

Council Meeting Minutes
Town Hall
July 18, 2023
7:00 p.m.

Council Members
Present:

Luis Gomez
Dynette Lewis
Sandra McMurray Jackson
Shelisa McCall
Alicia Johnson

Others Present:

Benjamin Boutwell, Mayor
Leslie Howington, Town Clerk
Kevin Merchant, Superintendent
Dale Long, Engineer
Robin Phillips, Grant Writer
Robert Hudson, CPA – via Conference Call

Council President Luis Gomez called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and stated that he will not confirm that the meeting was properly advertised because he saw it personally advertised for the entire year.

1. **Open Meeting with Prayer**

Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson opened the meeting with prayer.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **Roll Call**

Present at the table were:

Council President Luis Gomez

Council Vice President Dynette Lewis

Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson

Council Member Shelisa McCall

Council Member Alicia Johnson

4. **Public Forum**

Council President Luis Gomez opened the floor to public comments.

Helen Mincy 111 Mincy Court.

When she pulls out of her road, bushes are overgrown, ditch holds water.

Requested Mayor Boutwell take care of it. He agreed. Ms. Mincy showed photos to the Mayor and Town Council.

Evelyn Deterville, 561 Church St.

New people are coming in to Century every week. The Town is growing. She would like to keep the Council Meeting advertising continued to be verified before each Council Meeting. New people do not know. Advertise it if you have the funding.

Council President Luis Gomez responded to Miss Evelyn that we never stopped advertising, and for the record, the Bill List Review is at 6:45 p.m. and Council Meetings are at 7:00 p.m. Leslie Howington shared Council Meetings are posted at Town Hall and the Town's website.

Gary Bradley, Hilltop Rd.

Mr. Bradley asked about the grant for the Century High School and the grant for the Carver Community Center. He asked if it will take two years. Mayor Boutwell explained that there is a process and Ms. Phillips will be able to explain. Mr. Bradley said there are too many projects going at one time and nothing is being done.

Mayor Boutwell shared that the Town applied when the money was available and this includes the bridges. We are blessed to have it. It will be used as shelter and community center with activities.

Mr. Bradley noted on Main Street (Front Street) there are pipes all over and asked what is going on there. Mayor Boutwell advised that is a County drainage project. Dale Long added that it is FEMA money being run through the County for drainage from Front Street to Jefferson and not a Town project.

Mr. Bradley stated that the ditches have not been cleaned since May. He lives on Hilltop Road where there is a curve that is blocked. Mayor Boutwell stated that Friday overgrown landscaping was cleaned up. Mr. Bradley said it needs to be redone.

Mr. Bradley stated that for three years the pipe in front of his house is not right. Mayor Boutwell appreciated Mr. Bradley for bringing it to his attention and will look into.

Mr. Bradley noted that the storm water was being fixed, but the raw sewage in front of Pilgrim Lodge has not been corrected yet. The Town has the money. Dale Long shared that the work is scheduled to begin at Pilgrim Lodge on July 31, 2023. The construction sign is up.

Mr. Bradley asked to dredge ditches, not just mow them. He stated that Mayor Boutwell will clean it once a month. Mayor Boutwell will talk with staff. Mr. Bradley sees the community going down. You get all the money, but do not see anything being done. Where is the money going? Mayor Boutwell stated there is no money going anywhere.

Robin Phillips provided an update that the grants were awarded for the shelter and the bridges. She anticipates receiving a contract from DEO which is changing its name, so there might be a delay.

Ms. Phillips recommended the Council approve procurement for engineer, architecture and contractor by advertising in the Pensacola News Journal.

Council President Gomez asked about the phrase "storm shelter" versus a community center and asked if any other shelter has been considered?

Council President Gomez discussed the bidding process. He received a text about funding for Freedom Road Bridge and the Well, then Mr. Long asked for \$144,000 to fix the well of that money. How do we get an invoice before we get the money?

Council President Gomez was told the bridge is for a structural engineer. Now there is \$13 million for three bridges

Mayor Boutwell explained that the money is still with the State. It was committed to the project; \$1,297,000 for bridge according to Mr. Long, noting that it had been provided to the Council earlier.

Council President Gomez stated that the Town has received millions, but all we have is paper. He will not be enthused until we have something in the ground. He provided photos on his cellphone that he took Tuesday after the early adjournment and showed a video of raw sewage running out of Pilgrim Lodge at the lift station.

Council President Gomez shared his concern that the gym would be worked on before the Pilgrim Lodge Lift Station because someone above the Council wants it.

Council President Gomez reviewed a list of dates that had been shared.

Ms. Phillips shared that Talcon was approved by the Council to be the engineer.

Ms. Phillips requested the Town go out for procurement for engineering, architectural and administration for both the bridge and shelter projects. This will take up to six weeks. Once approved, after the State provides the contract, an administrator is chosen and then the architect.

Ms. Phillips explained that this will not happen overnight. There will be meetings and design reviews. We won't be starting on either the shelter or the bridge any time soon.

Council Member Alicia Johnson made a motion to advertise for three bids. Ms. Phillips explained that professional services do not require three bids. Council President Gomez requested a review before the motion and asked if we can have two full bids for the two separate pots of money. Dale Long confirmed.

Ms. Phillips stated that the bid will be for three bridges. If bids come in over the allocated amount, the Council can prioritize.

Council President Gomez asked about Freedom Road Bridge versus Millpond Bridge. Mr. Long stated that \$1.3 is the estimate for Freedom Road. We did not know we were going to get that grant, so we applied for a Hurricane Sally Grant and it included the bridge and culverts at Freedom Road and Jefferson Ave. The money from the State Legislature will cover the overages.

Mr. Long clarified that the State legislative money does not require the prep work that the Sally Grant does. We don't have to do procurement for the \$1.3 million, but you do for the \$2.8 million.

Mr. Long shared that the culvert work on Jefferson Avenue is not a complete replacement. It is estimated at \$30,000, while Freedom Road and Alger Road need more work.

Bart Hendricks with Mott Mac is the engineer working now.

Council Member Alicia Johnson made a motion to start the procurement process for the three bridges project for the CDBG Sally Grant. Council Member Shelisa McCall seconded the motion. No questions. The motion passed unanimously.

AJ made a motion to ask for three quotes for the shelter for surveying. Council Member Shelisa McCall seconded the motion. Council President Gomez asked if we will see the people who respond. Ms. Phillips will bring all bids to the Council and the low bid will win.

Council Member Dynette Lewis asked about deeding the building over to the Town. Ms. Phillips noted It is not a part of the survey, so no.

No further questions. The motion passed unanimously.

Two years is the time limit on this grant, but an extension can be requested. Council President Gomez cautioned that the cost may go up.

After Ms. Phillips requested a review, she requested to hire an SOI qualified study on the Carver Community Center. Ms. Phillips has asked four people and two responded that they do not have time to do it. Ms. Phillips suggested we may be able to invite a university to do it and that would be free. If so, a procurement will not be needed.

The purpose of this is to preserve the story of Carver Community Center by performing historical research and possibly have a display of the history at the new building.

Council Member Lewis asked if we would do a case study for a pictorial display and how much is this. Ms. Phillips stated that it will come out of the grant and she has not received bids yet. The State cannot refer people because it would be interference.

Council President Gomez would like to have another Town meeting for community input. Ms. Phillips believes that will happen as part of the investigation.

Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson stated that the building is in the historic district. Ms. Phillips shared that it has not been designated an historic building.

The historic district sign, purchased by the Alger Sullivan Historic Society is gone after being vandalized by a baseball bat. Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson asked if the Town has funds to purchase another sign. Ms. Mincy shared that the Alger Sullivan Historic Society is already in the process of replacing it.

Council Member Dynette Lewis asked for an update on Carver Community Center and if it is time to meet again with the architect again.

Council President Gomez asked if anyone on the call would like to make comment.

Dr. Jessica Griffen shared a report on the YouthFirst Century.

Younger kids are coming because older students are working.

Two busses full of children toured NAS last month. This Friday they will be at the Century Library to show the students how a library is run. Pensacola Theater will be performing while the children are there.

On July 28, 2023, they will hold their last field trip to Owa in Foley, Alabama. It is a water and theme park. The students will earn the privilege to go based on their behavior.

She has worked with Byrneville, Bratt, Ernest Ward Middle School and Northview High School with a goal to hire local teachers and educators like teacher aides. The goal is for students to develop relationships with the teachers and paraprofessionals before school.

Currently we are servicing between 19-23 kids and once school returns, she expects that number to increase. Total number of students is between 50-70.

Dr. Griffen was informed that people are coming in to inquire about the program. She is concerned. If there is anyone who wants to know what they are doing at YouthFirst Century, they are welcome to come. No appointment is necessary. Doors are open to anyone who wants to see what they are doing at YouthFirst Century.

Dr. Griffen emailed Mayor Boutwell, Council President Gomez, Leslie Howington about items of concern. Mayor Boutwell advised that these items do not need to go before the Council.

Council President Luis Gomez appreciates all the hours The Urban Development Group and Dr. Griffen have put into CenturyFirst. Dr. Griffen is grateful for the opportunity.

5. Ministerial Acts

a. Approval of Minutes

April 04, 2023 Bill List Review Minutes

April 04, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

April 18, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

Council President Gomez requested a motion to approve all of the April minutes. Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson made that motion.

Council Member Alicia Johnson seconded the motion. No questions. The motion passed unanimously.

June 06, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

Council President Luis Gomez requested a motion to approve the June 6th Council Meeting Minutes. Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson made that motion. Council Member Shelisa McCall seconded the motion. No questions. The motion passed unanimously.

July 05, 2023 Bill List Review Minutes

July 05, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

Council President Luis Gomez requested a motion to approve the July 5 Bill List Minutes and the July 5 Council Meeting Minutes. Council Member Alicia Johnson made that motion. Council Member Shelisa McCall seconded the motion. No questions. Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson voted no. The motion passed 4-1.

b. Approval of Bill List

July 05, 2023 Bill List

July 18, 2023 Bill List

Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson made a motion to approve the Bill List for July 5 with the exception of 100-12-05-02000 Miscellaneous for myflorida.com, and the July 18 Bill List. Council Member Alicia Johnson seconded the motion. No questions. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Robert Hudson Financials

Ms. Howington announced that Mr. Hudson had to leave the Conference Call earlier and would present at the next Council Meeting.

7. Mayor Boutwell Professional Operators Inc. Wastewater Agreement

Mayor Boutwell requested to table the item for Professional Operators Inc. Wastewater Agreement. Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson made that motion. Council Member Shelisa McCall seconded the motion. No questions. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Mayor Boutwell Security Cameras

After reviewing the options from the Agenda Packet, the Council decided to request a multi location quote for Century Business Center, Town Hall and the Wastewater Treatment Plant from ADT.

Council Member Alicia Johnson made a motion to table the Security Cameras. Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson seconded the motion. No questions. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Mayor Boutwell FPL Easement in Industrial Park

Mayor Boutwell read from the Agenda Summary Sheet.

Florida Power and Light has approached the Town with two options for an easement in the Industrial Park.

Option 1 covers the entire Industrial Park.

Option 2 covers Lots 7 and 8 where work needs to be performed to generate Algaplast.

Council President Gomez confirmed there is no cost to the Town and recommended covering the entire Industrial Park with this easement. Council Member Dynette Lewis made a motion to authorize Mayor Boutwell to sign an Easement with FPL that covers the entire Industrial Park. Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson seconded the motion. No questions. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Leslie Howington Utility Payment Agreement

Discussion was held regarding late fees being on hold during the time of the Agreement. Council Member Dynette Lewis made a motion to hold a Workshop with staff on August 1st at 6:00 p.m. Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson seconded the motion. No questions. The motion passed unanimously.

11. Leslie Howington Emerald Coast Regional Council Agreement

Leslie read the Agenda Summary Sheet.

The Town has enjoyed its first year working with the trained professional staff at Emerald Coast Regional Council. They have worked to understand our processes, Municipal Codes and have become familiar with our area and our citizens. It is time to renew the Town's agreement with Emerald Coast Regional Council. Careful review of the agreement reveals no changes except the following:

Eric Christianson

Rate was \$55 is now \$64.

Planner III

Angela Bradley

Rate was \$69 is now \$80.

Planner IV

Jessica Walton

Rate was \$69 is now \$80.

GISP, GIS Coordinator

Ada Clark

Rate is \$100. Ms. Clark was not on the original agreement.
Community & Economic Development Director

Hourly rates were discussed. Ada Clark was discussed as being new to the agreement this year.

Permitting was discussed. Council Member Alicia Johnson requested the staff make it clear to our residents that this is not the permit and they still need to go to the County for the permit.

Council Member Shelisa McCall made a motion to renew the Town's Planning Agreement with Emerald Coast Regional Council. Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson seconded the motion. No questions. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Leslie Howington ARPA Budget

Council Member Dynette Lewis made a motion to hold an ARPA Workshop on Tuesday September 26, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson no questions. The motion passed The motion passed unanimously.

13. Staff Reports

Clerk's Report

Lighting and Bleachers from NHS

I have spoken with the secretary of Northview and asked for the Town to be considered for repurposing their field lighting. We await a response.

Eagle Cleaning Services

At Council's request, we have provided a 30 day notice to Eagle Cleaning to discontinue service. This will take us thru mid-August. The staff have put a plan in place to absorb the work performed by Eagle Cleaning.

Regarding the budget to actual this fiscal year, turns out that \$1,218 from last fiscal year was paid during this fiscal year. $325 \times 3 + 243 = \$1,218$

When the budget is developed, we look at last year's expenses and project this year's expenses. As a result of Eagle Cleaning's first bills not reaching us timely, the history of expense did not populate and they were not included in this year's budget.

Council Member Dynette Lewis noted that the Council had not voted to cancel the contract with Eagle Cleaning. Ms. Howington apologized and will contact Eagle Cleaning and let them know of her mistake.

Budget Workshops

Staff are diligently working on preparing a draft budget for Robert Hudson's review and Mayor Boutwell's approval.

The proposed Millage Rate will be on the August 1, 2023 Agenda.

NOTE: After approving the Proposed Millage Rate, the rate may be lowered in the final budget but it may not be raised.

Future Budget Workshops with Mayor Boutwell, the Town Council, Staff and Robert Hudson are requested at a time of Council's choosing for

Tuesday, August 08, 2023 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, August 22, 2023 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, August 29, 2023 6:00 p.m.

Council agreed.

14. Mayor's Report

Wastewater Operator Trainee

Mayor Boutwell shared that Jeff Regan has experience and former certifications in wastewater from Milton and will pursue wastewater certifications once hired. Mayor Boutwell recommended hiring Mr. Reagan at \$16 with a \$2 raise when certified.

Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson made a motion to hire Jeff Regan at \$16 hour and a \$2 raise when he is certified within one year. Council Member Shelisa McCall seconded the motion. Council Member Alicia Johnson abstained because she recommended him. William Reynolds read the statute regarding abstaining and since Council Member Johnson would receive no financial gain from hiring Mr. Reagan she would be allowed to vote. No questions. The motion passed unanimously.

Natural Gas Operator Trainee

Mayor Boutwell stated we have a natural gas operator position available since Joe Brown retired. Current employee, Gary Small, is a jack of all trades and has worked in every area of the Town. Mayor Boutwell recommended transferring Gary Small from the Street Department to the Gas Department. Operator Qualification testing is done online. Mayor Boutwell stated Mr. Small will readily pick up this skill. Mayor Boutwell recommended bumping his hourly rate from \$17.46 to \$18 to transfer him and then immediately advertise for the Street Department position.

Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson made a motion to move Gary Small to the Natural Gas Department. Council Member Alicia Johnson seconded the motion. The hourly rate of \$18 to start and then \$20 once Mr. Small received his operator qualification was clarified. No questions. The motion passed unanimously.

Wastewater Lift Station Panels

Mayor Boutwell requested Dale Long come to explain that panels are being retooled. There is a cost associated with that. The Town must pay directly and then get reimbursed through the County. The cost is \$2,500 per panel and there are two panels, one at Pilgrim Lodge Lift Station and one at the Industrial Park.

Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson made a motion to move forward with the two panels for \$5,000. Council Member Alicia Johnson seconded the motion. It was determined to pay from the Water Department and reimburse the Water Fund with the County reimbursement. The motion passed unanimously.

Lions Club 5K Run

Mayor Boutwell distributed registration information for the Lions Club's 5K Run which will be August 12, 2023 in Anthony Pleasant Park.

15. Council Comments

Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson shared that Linda Moorer on Hilltop Road did not receive a water bill.

Council Member Shelisa McCall asked if we have scheduled water and wastewater inspections so that we don't miss them in the future. Mayor Boutwell affirmed and noted that we have them scheduled to pop up on our calendars a week before. This goes to Mayor Boutwell, Heath Burkett, Leslie Howington and Mallory Walker.

Council Member Shelisa McCall requested Rules of Order be on the next Agenda, as well as CRA. Ms. Howington has reached out to Meredith Reeves and hasn't heard back. Ms. Howington will send the CRA Committee an invitation to schedule a meeting and invite Meredith.

Council Member Shelisa McCall requested a Charter Review Workshop to wrap up so that we can have movement in Century. Council Member Alicia Johnson made a motion to hold a Charter Review Workshop at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 10, 2023. Council Member Shelisa McCall seconded the motion. No questions. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Alicia Johnson had nothing to report.

Council President Luis Gomez announced he received two garbage cans billed again even though they had been refunded. Ms. Howington will ensure the charge is removed from future bills and a credit issued for this most recent bill.

Council President Gomez asked if there was a deadline on Christmas Lights. Mr. Merchant said the longer we wait the more we will spend.

Council President Gomez stated that if Ms. Reeves is in Pensacola, then no one is in Century to offer help or guidance for elderly to get their homes repaired. Dr. Griffen told him there is money available, but no one is advocating for the Town. He recommended allowing Ms. Reeves to work in Pensacola and hire someone in Century. Ms. Mincy called Ms. Reeves more than once and did not receive a call back.

16. Public Forum

Kevin Merchant stated that a Class A CDL is needed for the Street Department position. \$17 per hour would be an appropriate salary. Mr. Merchant's recommendation is to hire a CDL driver. Council Member Dynette Lewis agreed to require a Class A driver.

William Reynolds shared that Community Action is meeting at Showalter Park

Gretchen McPherson shared that Lorraine Davis of Brewton is trying to get a homeless shelter built in the Brewton area and will host an event on July 29th at the Avenue in Brewton.

17. Adjourn

There being no further business, Council Member Sandra McMurray Jackson made a motion to adjourn. Council Member Dynette Lewis seconded the motion. Not questions. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:03 p.m.