



MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
of THE MARY ESTHER CITY COUNCIL
November 4, 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
Bernie Oder, Councilmember

CITY STAFF PRESENT

Jared Cobb, City Manager
Hayward Dykes, City Attorney

Dillon Morris, City Clerk
Shawn Lindsey, Public Works Director

OTHERS PRESENT

Chad Rewis, OSCO Captain

Jeff Wagner, OCWFD Chief

1. INVOCATION

Jeff Wagner, Ocean City-Wright Fire Control District Fire Chief, gave the invocation.

2. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Stein called the meeting to order 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 called for a motion to allow Councilmember Carter to participate virtually. Councilmember Coxwell initiated, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Sutton. The motion passed 4-0.

RESULT:	PASSED (4-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Susan Coxwell
SECOND:	Mayor Pro Tem April Sutton
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 Lawson. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	(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

6. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

6.1. World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims Proclamation

Mayor Stein read the proclamation to declare November 17th, 2024, as "World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims" in Mary Esther. After, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to sign the proclamation. Councilmember Coxwell initiated the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Sutton. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	(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

Citizen McLemore, Brian Circle, took the podium and spoke about Okaloosa County traffic victims and the upcoming World Day of Remembrance.

6.2. Epilepsy Awareness Month Proclamation

Mayor Stein read the proclamation to declare November 2024 as "Epilepsy Awareness Month" in Mary Esther. After, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to sign the proclamation. 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

6.3. Government Week Essay Contest Awards

The city hosted an essay contest for City Government Week. Mayor Stein read the winning essay. The city awarded Camille Kafferlin with a certificate of appreciation for her essay celebrating being a citizen of Mary Esther.

6.4. Update on Lead Line Inventory

Shawn Lindsey, Public Works Director, spoke on the lead line inventory. He stated that the city would send out a letter explaining that citizens have unknown service lines and that they will be inventoried at a later date. He also discussed that neither Mary Esther nor Northwest Florida had discovered any lead lines.

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 Sutton initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Lawson. The motion passed 5-0.

RESULT:	(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

- 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 October 7th, 2024, Regular 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. Jacobs Settlement Agreement

Shawn Lindsey, Public Works Director, stated he would let Jacobs speak to the topic but stated that he recommended approval with the exception of 90 days instead of 180 days, citing that it would be very close to the grant deadline. Scott Jernigan, Jacobs, stated he was concerned with the 90-day window, citing that if 90 days are approved, it will have to be brought back to their Jacobs team. Mayor Pro Tem Sutton asked if 120 days would be a better solution and asked how soon work could start. Public Works Director Lindsey stated residents asked him every day when work would begin. Scott Jernigan stated it is a matter of scheduling everything out and talk to his crew about it. Councilmember Coxwell asked when Talcon will be done, with Public Works Director Lindsey saying they should be done before Thanksgiving. Councilmember Coxwell asked how the city manager felt. City Manager Cobb discussed he was frustrated with the whole situation, opting for sooner rather than later. Councilmember Oder discussed that he was disappointed with the handling of the whole situation and letting Jacobs off the hook. He discussed he does not want to extend it over 90 days. Mayor Stein asked if there was any more discussion. Hearing none, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to approve the settlement agreement with Jacobs, as amended, which requires the scope of work to be completed within ninety (90) days of the agreement execution. 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. NEW BUSINESS

11.1. Contract for Rays Pond Rehabilitation with Chavers Construction, Inc

Shawn Lindsey, Public Works Director, discussed that the city recommends signing the contract with Chavers Construction. Mayor Stein asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, Mayor Stein asked for a motion to approve the contract with Chavers Construction, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$598,868.05 and authorized the mayor to sign the contract documents.

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

11.2. RFB 2024-08, Water Storage Tank Maintenance Program

Shawn Lindsey, Public Works Director, discussed the proposals received for RFP 2024-08. He stated he recommends approval to discuss the proposals with US Tank. Mayor Pro Tem Sutton asked if they are aware of tanks being in poor condition and if there will be additional financial impacts. Public Works Director Lindsey stated that all the proposals were aware of the tanks' conditions and that there was a timeline stating what to do and when. Jim Morris, President of US Tank, spoke to the council about having worked on the city's tanks already and that they have not increased the prices over the past 8 years and stuck to the budget. Anything not anticipated is taken care of. Councilmember Carter asked if there was an issue with the agenda saying "RFB" instead of "RFP". City Attorney Dykes stated that it was a scrivener's error. Mayor Stein asked if there was any more discussion, then asked for a motion to award RFP 2024-08 to US Tank, direct staff to negotiate an agreement, and return for City Council review and consideration. Councilmember Lawson initiated the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Sutton. The motion passed 5-0.

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

11.3. Parks and Greenways Master Plan

Shawn Lindsey, Public Works Director, discussed the two proposals received for the parks and greenways master plan. He discussed meeting with Community Development Director Reed about the proposals, and they were happy with both. Public Works Director Lindsey recommended approving the task order with Barge. Mayor Stein asked if he was happy with Barge, and Public Works Director Lindsey remarked that he was happy with their work. Mayor Stein asked if there were any other comments, then asked for a motion to approve the task order with Barge Design Solutions for a comprehensive parks and greenway master plan. 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

11.4. Facilitator for FY 2025 City Manager Evaluation

City Manager Cobb discussed the fee for Dr. Walt Hanline's evaluation of the city manager for next year. Mayor Stein asked for a motion to select Dr. Walt Hanline and the National Center for Executive Leadership and School Board Development to facilitate the FY 2025 Annual

Evaluation of the City Manager for an amount not to exceed \$4,400. Mayor Pro Tem Sutton initiated the motion, seconded by Councilmember Lawson. Mayor Stein asked if there was any more discussion and then called for a vote. 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

11.5. Personnel Manual, Annual Leave Policy Amendment

City Manager Cobb discussed that the personal manual has a policy for employees to stop accruing pay after a certain amount. This would amend it to remove the waiting period of 1 year to use time off and remove mention of fire department personnel from the manual. Mayor Stein asked if the city allowed them to go negative, and City Manager Cobb stated the city does not allow that except for Christmas. Mayor Stein asked if there was any more discussion; hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the amended annual leave policy as presented. 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

11.6. Intercity Bus Service Discussion

Councilmember Coxwell discussed Fort Walton Beach's recent ban on commercial bus stops and wanted to see if there was concern about them coming to Mary Esther. City Manager Cobb discussed Greyhound's business model changing from terminals to bus stops. The council reached a consensus to research the topic and see if any of the council wanted to bring it back for an official ordinance.

12. COUNCILS' STANDING COMMITTEE STATUS REPORTS

Mayor Pro Tem Sutton thanked the public works department for the work she did with them during city government week, discussed attending the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk, an economic development council meeting, two ribbons cuttings, and a leader dinner with officials from Hurlburt Field. She also discussed an upcoming legislative conference and reminded the public of the upcoming Veterans Day parade.

Councilmember Coxwell had no further comments.

Councilmember Lawson had no further comments.

Mayor Stein discussed the upcoming Veterans Day parade and thanked the mayor pro team for the help while he was gone.

Councilmember Oder discussed the upcoming legislative conference, the public library cooperative, the career online high school, and reminded the citizens to vote.

Councilmember Carter thanked the council for the support for his daughter's cancer treatment.

13. OTHER COMMENTS

City Attorney Dykes had no additional comments.

City Clerk Morris reminded mayor and council to check their mailboxes.

City Manager Cobb discussed the upcoming Veterans Day celebration and thanked everyone who participated in the city's day of service.

14. ADJOURN

The council meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Minutes approved at the 12/9/2024 meeting.

Dillon Morris

Dillon Morris, City Clerk

