

**MINUTES  
CITY COMMISSION MEETING  
MONDAY, JULY 25, 2022  
7:30 PM  
CITY HALL**

**Call to Order:** Mayor Jack Dearmin called the City Commission meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers located at 120 E. Pomelo Street, Lake Alfred, FL 33850.

**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance:** Pastor Kimberly DuBreuil of the First United Methodist Church of Lake Alfred provided the invocation and **Mayor Dearmin** led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call:** City Clerk Linda Bourgeois

**City Commissioners in attendance:** Mayor Jack Dearmin, Vice Mayor Brent Eden, Commissioner Mac Fuller, Commissioner Nancy Daley, and Commissioner Albertus Maulsby.

**Staff in attendance:** City Manager Ryan Leavengood, City Attorney Seth Claytor, Public Works Director John Deaton, Police Chief Art Bodenheimer, Parks, and Recreation Director Richard Weed, and Community Development Director Amee Bailey.

**City Manager Leavengood** announced the upcoming meeting date as Monday, August 8, 2022. He said the Mail Ballot Election for the Serdjenian Subdivision was sent to the State of Florida for approval and is tentatively scheduled to start in December of 2022 with an election day of January 10, 2023. He announced the August Friends of the Library program at which Lake Alfred Elementary School Principal Matt Burkett will be the guest speaker and he said the Library event celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> year of the new library and the 60<sup>th</sup> year of the foundation of the Public Library was a success.

**City Attorney Claytor** said he remained grateful to represent the great City of Lake Alfred.

Recognition of Citizens

There were none.

**Mayor Dearmin** read the Florida Water Professionals Proclamation into the record and it was accepted by Public Works Director John Deaton.

**Public Works Director** thanked the City Commission, shared the importance of having great and caring staff, and explained that we are a part of the Florida Water and Pollution Control Operators Association.

**Public Works Director Deaton** presented George Matthews with his five years of service plaque. He said he was very happy to congratulate George on his 5 years of service with the City of Lake Alfred and said that George is a hard worker and very dependable. George is a "C" licensed DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) wastewater operator and works at the wastewater plant. He looks forward to his 10-year recognition. He said to keep up the good work and we are happy to have you here. He concluded by saying thank you for your service to the City of Lake Alfred.

Parks and Recreation Director Richard Weed presented Cheryl Vice with her five-year service plaque. He said Cheryl came to work for the parks and recreation department in March of 2018 after working as a part-time employee for the streets department. As a part-time employee, Cheryl did a great job and was quickly noticed. When the opportunity for a full-time position became available, she was the first choice to be promoted.

Cheryl has now been a full-time employee with the City for five years. In her five years of service, she has shown a desire to learn and try new tasks. Cheryl has a great work ethic and will always find a way to go above and beyond and because of her diligence, she has previously been an employee of the quarter, an employee of the year, and has become a service worker III.

She comes to work every day with the attitude of getting the job done and never complains. Cheryl is always available to help after hours or on the weekend when the need arises and seems to truly love her job.

He concluded by saying for her hard work and dedication to the City I would like to thank Cheryl for her five years of service and her dedication to the parks and recreation department.

Police Chief Art Bodenheimer presented Jennifer McDermott with her fifteen-year service plaque. He said Jennifer McDermott first began her career with the Lake Alfred Police Department on 11/01/1993 as a part-time Communications Operator. On 11/14/1994, Jennifer changed her status to a full-time Operator. On 06/12/1995, Jennifer resigned from Lake Alfred and began employment with Auburndale Police Department as a Communications Operator.

After many years, Jennifer regained her senses and was rehired on 05/30/2007 as a Communications Operator with the Lake Alfred Police Department. On 08/29/2011, Jennifer was promoted to the Communications Coordinator position and remained in that position until taking a full-time position with Polk County Emergency Management as a 911 Training Coordinator on 10/02/2016. Jennifer remains with the Lake Alfred Police Department as a part-time Communications Operator.

During her tenure with the Lake Alfred Police Department, Jennifer was able to educate herself to rise as one of the top people within the communications section of the department. She has continued to be a dedicated employee, even in her part-time role, and has been able to help the department with training and certifications of new employees through her role with Polk County 911 training.

Jennifer has been and is an asset to the City of Lake Alfred, the Lake Alfred Police Department, and the citizens of Lake Alfred. We appreciate her professional service over the years and look forward to her continued employment. He concluded by saying Jennifer, congratulations on your 15 years of service award.

Consent Agenda:

- 1.) City Commission Meeting Minutes for July 11, 2022
- 2.) City Commission Announcements

**Commissioner Fuller** made a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by **Commissioner Maultsby**. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Mayor Dearmin** presented the business item.

1.) Public Hearing: Resolution 10-22 Proposed Millage Rate and Budget Hearing

**City Attorney Claytor** read Resolution 10-22 into the record.

**City Manager Leavengood** said the City is required to advise the Property Appraiser's office of its tentative millage rate, roll-back rate, as well as the date, time, and place of the proposed budget hearing.

- The proposed millage for FY 22/23 is 7.2390 mills, which is equal to the current millage rate and is a 12.03% increase above the calculated roll-back rate of 6.4619.
- The date, time, and place of the first public hearing on the fiscal year 2022/2023 budget is set for Thursday, September 8, 2022, at 7:30 p.m. in City Hall located at 120 East Pomelo Street, Lake Alfred, Florida.

The proposed resolution sets the millage rate ceiling for the next fiscal year. The millage rate can be lowered when considered for adoption in September, but it cannot be increased beyond the initial limit set within this resolution.

The draft FY 22/23 Budget is currently balanced with a millage rate of 6.989 which is a 0.25 millage rate reduction from the current rate. If adopted in September, a 6.989 rate would represent an 8.2% increase over the rollback rate which is below the CPI inflation rate of 9.1% as of June of 2022. Additionally, a 0.25 reduction in the rate will represent the largest millage rate reduction in 15 years and bring it below the pre-housing boom rate of 7.058 which was in effect between 1993-2006. He provided an overview of the millage rate from 2003 to the present which showed the trendline from the housing boom to the downturn, and then the upswing of the economy.

He said the staff was recommending approval of Resolution 10-22.

**Commissioner Daley** asked if it would be lowered between now and the final adoption.

**Mayor Dearmin** opened the public hearing and seeing no one, he closed the public hearing.

**City Manager Leavengood** said that would be a City Commission decision but he is anticipating the current state of the economy potentially heading into a recession, and with the property values increasing significantly he thinks it is prudent to do some form of reduction. If we can get it below the historic rate of the city that is a pretty good milestone going in at the .25 reduction.

**Commissioner Daley** asked about the new homes coming online next year that were built this year.

**City Manager Leavengood** explained with the rollback rate they look at the historic value so they will look at the increase on the existing property. New construction is separate from that. Yes, there is additional revenue with new homes but also new additional expenses such as personnel with police, fire, and service workers. He spoke about the inflationary measures on the citizens and said we feel them as well for labor and projects.

**Vice Mayor Eden** asked where the 9% inflation rate came from and City Manager Leavengood said those were the reported numbers [Consumer Price Index]. Vice Mayor Eden said he thinks a good opportunity and appreciates the effort.

**Commissioner Maultsby** said so he understands we are increasing taxes a bit but it is a cut in the rate.

**City Manager Leavengood** said the rate of taxation is 7.239 and the value attached to the rate is what changes. He provided an example of the value of the house going up increases the taxes. From a management perspective, we don't balance the budget with rates, we balance the budget with dollars.

**Commissioner Maultsby** asked if we needed this increase because of inflation.

**City Manager Leavengood** said yes and we are seeing those increases in our project costs. There is an opportunity to provide some relief but it would be disingenuous to go to the full rollback rate because that would be saying we are not operating in the same economy that our costs didn't increase. The rollback rate does not account for inflation.

**Commissioner Maultsby** asked if the contractors were still moving at the same speed and City Manager Leavengood said they are still moving along and there is still activity in some of the subdivisions. Some interesting factors are at play and if we do go into a recession we are likely to be buffered because of our location to the I-4 corridor. We may be buffered from most of it based on our growth projections and growth pattern.

**City Attorney Claytor** said to keep in mind they are setting the ceiling tonight and it will come back to them on September 8<sup>th</sup> and if they choose as a Commission they can lower the millage but if you set it too low you can't increase it. You want to give yourselves options.

**Mayor Dearmin** said it is a testament to what the City Manager and the departments do, and that we have not had a reduction in the fifteen years that he has been here. He is in favor of the approval.

**Mayor Dearmin** opened the public hearing and seeing no one, he closed the public hearing.

**Commissioner Maultsby** made a motion to approve Resolution 10-22 setting the proposed millage rate at 7.2390 mills and the first public hearing date for Thursday, September 8, 2022, at 7:30 PM in City Hall at 120 E. Pomelo Street, Lake Alfred, FL 33850. The motion was seconded by **Vice Mayor Eden**. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Mayor Dearmin** presented the next two business items.

- 2.) Ordinance 1491-22: Polk Training Center Future Land Use
- 3.) Ordinance 1492-22: Polk Training Center Zoning

**City Attorney Claytor** read the title of Ordinance 1491-22 into the record.

**City Manager Leavengood** read the analysis into the record. On July 11, 2022, City Commission approved Ordinance 1487-22 annexing property along County Road 557 into the city limits. The Polk Training Center includes two parcels totaling approximately 9.77 acres. The staff has worked with the applicant in determining the Future Land Use and Zoning designations. The proposed Future Land Use designation is Urban Residential and the proposed zoning is Residential Neighborhood 2 (RN-2).

On July 14, 2022, at their regular meeting, the Planning and Zoning Board unanimously voted to recommend that the City Commission approve the future land use and zoning district assignment requests.

If approved on the first reading, the future land use and zoning amendment ordinances will be considered on the second and final reading at the August 8, 2022, City Commission Meeting. The notice to the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) will be after adoption since this is a small-scale amendment.

He said the staff was recommending approval of Ordinance 1491-22 on the first reading.

**Commissioner Daley** said she was having trouble wrapping her head around the RN-2 Future Land Use designation in that particular area because the site is surrounded by residential and the school and with this designation it has the potential for 24 units per acre on the property. She said the minutes did not have many discussions and it doesn't seem to her that is a place for high-density development. She said she thought the townhomes and duplexes would be closer to the town where you have public transportation, services, and restaurants.

**Community Development Director Bailey** reviewed the area and said the areas to the west had the same designations as well as Cypress Greens. She said we do see this designation in the city but it is also along Lynchburg Road. She agreed the higher densities should be near services such as transit but we often see it where there are other desired concepts. They are excited to be close to the school, to offer more affordable housing options, and being near a school is a desired residential location. She said this is an ideal location for transit and we are working with the Transit Authority to have additional transit lines. She spoke about being on a corner gives it more visibility, people are more accepting of high-density areas near schools, and them having a lower expectation of apartments being next to highways. She explained the Polk Training Center tried to find commercial applicants but most wanted residential.

A discussion ensued as to the RN-2 designation being under the Urban Residential, the difference between the Residential and Urban Residential categories, and under the Residential, it has the lower three densities with the higher three densities under the Urban Residential category. Further discussion was that the parcels to the north and the east of this location were still in the county, they are all at a lower density, and they all got notifications of the proposed changes.

**Community Development Director Bailey** said the parcel owners have all received the Annexation notification, the Planning and Zoning Board notifications, and notifications for this hearing, and they will receive a notification for the adoption hearing. We have received very few comments and most of them were annexation inquiries for us to supply them with water. She said most people know Discovery Highschool has purchased a lot to put their football field there and oftentimes there is high density around stadiums. She provided examples of Winter Haven and Lakeland and said because there is a school it encourages this type of density.

**City Manager Leavengood** asked what can be done in the Urban Residential and RN-2 zoning and it was shared townhomes, apartments, quads, and more multifamily types of density.

**Commissioner Daley** said she did not think it was transitional because Eden Hills is across the highway and then this could be a mobile home park. She said there was not much discussion about it.

**Community Development Director Bailey** said there was discussion about it because the Principal of the high school spoke about the build-out of the football and baseball fields and two or three-story buildings as they build out their site. The discussion was focused more on having residential next to the high school. She shared about the process of when the staff reviews the requests it is to be in line with the policies, the Comprehensive Plan, and other criteria. Whether or not you feel it is a suitable use is a policy decision.

**Commissioner Daley** said maybe we need to make a policy decision for it to be like a PUD and it is not just a mobile home park in the middle of the single-family residential area. Community Development Director Bailey said she did not think the PUD was quite the correct route as you have the decision as to whether or not the land use and zoning are appropriate. She explained the Planned Unit Development and the design of the new code.

**Commissioner Daley** asked if the City Commission decided the RN-2 was too intense what would be the next level down and Community Development Director Bailey said it would be residential land use and then you would have the choice of rural residential, vintage residential, or RN-1.

A discussion ensued that the difference between RN-1 and RN-2 was six versus twelve, it is consistent with the Cypress Greens, twelve is the maximum density allowed, this provides an opportunity for the potential of townhomes and apartments, and the demarcation line of the Green Swamp is just north of the site. Additional discussion was that there were currently cows on the east side of Discovery Academy, and the parcels surrounding the school that have the RN-2 designations.

**City Attorney Claytor** said to please keep in mind that the Commission is considering only the future land use and not the requested zoning designation. The future land use being presented for consideration is the Urban Residential. While Commissioner Daley has expressed legitimate concerns and sufficient criteria for the City Commission to deny future land use request at public hearing, City Attorney Claytor stated that the applicant may have a legal entitlement to a public hearing for both the future land use and zoning request.

**Mayor Dearmin** opened the floor to public comments, and seeing none, he closed the floor to public comments.

**Commissioner Daley** asked if none of the other Commissioners see the dilemma here and **Vice Mayor Eden** said he sees it on both sides. He asked what was the rationale for not wanting it, and asked if it was the property values. She said the property values were not on the top of her mind it is just the consistency and compatibility of the single-family residents that may potentially annex into the city.

**City Manager Leavengood** spoke about urbanization, the road widening and lending to more density in the future, traffic counts, and the concept of what it would look like in the future. Downtown has only some potential to develop. He spoke about commercial development and this may be the first puzzle piece that would develop so keep in mind the higher density. He continued and said we just passed the new code this past year so there is going to be some dialing in and conversations about the opportunity to maybe dial it in from a policy perspective, like a more refined to the land use table. We may discuss it in the fall but for this item, it is just a question of do you see the availability or an opportunity for the higher density especially when he has heard concerns about diversity, housing stock, and those types of things. He said this may be an

opportunity because it is next to a school, closer to downtown, and not in the Green Swamp Area of Critical State Concern.

A discussion ensued regarding not being able to squeeze twenty-four mobile homes, there may be multiple stories in height, and the zoning creates the maximum. Further discussion surrounded the City went from thirty-five to fifteen zoning categories, and they are now a wider range of options. To get twelve, you would have to go vertical and examples were given. We do not currently have townhomes in the City of Lake Alfred, but we do have them in plan review for Waterford Cove and others have mentioned them as considerations from developers.

**Community Development Director Bailey** reviewed the land use and zoning categories with the City Commission. In the Green Swamp, they cannot have Urban Residential because they are maxed at four units per acre and the highest zoning they can get is the Vintage Residential. There would have to be a major rewrite of the policy if we were going to allow anything other in the Green Swamp.

**Commissioner Daley** said she would like to see a transition and Community Development Director Bailey said we only had two land use designations. Commissioner Daley responded and said that was a problem because we did not use to.

**Commissioner Fuller** asked if Cypress Greens was a 55+ plus community and the answer was yes. He asked if the city was potentially encouraging more Cypress Greens-type development.

**City Attorney Claytor** said his recommendation was that the City Commission not consider the end use when considering the requests for future land use and zoning. The City Commission should consider the maximum development envelope for the requested future land use and zoning requests. That being said, the reality is that a developer would most likely not be able to develop at the maximum density and intensity levels which are permitted by the requested future land use and zoning designations. Moreover, the concurrency concerns related to transportation, schools, water, and wastewater would have to be addressed as you go through the subdivision and/or development process.

This is a legislative decision, and the decision of the City Commission must be based on the facts, competent evidence, and information presented. If the City Commission determines that the subject requests are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, compatible with the City's ULDC, satisfies the criteria set forth by the Code, and the requests are consistent with the the current development trends in the area, then the City Commission should vote to approve the subject requests absent a compelling public purpose to the contrary. City Attorney Claytor reminded the City Commission that this is not a public hearing and on the second reading/public hearing it is recommended that the City Commission have a more thorough vetting of the requested future land use and zoning designations.

**Commissioner Daley**, as a side note, said the local high schools just sent out letters that they are full in the northeast area. That is something we need to keep in mind because even if you live in the district, they can't take you and just a list of nearby schools will be provided. Her concern is the compatibility around it and said Cypress Greens is not right next door.

**Community Development Director Bailey** said the typical townhomes have a 9 unit per acre density.

**City Manager Leavengood** said from an operational standpoint density is favorable because of the economies of scale, service delivery, and irrigation.

**Community Development Director Bailey** presented an overview and showed a slide that depicted the two land use districts and the zoning category options. She spoke about the expectation of having an urban density as you are approaching the city because that is what we need to justify running water and sewer to the units.

**Mayor Dearmin** said he felt it was flexible and in his opinion, twelve is better than twenty-four. If we have a public hearing it could change. He is in favor of keeping it lower.

**Rocco Pilieri** of Polk City asked to speak and said two-hundred townhomes in this area would need a ladder truck for public safety. You don't have a ladder truck that goes up to three or four stories. Public Safety wise it is not a good thing. He continued and remind the City Commission about the parking lot at the high school that everything was so impervious to the water, you are going to have two-hundred units with a parking lot for two hundred cars. There are roofs, and sidewalks and they are building up there like crazy. He concluded by saying for a three or four-story building you will need a ladder truck you cannot do it with the equipment you have.

**Mayor Dearmin** asked about the height limit and City Manager Leavengood said thirty-six feet is the maximum and the traditional townhomes are two stories. We have two-story houses and apartments.

**Commissioner Daley** asked the City Attorney what would change if we continued or postponed the action. He responded and said he would recommend there be a public hearing on this and vet the item then the City Commission could take the appropriate action. However, rather than not vote or move this forward he would recommend continuing the item then the staff can bring it back to you at a later date. The staff could present other options to the property owner that is requesting the future land use change that would most likely have to go back through the process. He cautioned them that the applicant would be entitled to a public hearing and advertisements have already been prepared. The concerns that were addressed tonight are legislative valid concerns that should be heard and thoroughly vetted at a public hearing.

A brief discussion ensued regarding approval of the ordinance on first reading is essentially moving it to the public hearing, how other cities move the items to a public hearing, and the applicant has the right to present on legislative for land use and quasi-judicial on zoning in support of their application. It is a formality and City Attorney Claytor recommended that the applicant be afforded the public hearing. He said you would be making a positive motion to move Ordinance 1491-22 to a second read public hearing on August 8, 2022. He cased a proposed motion for them and said if you don't get past this vote, there would be no need to hear Ordinance 1492-22.

**Lora Bonacic** director of the Polk Training Center said she was here on behalf of the applicant and would be happy to answer any questions or concerns they may have or to

be able to do more research to present the information about what we are proposing and our application is all about. There were no questions or comments for Ms. Bonacic.

**Vice Mayor Eden** made a motion to approve Ordinance 1491-22 [for the Polk Training Center Future Land Use Assignment] on the first reading. The motion was seconded by **Commissioner Maultsby**. A roll call vote was taken with **Commissioner Daley** dissenting. The motion carried with a majority vote.

**City Attorney Claytor** read the title of Ordinance 1492-22 into the record.

**City Manager Leavengood** said the staff was recommending approval of Ordinance 1492-22 on the first reading.

**Mayor Dearmin** opened the floor to public comments, and seeing none, he closed the floor to public comments.

**Commissioner Maultsby** made a motion to approve Ordinance 1492-22 for the Polk Training Center Zoning Assignment on the first reading. The motion was seconded by **Commissioner Fuller**. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Mayor Dearmin** introduced the next two business items.

- 4.) Ordinance 1493-22: Florida Gas Future Land Use
- 5.) Ordinance 1494-22: Florida Gas Zoning

**City Attorney Claytor** read the title of 1493-22 into the record.

**City Manager Leavengood** read the analysis into the record. He said on July 11, 2022, City Commission approved Ordinance 1487-22 annexing property along County Road 557 into the city limits. One small parcel (0.09 ac) included the Florida Gas transmission facility. Staff proposes the Future Land Use designation and Zoning district assignment of Public Buildings and Grounds.

On July 14, 2022, at their regular meeting, the Planning and Zoning Board unanimously voted to recommend that the City Commission approve the future land use and zoning district assignment requests. On February 7, 2022, the City Commission approved Ordinances 1476-22 and 1477-22 on the first reading. However, the City Staff voided the two Ordinances to bring forward the Future Land Use and Zoning after the revised annexation ordinance was adopted.

If approved on the first reading, the future land use and zoning amendment ordinances will be considered on the second and final reading at the August 8, 2022, City Commission Meeting. The notice to the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) will be after adoption since this is a small-scale amendment.

He said the staff was recommending approval of Ordinance 1493-22 on the first reading.

**Mayor Dearmin** asked if there was an existing building on the property and City Manager Leavengood replied no and said the use of the land had been long established.

**Mayor Dearmin** opened the floor to public comments and seeing no one, he closed the floor to public comments.

**Commissioner Fuller** made a motion to approve Ordinance 1493-22 for the Florida Gas Future Land Use Assignment on the first reading. The motion was seconded by **Commissioner Maultsby**. The motion was unanimously approved.

**City Attorney Claytor** read the title of 1494-22 into the record.

**City Manager Leavengood** said the staff was recommending approval of Ordinance 1494-22 on the first reading.

**Mayor Dearmin** opened the floor to public comments and seeing no one, he closed the floor to public comments.

**Vice Mayor Eden** made a motion to approve Ordinance 1494-22 for the Florida Gas Zoning Assignment on the first reading. The motion was seconded by **Commissioner Maultsby**. The motion was unanimously approved.

Recognition of Citizens.  
There was none.

Employee Recognition

**City Manager Leavengood** presented Wanson Etienne with the Employee of the Quarter award.

He said Officer Wanson Etienne began his career in law enforcement on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2006, with the Winter Haven Police Department as a Community Service Officer. During his service as a CSO, WHPD staff recommended that he attend the Police Academy to become a full-time police officer. Officer Etienne did complete the Police Academy and became a full-time police officer with the Winter Haven Police Department until leaving the department on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.

Officer Etienne took a civilian job after leaving WHPD and heard that we were hiring in Lake Alfred. He went through the hiring process and was hired on July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Since being employed with Lake Alfred, Officer Etienne has worked in road patrol and currently is a School Resource Officer assigned to Discovery High School.

Officer Etienne has been a valuable asset to the department and community during his tenure. He currently speaks multiple languages and has been an integral part in translations for investigations and normal day-to-day operations not only for the police department but also for other City departments and other police agencies.

Officer Etienne is a very self-motivated employee that is always willing to help the police department and other City departments reach goals and serve the citizens of Lake Alfred with professional police service. Officer Etienne has made a positive impact at the Lake Alfred Police Department and I am proud to have him as an employee. It is with honor to present him with the Employee of the Quarter Award for the City of Lake Alfred. He added that Officer Etienne was a respectful and polite police officer, provided an example of a situation, and said the person had written a letter of commendation.

**Commissioner Fuller** asked about the date of the Christmas Parade and was told by Parks and Recreation Director Weed that it was always the first Saturday in December. He said the parade applications will be going out soon. He thanked everyone for their attendance and said he was still learning. He thanked the City Commission for the discussion to make an informed decision.

**Mayor Dearmin** said we had an excellent 60th library anniversary and 10th anniversary for the Edwin Moore Library. He said he was able to speak and was honored. We should be proud of our library and the hard work that was put into it. Getting ready for the conference and he is excited about that. He requested prayers for the health of everyone. He mentioned the City event Community Fun Day on August 6, 2022, at Lions Park.

**Vice Mayor Brent Eden** thanked the first responders, the Chief, and all of the staff as they do a great job. He said he is looking forward to Community Day and the upcoming conference. He said his only comment was he wished it was not around the time the kids went back to school. He said he would see everybody there in a couple of weeks.

**Commissioner Maultsby** asked about the affordability of rent and ownership. He said at the Mackay Estates a sign used to say the “from low 100s” and now it says “from the low 300s” and asked if that was what we considered affordable. City Manager Leavengood said the housing prices have just increased across the board due to relocations to Florida and the interest rate environment. That is something we all have to look at as a nation.

**Commissioner Maultsby** asked about the grant application from Congressman Soto’s Office and City Manager Leavengood said we were still in the process on that one and we did make the shortlist but he will include the information in an update. He said we did receive the Florida Recreational Development Assistance Grant of \$200,000. We are looking at a 1/2M+ phase at Central Park next year.

**Commissioner Maultsby** asked about the Growers Fertilizer and the bank. He said Growers Fertilizer is in a holding pattern waiting on the county to do a right-of-way acquisition and he sees us being the best end user. As for the bank, they are selling the property and are in the process of getting an appraisal.

**Commissioner Maultsby** asked about the progress on the address change for the County Administration Building and City Manager Leavengood explained this was an ongoing saga, shared the last contact we had last week was they were contacting legal for a response and it may be upward of a month before we have anything in hand.

**Commissioner Daley** asked about the little defunct gas station and Community Development Director Bailey said she spoke to the property owner a few weeks ago and they are cleaning up the property trying to make the lakefront visible. Commissioner Daley asked if there was a chance they would annex and Community Development Director Bailey said they are in the county and have a commercial designation. There is limited opportunity for development on the property. Commissioner Daley continued and said the medians look exceptionally well and she congratulated the staff. She went on to read into the record an article from the Beauty Berry Post from Steve Franklin about the value of the volunteer service hours (\$50,044.89), expertise, and the appreciation of our volunteers. She concluded by wishing Happy Birthday to the Mayor (25<sup>th</sup>) and Vice Mayor (16<sup>th</sup>) who both had birthdays this month.

**Mayor Dearmin** thanked the volunteers and staff for working day in and day out in this heat. We appreciate them very much.

Without further comments, at 9:16 p.m., the City Commission meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Linda Bourgeois*

Linda Bourgeois, BAS, MMC,  
City Clerk