

City of Live Oak
City Council Meeting
January 10, 2023

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The Live Oak City Council met Tuesday, January 10, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. in City Hall located at 101 SE White Ave., Live Oak, Florida 32064 for a regular monthly meeting. The following officials were present: Mayor Frank Davis, Councilmember Matt Campbell, Councilmember Tommie Jefferson, Council President David Burch, Councilmember Lynda Brown-Owens, Councilmember Tesie Allen, City Attorney Todd Kennon & City Clerk John Gill. Absent: City Manager George Curtis

Council President Burch called the meeting to order.

Mayor Frank Davis led the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Council President Burch then presented the agenda for any additions, deletions, or changes. Councilmember Campbell made a motion to change the order of item 4A and to move it to the top before public comments to allow Jason Furry to attend another meeting in Branford which councilmember Jefferson seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Council President Burch proceeded to the next agenda item regarding the approval of December 13th regular monthly City Council meeting minutes. Councilmember Owens moved to approve the December 13th regular monthly City Council meeting minutes, which Councilmember Allen seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Council President Burch then turned the floor over to Mayor Davis who proceeded with matters of the City, discussion with possible council action on the recommendation of the Live Oak Suwannee County Recreation Board to hire Jason Furry as the Parks & Recreation Director with an effective date of December 19, 2022. Councilmember Jefferson made the motion to approve Jason Furry as Parks & Recreation Director, which Councilmember Campbell seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Council President Burch then opened the floor for public comment.

Bob Farley: Spoke regarding development issues

Jay Hatfield: Spoke regarding permit issues

Dana Berman: Spoke of the needs of the public

Jeff Bradford: Spoke regarding City Employees

Darrell Bridgett: Spoke regarding permitting issues opening a store

Marion Gross: Spoke about Walker Street and more police patrol

Cheryl Pruitt: Spoke regarding City Manager Mr. Curtis

Moses Clepper: Spoke about development, process issues, and the city manager position

Jessica Gordy: Spoke regarding time spent working for the city of Live Oak

Eddie Ojeda: Spoke regarding time spent working for the city of Live Oak

Sherrie Ojeda: finished the statement that Eddie Ojeda was reading

Deb Seldatos: Spoke the concerns of the city employees and staffing problem

Dennis Music: Spoke about the development and process issues

Rudy Robles: Spoke regarding development and process issues

Council President Burch closed public comments.

Council President Burch then proceeded to the City Councilmember section of the agenda and turned the floor over to Councilmember Campbell, who proceeded with the status of Miller Street sidewalk and turn lane studies. Councilmember Campbell read into the record information that was provided in a handout from the City Manager with the status of Miller Street sidewalk. Council President Burch then called Gary Caldwell to give additional information about Miller Street sidewalk. Councilmember Campbell called Lane Lucas to approach council with more information on the Miller Street sidewalk and turn lane studies.

Councilmember Campbell then moved on to the status of push button activated LED flashers at the school crossings and Helvenston crossing. Councilmember Campbell read into the record a handout provided by the City Manager that these

were funded by CRA at \$3,558 per set of two. If these prove to be successful, we can look at ordering more based on available funding.

Councilmember Campbell move to the status of installation of the new electronic water meters, Councilmember Campbell read into the record a handout from the City Manager stating the contract was awarded and waiting on shipping status of the meters, with construction being expected to begin mid-January. Councilmember Campbell asked finance director Joanne Luther to advised council the billing information for the meters and utility bills, Ms. Luther stated letters will go out regarding bill information along with meter dates and the process of the meters being installed.

Councilmember Campbell moved to update on the consideration and legality of new businesses being able to apply for variances in existing shopping plazas. Councilmember Campbell was advised it was sent over for legal consideration and turned the floor over to City Attorney who stated that he is in the process of reviewing the process, also explaining the detail in which it intel's. Mr. Kenon also explained the factors of the alcohol ordinance affecting the proposed business.

Councilmember Campbell then moved to the permit status of the Wainwright property project. The City Attorney stated that when his firm was retained, they were asked to look over it. Mr. Kennon stated that he did not hear back from staff but per his recommendation he is proposing a meeting with Mr. Wainwright and his engineers to comply with the subdivision requirements to come up with a development plan as quickly as possible. Brian Pittman with Pittman Engineering approached council to give out a visual of the overall developments and apartment plans. Mr. Pittman discussed the timelines and haven't heard from staff and needed the approval to move forward. Mr. Pittman stated he has been working on the project since June 2021.

Councilmember Campbell then proceeded with the discussion with possibility of a workshop to make changes and amendments to the format of the city council meetings, in particular public comments and input. Mr. Kennon stated that public comments can be anywhere in the meeting also the council President can change the speaking time with a motion and a vote. Mr. Kennon advised he would need all the question pertaining to the format of the city council meeting so he can research the rules and see what can be changed.

Council President Burch then turned the floor over to Councilmember Owens with the next agenda item on discussion regarding the Chief of Police being more visible in the community, also more foot patrols. Councilmember Owens is asking for more input from police officers and the Chief of Police.

Councilmember Owens moved on to discussion regarding boarding houses and safety concerns, stating there is drugs and prostitution going on in these houses. There is a safety concern on Walker Street, there is no good parking and people not obeying the speed limit. Councilmember Owens stated she spoke with code enforcement about the boarding housing but there was no action taken.

Council President Burch moved to the next agenda item at which time he turned the floor over to Councilmember Jefferson to discuss the placement of dual street signs on Hwy 129. Councilmember Jefferson stated that there should be more signs placed on Hwy 129 with the dual designation of Ohio Ave/ Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd. Councilman Jefferson called up Mr. Alonzo Philmore to give history and timelines on the Dr. Martin Luther King signs and when the signs should have been put up. Councilmember Owens directed Councilmember Jefferson to ask public workers director, Mike Crandell when and how long would it be before the signs are up. Finance director Joanne Luther approached stating she will look into the pricing and how many signs are needed. Also, information on more sidewalk crossing signs as well.

Councilmember Jefferson moved on to discussion with possible council action on the cancellation of the City Manager's contract including termination, immediately and giving the City Manager written notice of the same. Councilmember Jefferson stated he met with Mr. Curtis to discuss the direction he was going in with the City of Live Oak and Councilmember Jefferson didn't receive the feedback and understanding of the question. Councilmember Jefferson also advised that he had spoken with business owners in the city and was getting feedback on how it's not easy to have or do business in the City of Live Oak with Mr. Curtis being the City Manager. Councilmember Jefferson said one of the issues is staffing and Mr. Curtis is the person who hires and fires but is not having enough staff to help make the City of Live

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Oak grow. Councilmember Jefferson then made a motion to terminate the City Managers contract effective immediately. The motion died for lack of a second. Councilmember Campbell commented that he was not able to make a second without having a plan in place on who will take the position of City Manager. Councilmember Campbell stated that he reached out to Mr. Curtis and asked that he attend the meeting via phone call. Mr. Curtis answer was no and that he stands on the comments he made to the Lake City Reporter newspaper. Councilmember Campbell recommended that Mr. Curtis should be placed on notice to make a drastic change with some criteria/conditions in place within a certain amount of time or the vote will be taken for termination of his contract immediately. City Attorney Kennon stated that he would need to review the terms to verify what the process would be. Councilmember Owens advised that the city manager evaluation will be held in January 2023. Councilmember Owens recommended a Human Resources Department should be in place to help with staffing issues also relieving some of the duties Mr. Curtis has and appoint other staff or council to be in charge to help the city to move in the direction of growth.

Council President Burch proceeded to the final agenda item, discussion with possible council action, appointment to seat #6 of the city of Live Oak Planning & Zoning Board, Local Planning Agency, Board of Adjustment, and Historic Preservation Agency for the term ending August 2025. Council President Burch turned the floor over to the City Clerk who oversaw the election. Mr. Gill noted that there are three applicants; Ken Beasley, Gloria Hancock, and James Perry. A written vote was taken with Ms. Gloria Hancock filling seat #6 for the Planning & Zoning Board. A motion was made for confirmation of seat#6 by Councilmember Jefferson which councilmember Allen seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Councilmember David Burch
City Council President

Attest:
Mr. John Gill
City Clerk