernie Oder
SECOND:	Mayor Pro Tem April Sutton
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	None

11.7. FY 2025 Law Enforcement Service Agreement

City Manager Cobb led the discussion of the 2025 Law Enforcement Service Agreement, discussing the 9% increase and a provision for requesting additional services. Councilmember Coxwell asked if this increase is typical among municipalities where City Manager Cobb stated it is and that he is working to see if it can be brought closer to inflation. Councilmember Oder asked why the insurance was so high. Captain Rewis, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office, said it was for workers healthcare and benefits. Mayor Pro Tem Sutton voiced that the city can not keep sustaining the increases, discussing Shalimar's police department for what they pay. Councilmember Carter discussed that Shalimar and Mary Esther are not good comparisons and that it is a multifaceted issue, citing that the city would lose the patrol car around the city if the contract is ended. Captain Rewis discussed warnings versus citations, stating that OCSO leans for warnings to help better educate citizens, as well many people that are stopped are first time stops with tourists. After some discussion, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to approve the FY 2025 Law Enforcement Service Agreement with the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office for an amount not to exceed \$299,129.00. Councilmember Coxwell initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Oder. The motion passed 4-1.

RESULT:	PASSED (4-1)
MOVER:	Councilmember Susan Coxwell
SECOND:	Councilmember Bernie Oder
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	April Sutton

11.8. Photo Speed Enforcement in School Zones

City Manager Cobb led the discussion on photo speed enforcement in school zones, discussing that cameras can be used to enforce speed limits in school zones. Mayor Stein asked when the camera is in effect, with Captain Rewis saying that it is up to council. Councilmember Coxwell asked if the funds go back to the municipalities, with Captain Rewis stating most goes to the state with some going to the municipalities. Councilmember Carter inquired about the education requirement, with City Manager Cobb stating it would be up to the vendor with the city doing some education. Councilmember Lawson inquired whether the price would increase for higher speeds, with Captain Rewis stating it is the same fine for any speed over the limit. After some discussion, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to direct the city manager to prepare an ordinance for review, discussion, and consideration of a first reading. Mayor Pro Tem Sutton initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Coxwell. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem April Sutton
SECOND:	Councilmember Susan Coxwell
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	None

Mayor Pro Tem Sutton discussed her trip to Perry, Florida, upcoming city events, the bathrooms in the fire department coming along, and urged citizens to stop by the library to congratulate Library Director Ortyl on retirement.

Councilmember Coxwell discussed attending the Waste Management recycling facility ribbon cutting.

Councilmember Lawson had no additional comments.

Mayor Stein stated the Veterans Day Parade is good to go.

Councilmember Oder congratulated Library Director Ortyl on retirement, the next Okaloosa County Library Cooperative meeting, a note received from the library cooperative, thanked the fire department, the next Northwest Florida League of Cities meeting, the Florida League of Cities legislative committees meetings, and attending the discussion of Navarre incorporating.

Councilmember Carter discussed the poor mic quality of the council chambers.

13. OTHER COMMENTS

City Attorney Dykes had no additional comments.

City Clerk Morris discussed wanting to redo the council photo, helping organize the upcoming Northwest Florida League of Cities dinner, the upcoming Okaloosa League of Cities dinner, and that he will be taking over the duties of the secretary for the Okaloosa League of Cities.

City Manager Cobb discussed wanting guidance on a team building and governance workshop and reaching out to Doctor Hanline for his review for next year.

14. ADJOURN

The council meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Minutes approved at the 11/4/2024 meeting.

Dillon Morris
Dillon Morris, City Clerk

