AGENDA MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
CITY HALL, 501 W MEADOW STREET
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2023 5:30 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

The City of Leesburg Commission held a regular meeting on Monday, November 13, 2023, at Leesburg City Hall. Mayor Burry called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with the following members present:

Commissioner Allyson Berry
Commissioner Jay Connell
Commissioner Mike Pederson
Commissioner Alan Reisman
Mayor Jimmy Burry

Also present were City Manager (CM) Al Minner, City Clerk (CC) J. Andi Purvis, City Attorney (CA) Grant Watson, the news media, and others.

INVOCATION

Mayor Burry gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

2. PROCLAMATIONS:

There were none.

3. PRESENTATIONS:

A. Susan Street Sports Complex Project

Recreation Director (RD) Travis Rima provided updated information on the Susan Street Complex project. They have previously reviewed this project and the footprint has not really changed. However, he was looking to get some further directions, as they are entering the thirty percent portion of the design phase. The objective of this project is to demo the existing facility and create a destination facility to include rectangle sports. The rectangle fields will be used for football, seven on seven football, soccer, rugby, and lacrosse. Any sport that can be played on a rectangle, can be played in this complex. They are entering the Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) process. He is looking for approval so they can move forward. They need to move forward with the CMAR so they can get the first budget estimates.

There are three deliverables; thirty, sixty, and good manufacturing practice (GMP). They would like to take the first step and get the first budget estimate. The numbers he will show later are the architect and engineer numbers and that was estimated. It is not the CMAR.
The complex has not changed much since it was first presented a couple of years ago. The fields have been moved around a little and the parking lot was switched to a different area. However, they are still looking at a stadium that includes a grand stand, turf surface, and four multi-purpose fields that are rugby-sized. As previously discussed, any field that is rugby size, can have any other rectangle sport played on it. There will be a multi-purpose field in the middle which will be used for soccer. There would be a fieldhouse with concessions, restrooms, and locker rooms. The only big change from the last time this was brought to the commission is the parking lot. That has been moved to the northeast corner of the facility. That was a good change because it would allow for an entrance coming off US 27. There was previous discussion about it coming off of Red Raider Road. They are now looking at it coming through Susan and Williams Streets. They would like the entrance to come in off US 27. It would be between the Pizza Hut and the Big Lots shopping center. This would allow them to have a marquee sign out front. It will be interesting to watch this come together, because in order to have the entrance off US 27 they need to acquire some land. There are three business entities that own the area they are looking to come in on. The city will need to purchase or negotiate some right of way to acquire that. Pizza Hut owns a square, Pat Sales owns a weird triangle, which comes off Pat Sales, and then Big Lots. The people that own the area own this part and we will need to negotiate with all of them. If we can get this done, it will provide good access to come in and out of Susan Street. It would almost have its own private type entrance into the facility. In the budget we have seven point nine million dollars and two million of that will come out of the FY 25 budget. They have worked with the Lake County Tourism Development Council where they allocated nine hundred and ninety-six thousand dollars. There is another million dollars that the commission will see in that contract. He spoke with their director from the Lake County Tourism Development Council and he said a contract would come before them at the next couple of meetings. That will get them another million dollars for this project. There is a legislative priority grant that comes in at seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars and that will take us to seven point nine million dollars, which is the cost of the complex. The proposed entrance road would be another quarter, but they still need to see how much the property acquisition will be. They are looking for approval to move onto the CMAR budgeting. **Someone from the audience** asked what CMAR stood for and **RD Rima** responded it stood for Construction Manager at Risk. **Commissioner Pederson** pointed out that the city does not have to have an entrance off US 27, because we already have another ingress/egress. However, he hopes they can pull that off because it would make a much nicer entrance. **Commissioner Connell** asked if they end up going with the new entrance, will they have to negotiate with the property owners? Will that drive the costs up higher than the number in the packet? **RD Rima** answered if the city has to purchase property, yes. They have not gotten into surveying or appraisals yet, so they do not know what those costs might be. **Commissioner Connell** inquired if they wanted to purchase the land or just gain access to use it? **RD Rima** responded that is the question they still need to figure out. **CM Minner** stated with this concept, they want to do it right the first time. In order to do it right, the thought was to have it come off US 27. Based on where it goes, we may have to purchase or work out an agreement for ingress/egress. However, at this time, we do have that answer. We wanted to present the concept to the commission to get input. Depending on where this goes, because we do not want to push it above the eight million dollar number, so based on funding levels and different things, the entryway could become a marquee for the project. If needed, they could peel back on some of the fields to stay within the budget. The first step is to get the commission's approval to move forward. That would allow the engineers to begin the design phase and it would put us in a position where we could start approaching the property owners about the ingress/egress off US 27. **Commissioner Connell** wanted to verify when the numbers come back. Will they come back before the commission for review to see if they want to purchase the property or enter into an agreement to use the property for ingress/egress? **RD Rima** replied yes. **CM Minner** said the process would be the same as they do on all projects. However, this project will have a

few other stopping points with the commission as they get into the thirty, sixty, and ninety percent design phases. This will be back when the Construction Manager at Risk numbers come in. There will be a lot more financial check-ins and reports to the commission before any money is spent, other than the designing number which was previously approved. **Commissioner Connell** inquired about the engineering fees. **RD Rima** replied it was five hundred and sixty-two thousand eight hundred dollars. **Commissioner Pederson** mentioned having the entrance cut through between Pizza Hut and the shopping center would benefit both of them. **RD Rima** agreed. He was looking to receive direction from the commission before approaching the property owners. He believes they would be pleased to have a couple thousand people coming in and out of their parking lot.

Commissioner Pederson made a motion to move forward with the CMAR design and Commissioner Reisman seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Reisman	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Berry	Yes
Mayor Burry	Yes

Five yeas, no nays, the Commission approved moving forward with the CMAR design.

B. Consider Hosting BikeFest 2024

Special Event Manager (SEM) Maggie Lyden said her objective was for approval to continue the tradition of Bikefest on a manageable scale that will benefit the community. She was requesting approval to move forward with planning and securing acts and sponsors. It is imperative to begin this process as soon as possible, to secure top tier entertainment and quality sponsorships. She would like to request an increase to the city manager's spending approval amount. Highlights of the event will include the city managing two stages. They would condense the footprint to a manageable scale and upgrade the entertainment to entice attendees from surrounding areas to come spend time in Leesburg. They would utilize new partners that align with the budget. Community engagement, via opportunities, will include parking, vending, and securing media partnerships with iHeart Media and JBC Broadcasting, as well as securing additional new sponsors while retaining previous sponsors. She has already met with Gator Harley and she had lengthy conversations with other sponsorships from the past who are looking forward to enhancing their sponsorship for 2024. She showed a rendering of the possible layout that would be more concentrated within a specific area to help with public works safety, cleanup, open container laws, and paid vendor space. Five hundred and twenty thousand dollars is above and beyond what the event division's budget is in the CRA. That budget is four hundred and fifty thousand dollars. She will be seeking allocations for this event from the general fund reserve of approximately fifteen million dollars. Some unknowns are entertainment and beverage sales. With alcohol sales, they will navigate how to best utilize the revenue streams to protect the city's investment. They will look at how to best utilize alcohol sales, given that municipalities cannot profit from alcohol. However, we may be able to utilize it for civic funding. They would like to maximize profitability for the city while staying within state statutes. Due to the time crunch of planning an event this size, she would request that the city manager have emergency spending authority. She will be back on November 27th to file a formal resolution that says that cash would only be spent on this event. Moving forward after bringing in new sponsors and implementing the highlights she mentioned, she believes the city will break even at Bikefest 2024. **Commissioner Connell** asked where she pulled this information from? **SEM Lyden** wanted to know which information he was specifically referring to. **Commissioner Connell** said he was referring to the expenses on the revenue side. Where did those numbers come from? **SEM Lyden** responded it was based on previous years of Bikefest as well as relationships she has with different partners and vendors. **Commissioner Connel**l asked if she would be able to raise two hundred and some thousand dollars in four months for sponsorship? **SEM Lyden** answered yes, that was her goal. **Commissioner Connell** questioned the security costs being one hundred thousand dollars for a three-day event. **SEM Lyden** responded yes, the security cost covers the three-day event, which includes two main acts, stage security, and police to encompass the entire area. **Commissioner Berry** wanted to verify that this was doable considering the time constraint and being new to the city. **SEM Lyden** replied yes, as long as she can start right now. **Commissioner Berry** said she does not want to set anyone up for failure, but if this works it would be good for the city and the county. It would be a win-win. However, she did not want to put her in a position where she had to jump with both feet. **SEM Lyden** pointed out that she comes with experience in this realm. She has experience of planning large-scale events, especially music events. After having conversations with new partners, she believes this is attainable. She has been talking to partners and potential sponsors. **Commissioner Connell** asked if she had volunteers? **SEM Lyden** responded yes and her phone had not stopped ringing. **CM Minner** mentioned one thing that was not mentioned in the presentation was the outreach they have with Gator Harley. Gator Harley has always been a very big sponsor of this event. The recreation director and the special events manager have met with the owners of Gator Harley, and that partnership will continue to be important. **SEM Lyden** stated they are an important sponsor and they are willing to help with the logistics of this event. **Commissioner Reisman** added that he attended an event at Gator Harley over the weekend. If that was anything like what our Bikefest could be, it would be a success. That event was a huge success for them.

Melissa, owner of the McCracken Pub, asked if they would consider changing from Anheuser Busch as the alcohol sponsor due to the marketing negativity they have had over the past year? It also affected the attendance of the event last year. **SEM Lyden** answered moving forward with the sponsorship with Wayne Dench, there are several things they could do. Instead of branding it as Bud Light, they could brand it as Budweiser or Michelob Ultra. **Melissa of the McCracken Pub** questioned the smaller footprint. Does that mean there will be fewer vendors? That could lead to lower attendance. Has that been thought about? **SEM Lyden** replied no. Condensing the footprint and by utilizing the space in different ways, they will be able to handle all the vendors. Regarding the attendance, by upgrading the entertainment, that will bring in additional attendance for the event.

Tate, president of Abate of Florida, Lake County Chapter, an organization for motorcycle rights, said he was there to speak on behalf of the two hundred and ninety-eight members of this chapter. Bikefest is a big event for a lot of local organizations. This event allows the organization to make money, so they can thrive throughout the rest of the year. During past commission meetings it has been said that certain people do not benefit from Bikefest and that is untrue. Anyone who works for the hospitality community benefits from Bikefest. The hotels in this area are packed during Bikefest. They also have a campground every year and it is packed. All the fast food restaurants are packed along with the local bars. The City of Leesburg will make money off of Bikefest. The city needs to bring in better, more reputable bands because that will draw more people in. They need to stop with the washed-out bands from the past. They need some new bands to draw the younger generations in. That is where they will make money.

Commissioner Reisman made a motion to move forward with Bikefest as presented and Commissioner Pederson seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Reisman	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Berry	Yes

Commissioner Connell	Yes
Mayor Burry	Yes

Five yeas, no nays, the Commission approved moving forward with Bikefest.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS:
This section is reserved for members of the public to bring up matters of concern or opportunities for praise. Issues brought up will not be discussed in detail at this meeting. Issues will either be referred to the proper staff or will be scheduled for consideration at a future City Commission Meeting. Comments are limited to three minutes.

Marcelina Miranda, owner of the Mayan Blendz Barber Shop located at 2304 West Main Street, said he attended the last meeting and asked about the feather flag code being updated. He hoped the commission would consider that at a future meeting. He has had conversations with other business owners on West Main Street and North Boulevard. However, those people were unable to make this meeting. They all feel the same, the current code hinders business and they feel it is unnecessary to send violations through the mail. He knows people can stack up yard signs and be excessive. However, the code does not allow them to advertise for their business. The people he has spoken with are not all located in plazas, some are right on the road and they would like to have the opportunity to have feather flags to promote their businesses. He understands a different commission voted against them previously because they were found to be a nuisance. However, he was there to say he hoped they could come to an agreement so they could have feather flags without them becoming a nuisance. That would be great. He would love to see that happen in the future.

Sandy Moore of the Leesburg Area Chamber of Commerce said on November 4th they held their annual Chilli Cookoff, Burn in the Burg Chili Cookoff, in the town square. She thanked the city for their support to help make this event happen. She commended the work crew that worked on town square because it looked awesome. The mulch and the holiday decorations looked great when the lights turned on. It was a great representation of the city. This year they had more chili cookers than ever before. She thanked Commissioner Reisman and Commissioner Berry for coming out to volunteer at the event. This event turned out great and that could not have happened without the city's support. They were thankful that they were able to borrow the items needed to make this event a success.

Elliot of Blue Island Sportswear, said his company was moving to the southern garden building. He had conversations with two commissioners and they responded immediately. However, there are parking situations in the downtown that everyone is aware of. We all know there are laws downtown that limit parking to three hours. That law needs to be enforced. There are six areas in the downtown where he has asked people to move their vehicles because they were there from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. He had cameras out there and he counted twenty-six vehicles who were their customers and they could not park. All he asked was for the city to enforce the law.

Joyce Carter of 117 Woodland Boulevard, said she was there on an impromptu notice. She stated that she moved into her home in 2012. When she would drive home and pull into her garage at night it was very dark, almost pitch black. She was very concerned about her safety, so she called the city and was told if she wanted a safety light she would have to pay for it and she is still paying for that light. She was told if a pole was not already there and they had to install a pole, she would have to pay more. Thank god the pole was there. Recently, the city added more street lights in the Woodland Park Community and she wanted to know why she was the only resident paying for safety? Why is she paying for a light in front of her home when no one else has to? **CM Minner** said he would get in touch with her. There is a difference between a security light and a street light. He needed to pull up her account to find out the specifics. However, he would get back with her shortly.

5. CONSENT AGENDA:

Routine items are placed on the Consent Agenda to expedite the meeting. If the Commission/Staff wish to discuss any item, the procedure is as follows: (1) pull the item(s) from the Consent Agenda; (2) vote on remaining items with one roll call vote, (3) discuss each pulled item and vote by roll call

Items pulled for discussion:

5.B.3 Authorization to execute a Construction Services Agreement with DB Civil Construction, LLC for an amount of $755,782.80.

Commissioner Reisman moved to adopt the Consent Agenda except for 5.B.3 and Commissioner Berry seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Berry	Yes
Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Reisman	Yes
Mayor Burry	Yes

Five yeas, no nays, the Commission adopted the Consent Agenda, as follows:
(Each item has its coordinated resolution number listed below the header)

A. CITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES:

1. Regular meeting held October 23, 2023

B. PURCHASING ITEMS:

1. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a Construction Services Agreement with Bulldog Sitework, LLC for an amount of $219,638.89; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,727

2. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a Construction Services Agreement with Bulldog Sitework, LLC for an amount of $247,012.87; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,728

3. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a Construction Services Agreement with DB Civil Construction, LLC. for an amount of $755,782.80; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,735

Mayor Burry stated he spoke with the city manager earlier today about this item. There were eight bids received for this project and even though he was in favor of the project and because the low bid was for seven hundred and fifty-five thousand dollars, while five other bids were well over a million dollars. That is a huge difference and in order for him to support this they need to have a certification of the bids to make sure everything is correct. **CM Minner** responded that in the past when there has been a big discrepancy, they had the contractor sign a form that supports what was presented in their bid. He would have the purchasing director do that. He asked, in order to keep the project moving, if they could add that as an addendum, it would be done before they execute the project. They will have to sign that form. They could make a motion to amend that requiring a certification of bid be signed before executing the contract.

Commissioner Pederson made a motion to require a certification of bid, and Commissioner Reisman seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Berry	Yes
Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Reisman	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Mayor Burry	Yes

Five yeas, no nays, the Commission approved the amendment to require a certification of bid.

Commissioner Pederson made a motion to approve 5.B.3 as amended and Commissioner Reisman seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Reisman	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Berry	Yes
Mayor Burry	Yes

Five yeas, no nays, the Commission adopted the resolution.

4. Purchase request by the Information Technology Department for desktop and laptop computers as part of the City's annual program for computer hardware replacement.

C. RESOLUTIONS:

1. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute Civic Organization Funding Agreements for Fiscal Year 2023-24 with Community Development Corporation of Leesburg, Inc., Leesburg Area Chamber of Commerce, Inc., Leesburg Arts Festival, Inc. DBA Leesburg Center for the Arts, and Melon Patch Players, Inc.; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,729

2. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a Gas Service Agreement between the City of Leesburg and TLC Hodges Reserve, LLC, for the purpose of setting forth the terms under which the city will provide natural gas service to the development known as Hodges Reserve Phase 1; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,730

3. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a Gas Service Agreement between the City of Leesburg and TLC Hodges Reserve, LLC, for the purpose of setting forth the terms under which the city will provide natural gas service to the development known as Hodges Reserve Phase 2; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,731

4. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a Renewal to the lease agreement between the City of Leesburg and Kids Central, Inc.; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,732

5. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, accepting a Utility Easement from Jerry Hamby and Beulah Annette Hamby; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,733

6. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing amendments to Personnel Policies 800 and 805 to reflect updated per diem rates; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,734

**6. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND NON-ROUTINE ITEMS:
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN INFORMATION SIGN-UP SHEET (YELLOW) AVAILABLE**

A. SECOND READING OF ORDINANCES:

1. NONE

B. FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES:

1. NONE

C. NON-ROUTINE ITEMS:

1. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a Management Services Agreement with Akers Media to manage LakeFront TV; and providing an effective date.

DENIED RESOLUTION 11,736

Commissioner Reisman introduced the resolution to be read by title only. CC Purvis read the resolution by title only.

Commissioner Reisman made a motion to adopt the resolution and Commissioner Pederson seconded the motion.

Mayor Burry requested comments from the Commission and the audience.

Commissioner Connell said the present provider has been running the station for ten years. Are there any issues with the current provider about how they operate? **CM Minner** answered no. The provider is at the end of their second long-term contract/agreement with the city. Yes, the current provider has provided about ten years of service to the city. However, the fact of the matter is that their contract is expiring. The city has gone through both phases of the contract with the current provider, which included options for renewal. Under state statutes, they are now required to go through procurement. At this time, the current contractor has ended their contractual relationship and the city is required to bid for this service. They sent this bid out to the marketplace and put together a committee to review the bids received. The process was for a request for proposals that way they could marry costs as well as qualifications. There were some abstractness to the process and they had to take into consideration all types of things; experience, qualifications, tenure with the city and cost. The cost was a third of the total awarded points. The total of points awarded was one hundred and fifty from five different judges on the committee. After the initial round of judging the bids there were questions. As he explained at the last commission meeting, they wanted to go back and re-review them to make sure they were comparing apples to apples as far as costs.

They went back and sent more information out to the three respondents to clarify that. They now have a clearer delineation of costs. The costs were broken down into the value of production minutes that would be provided. After the second review of the submissions, it was determined that Akers Media had the lowest cost and they were the best provider. They were reranked accordingly and the committee was very strict. He and the procurement manager were strict in terms of point awards. The points for cost had a maximum of fifty points. The three respondents were ranked fifty, forty, and thirty. The lowest cost provider based on production minutes was awarded fifty points, the second lowest was forty points, and the highest cost provider was thirty points. They then added those points to the points that were awarded by the committee for the other areas of experience and so forth. At the end of the day, Akers Media was the lowest cost provider. Their total package was one hundred and eighty thousand dollars and we have one hundred and seventy eight thousand two hundred and fifty available in the FY 24 budget for this service.

Commissioner Connell asked if the proposed contractor has experience running a TV station? **CM Minner** answered that running a TV station was not one of the services requested. The services requested were for broadcasting public meetings and making productions for the city's TV station. However, all three respondents are highly qualified to produce the materials that would be produced and put on the city's TV station. **Commissioner Berry** questioned the equipment. Does Akers Media have equipment? **CM Minner** replied in Aker Media's initial response, they stated that they have the equipment needed to do production. They also have experience of broadcasting public meetings. Based on the submissions, they need to go with the assumption that they have the equipment, expertise, and tools necessary to air meetings and conduct media productions. **Commissioner Pederson** said this was a tough one. Sometimes change is good and other times change is not so good. We have a company that has been doing this service for ten years and they have done a great job. They have established good relationships in the community and they included letters from community leaders saying so. They have a good working relationship with department heads. If this were in the private sector, this would be a negotiated contract but the government had to bid it out. He appreciated the other companies participating and they were all good proposals, but he cannot pull this from the company that has been doing this for the past ten years. He understands the numbers, but he knows the city manager can always find those numbers. He respects the budget process, but he would like to see the city stick with the current provider who is passionate about this. He has told them on occasion that they need to learn to say no, because looking at the production hours from last year you can tell they never said no to anyone. Going forward, they may need to say no. However, this is tough and he supports the incumbent. **Commissioner Reisman** remarked that this was a very tense, political, and emotional RFP process and a lot of them were involved in it. He would say that he had the most experience working with Facci Bella. They made videos for the airport and there were other different videos he has hosted as a commissioner and it has been a good working relationship. However, he has to take his emotions out of this. Whether it be a friendship or anything like that has to be taken out of the picture in order to make the best decision for the city. For those reasons, he supports the current RFP proposal. **Commissioner Connell** said the current contractor has been doing this for ten years with no issues. They know what they are doing and he agreed that sometimes change is good, but this is not good. The system is not broken and they do not need to fix it. **Mayor Burry** commented that he was not a media-savvy person. He did not know a lot about filming, so he relied on the committee. That is why they put together that committee. They were gauged in finding the best candidate for this and they said it should be Akers Media. With that, he supports Akers Media. **Commissioner Connell** said he did not know if the committee had anymore background with the media than he did. This was just a recommendation. **Mayor Burry** said that a committee was put together and they provided the ratings. This was their recommendation. **Commissioner Berry** commented that the ratings were based on financial criteria for production and broadcasting. There was nothing for artistic criteria. None the less, they would do a great job and that has been stated. This bid was based on financials as far as criteria for the six or seven categories that were listed. **CM Minner** responded that the bid was based on three things: experience, credentials, and financials. The financials were only a third of the total points.

Lonnie Barrett of 11900 McCormick Street said this was primarily an artistic endeavor. Of course, the city has to pay for it, but what is most important is what it looks like. He questioned whether or not each commissioner took the opportunity to evaluate each applicant based on their artistic abilities. No two production companies are the same and nobody will look the same. If this were a restaurant, they would all want to taste the food.

John Sokol said he knows the money part of Lakefront TV, but Lakefront TV is a lot more than that. The commission is basing this on what they are going to do to broadcast the meetings and everything else. Lakefront TV is a lot more than that. If they have ever sat down and watched that channel, there is a lot going on. There are a lot of great shows produced. They are constantly talking about what is happening in the community. It is aired on this channel for people who cannot get out to see it in person. This provides an opportunity for them to see it. The current provider has proved themselves over the years. They work extremely hard now, so what happens if they change? It will be the people that watch that channel that suffer. They provide great quality entertainment for the community and surrounding communities. If this is just based on making sure the commission meetings are aired, anyone can do that. That is not a hard job. However, what is being programmed now on that channel will lack. If changed, people will see a difference.

Doug Akers, president of Akers Media Group, said with their proposal the committee recommended awarding the bid to them. They are well-known for their magazine. However, over the last ten years, they have been producing videos and other content for their clients which is white-labeled. They do this for a living for clients all over the State of Florida. They may not necessarily manage a TV station, but they produce quality content that has quality content and it is white-labeled. One thing they are not good at is self-promotion, which is letting everyone know about all this great content they produce for other businesses. The difference they would bring is that even though a lot of companies produce great quality content, they have a large audience that would receive that content. It would be on more than Lakefront TV. They would leverage Style Magazine and other assets to take that content and produce it for a larger audience. All three companies produce great content, but the difference they have is the size of the audience they can share that content with.

Dr. Anna Marie Chwastiak, president/owner of Facci Bella Productions, said she was the current vendor who manages and operates Lakefront TV. She has been doing that for the past ten years. It has been an honor and pleasure to serve the commission and all departments. About ten years ago, the city approached her and asked if she would step in and salvage the station that was about to go dark. She came in with her broadcast quality equipment, setup the studio and they were the first ones to take productions outside the box. Up until then, everything was produced inside the studio. They increased the production quality and production quantity. Several years into this, they were faced with a failing cablecast system. This is much more than producing pretty videos, this is managing and operating a television station, which includes a technical part. When the server died seven years ago, Facci Bella went hand in hand with the IT department and they selected a new server that allowed them to go high-definition. At that time, Facci Bella acquired, for the City of Leesburg, Prism 21 and their high-definition channel 1021. Since then, they have acquired Amazon Fire-Stick, Apple TV, and Roku. They are currently talking with Optical Tel to get this station into the southern portion of Leesburg, like Legacy and Plantation. The fact is, yes, they could produce pretty videos, but there is a technical aspect. Everyone remembers when they were faced with covid, they had to rebuild the Venetian Center three to four times a month for meetings. Her guys were out there between three thirty and four o'clock to set everything up, including cameras and audio. There is a major technical part and during covid that was a challenge. They were the ones that got the hardware and software to go live remotely. They were able to bring the meetings live from the Venetian Center. It gave them the opportunity to provide live coverage of the Christmas parade and the Miss Leesburg Scholarship. Facci Bella has never put a cap on this station. They could produce all two to five minute videos, but the fact of the matter is, how would they fill the rest of the air time with Florida cable channel infomercials? She could truly say that she runs the station as a true community channel. She polished a very rough gem. She polished it very well for the city and she is proud of what she accomplished. She has now brought on Lake County government programming and Lake Sumter College is now programming. They have now partnered with them. Lake Sumter College would like to produce content with them using interns from Lake Sumter College. Their station has unfortunately gone dark, but they want to rebuild it, so she has been helping them do that. Again, the past ten years have been an honor and she has proven what she can do and accomplish for the city. Whoever gets the contract, she hoped they would appreciate the gem it is. They are very fortunate, because it is the only TV channel in Lake County.

Commissioner Reisman made a motion to approve the RFP as is and Commissioner Berry seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Reisman	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	No
Commissioner Berry	No
Commissioner Connell	No
Mayor Burry	Yes

Two yeas, three nays, the Commission denied the resolution.

Commissioner Pederson made a motion to continue the contract with Facci Bella and Commissioner Berry seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Berry	Yes
Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Reisman	No
Mayor Burry	No

Three yeas, two nays, the Commission approved the continuation of the contract with Facci Bella.

CM Minner pointed out that the contract that was in the packet was for Akers Media. He asked, based on the motion that he would go back and work with Facci Bella for the contract. That contract will be in their packet for the next meeting on the consent agenda. He looked to the commission for some guidance because the Facci Bella contract was two hundred and thirty-five to two hundred and forty thousand dollars. That is almost sixty grand over budget. He asked for some liberty when he discusses this with Dr. Anna Marie, they will bring that number within a budget parameter based on what we have in the budget. Based on her negotiations, that number will be in the contract and they will either have a contract that falls within the budget at the unit cost that was identified in the RFP or he will bring a contract that was her number, which was the two hundred and forty number. However, that would put us over budget. If there are any questions, it will be on the consent agenda and they can pull that item at the next meeting. **CA Watson** stated he was good with that because the city manager would get with him on that. **Commissioner Pederson** stated he thought they had just approved the RFP for two hundred and thirty-five thousand five hundred dollars. **CM Minner** pointed out that there was no contract for Facci Bella. Unless the city attorney agrees to strike the name. The contract before them was rejected. **Commissioner Pederson** said he may have misunderstood. He thought they were only changing numbers, but he understood changing the contract. **CM Minner** said the contract before them was not with Facci Bella. Therefore, they need to bring a new contract to the commission for Facci Bella. He asked for the liberty to change the numbers to reconsider the Facci Bella contract to bring it within budget parameters. He was unsure if Dr. Anna Marie would be open to that concept, so it would be a Facci Bella contract for one hundred and seventy eight thousand with fewer production minutes, or a contract agreement that is for twenty five or twenty eight hundred minutes at the two hundred and forty thousand dollar number. Either way, the Facci Bella contract will be on the consent agenda at the next meeting and they can pull it if needed. If they went with the Facci Bella for two forty they would need to find more money in the budget and he would not negotiate with Dr. Anna Marie. He would discuss those issues with her and he would have that contract for the next meeting. Unless they want him to just go with the two hundred and forty thousand dollars. **Commissioner Pederson** said he thought the number was two thirty-five five. He would like to go ahead and put that number on the contract. That is what he thought they approved. **CM Minner** said he was looking for clarification on the number. If they want a contract that is two thirty-five five for Facci Bella, they will modify the contract and it will be on the next agenda. **Commissioner Pederson** mentioned that he does not take this lightly, but he wants to continue the contract as is. He previously joked with her about learning to say no, but he wants her to continue running the station. **CM Minner** said there would be an amended contract as directed. **Commissioner Pederson** thanked him for the clarification.

2. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida approving language revisions to the Home Improvement Grant Program; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,737

Commissioner Reisman introduced the resolution to be read by title only. CC Purvis read the resolution by title only.

Commissioner Reisan made a motion to adopt the resolution and Commissioner Pederson seconded the motion.

Mayor Burry requested comments from the Commission and the audience.

Commissioner Connell asked the city manager to speak about this item. **CM Minner** said this past summer the commission approved the modified home grant program. In short, the home grant program provides up to twenty-five thousand dollars for qualifying home improvements to houses within the City of Leesburg. That grant program was approved and it was made applicable for any house anywhere inside the corporate limits of the City of Leesburg. During the budget process, they made an allocation to fund the program from the Carver Height CRA to the amount of three hundred thousand dollars. As staff endeavored to process and get the grants rolling out to applicants, they ran into a little bit of a modification which was very positive, where partnerships could bring more Housing and Urban Development (HUD) money. HUD money flows differently from the federal government. It typically goes through the state and then out to different organizations. Specifically, the Habitat for Humanity and the Lake County Community Action Agency have available HUD monies that could match the city's home grant program. The housing director, Commissioner Berry and himself, thought about marrying the city's program with these other programs to expand on what the program could offer. It would allow for more money to improve houses. They could keep our grants at twenty-five thousand dollars and marry

that with either the Habitat for Humanity or Lake County Community Action. That could bring down the city's grant requirement, so they can spread the money out and marry it with different partners. In any case, marrying it with different partners provides an opportunity to improve more homes that are at varying levels which shares the wealth. Hopefully, this will expedite the rehabilitation of homes that need improvement.
At the end of the day when these things happen, assessed values will go up and, in turn, we will have better housing stock which is better for the overall community. To make this partnership we need to do two things; modify the grant and then approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement with the partners. The first item on the agenda is to modify the grant and that grant modification does two things. There was a reimbursement requirement for the city and a lien requirement. First, he asked the commission to reconsider the reimbursement criteria. The reimbursement criteria that exists states that reimbursement or payment of the grant will be done on a reimbursement basis. That language will not change. If they issue a home grant to somebody in the city, they are required to make those improvements and they will reimburse them. Then we would stick in a second paragraph, which is a "however paragraph" that says if an applicant has a recognized partner, then we will have a construction administrator that goes through and helps us administer the program. That construction administrator will come from one of the partners, either Habitat for Humanity or Lake Community Action Agency. They will review the grant applications and they will ensure that the improvements requested are reasonable. They may need more or they may need less. They would marry with the money that the partner brings, whether that be Habitat for Humanity or Lake Community Action Agency. One thing to remember is that the partners' money is federal money. However, the first thing they would need to do is change the reimbursement. If the applicant was to go alone and just work with the city, the rules that were imposed stay in place. However, if they were to have a partner, the modification would be to make a reimbursement on a draw basis. Instead of paying the recipient, they would pay the agency directly. That money will never go to the partner, it will go immediately to the agency based on the draw request. For example, if the Lake Community Action Agency says they have to pay Acme Roofing five thousand dollars, they will cut a check to the Lake Community Action Agency and they will have to show receipts for where that money went. They believe this will help folks more who meet the low to moderate income requirement. The section covers the lien modification where they would use a different word instead of lien. They would call it a covenant for repayment. It is a friendlier word having the same intent. It is a happier word and the basic requirement says if someone works with the city only, there will be two things. First, if they bring money to the table, the city will waive the lien requirement. If they do not bring money to the table, the city will lien their property for five years. That does not change. The only thing that would have is, instead of saying we would lien for five years, it would say they have a covenant for repayment to make it friendlier. However, if they add that new paragraph and the applicant wanted to include a partner, HUD would not allow grant monies to be spent when a lien is being added. The federal government says they cannot do what the commission did. That does not mean that the city cannot do it that way, but the federal government cannot. If we are going to have a partnership with them and marry in federal government money with local government money, we have to follow the federal rules. If there is no partnership, the city will have a waiver of covenant for repayment. If there is a partner, that partner says there will be no requirement for repayment. Those would be the modifications to the home grant.

The next item on the agenda will be the Memorandum of Understanding for potential recognized partners. They both basically say the same thing. They lay out the program for how the city would work with Habitat for Humanity and the Lake Community Action Agency. If they find any other partners, they will make another MOU and that will be brought before the commission. Right now, there are only two recognized partners. He requested that the commission approve the modification of the grant program to include the two MOU's. They would then re-market and re-advertise the program. They will accept the applications that have already been received. When they re-advertise, they will hold another community meeting. There was one community meeting that had very good participation, but there were a lot of questions. Some of the questions were on this exact topic, which was the catalyst for modifying the grant program. If they approve the modification to the grant program with the redline changes and approve the two MOU's, staff will go back and readvertize the grant program. The applicant will need to provide whichever partner they pick and whichever partner they pick, they will have to go out and inspect the home. They will need to do a pre-inspection along with some other stuff. One line of the MOU states there will be a three or four percent inspection fee and administration fees which will go to Habitat for Humanity or Lake Community Action Agency, but that makes the applicant eligible for more money. Some of the grant money pays the administrative fees of the partner, but overall there will be more money in the pot and they will be able to make improvements. There will be more clarification and management of where that money is spent. That is an overall good thing, because they would ensure that money does what it is supposed to do. Once we receive the report back from the partner, we will make a grant contract and that grant contract will come before the commission for approval. They will need to approve the grant contract with that partner. Before any money is spent, it will come back before the commission. They will sign off on every single grant and every single penny. It will all be laid out in the contract. After the commission executes it, it goes to the recipient for approval. After that, it goes back to the partner and they will get to work. They will begin making draws and, with a little time, the city should have a lot of houses repaired, which will improve the housing stock.

Commissioner Reisman asked for clarification because he knows this is citywide, but is this only funded by the CRA? **CM Minner** said yes. Right now, it is only funded by the Carver Heights CRA because this was the pilot program. There are some requirements. If they choose to have a partner, they will have to meet low to moderate income requirements and they will have to meet certain income restrictions based on the number of people in the family. There is a total income requirement that they have to meet in order to be eligible for the grant. Each applicant will comeback for approval by the commission. **Commissioner Connell** questioned the difference between having a partner and going with the city's program. Could they receive up to twenty-five thousand dollars? **CM Minner** responded that the city's program provides eligibility of twenty-five thousand dollars. **Commissioner Connell** asked if they had a partner, would the city still give them twenty-five thousand dollars? **CM Minner** answered the city could give twenty-five thousand, plus whatever the partner provides. They could have a program where someone could receive about thirty-five thousand dollars. **Commissioner Connell** inquired if the partner would require the covenant? **CM Minner** stated the partner cannot. That is why they are looking for the modification. **Commissioner Connell** asked if the other partners could potentially require that. **CM Minner** answered no, they cannot. They cannot have a covenant for repayment or a lien, because HUD's purpose of the program is to fix houses for low to moderate income people. They cannot have the repayment criterion. HUD does not allow for a repayment criterion.
Commissioner Connell commented that the city could potentially give up to twenty-five thousand dollars of taxpayers' money with no restrictions or a time span for having to live there? **CM Minner** answered yes, if there was a partner involved. **Commissioner Connell** asked if the partner would match what the city gives. **CM Minner** said potentially, yes. **Commissioner Connell** clarified that it could be possible, but it is not required. **CM Minner** agreed. There are different variables based on how much money the partner has. It could be somewhere around ten thousand dollars or it could be up to fifteen thousand dollars. There could be a total grant amount out the door of twenty-five thousand dollars. That amount could be ten thousand dollars of city money and fifteen thousand dollars of partner money. There are many variable ways to potentially mix money. This enables them to spread wealth, but with that partnership, the federal rules prohibit a lien. **Commissioner Connell** asked if the city could lower the amount provided if there was a partner? **CM Minner** responded potentially. **Commissioner Connell** commented that he was not understanding. If the city has three hundred thousand dollars to work with and if we do not lower it down if there was a partner involved, how does that spread the wealth to more participants? **CM Minner** stated that instead of the city providing twenty-five thousand dollars,

they could provide ten, fifteen or five thousand dollars. The partnership does bring in the inspection criteria, so that partner may say no, they do not need the full twenty-five thousand dollars from the city. They may suffice with ten thousand dollars of city money to be married with ten thousand dollars of partner money. It would be more efficient and it would spread the money out. They could have a really bad ugly house (excuse the French) that may need more than twenty-five thousand dollars for improvements. They could have a house that only needs twenty-five thousand dollars of improvement and the amount of money provided would be a mix of the partner and the city. They would then be able to spread the wealth and maximize grant money. **Commissioner Connell** asked who does the assessment if they do not have a partner? **CM Minner** answered it would be the housing department. **Commissioner Connell** asked if it was just the city doing the work. Would that include the covenant? **CM Minner** replied yes. **Commissioner Connell** remarked that if they were going to waive the covenant with the partnership, the city should only match what the partner contributes. **Mayor Burry** asked if he could repeat his comment. **Commissioner Connell** stated if the city were to waive the requirement of the covenant on the repayment, meaning the length of time they have to live there, the city should not provide more taxpayer money higher than what the partner provides. For example, the city should not provide twenty-five thousand dollars when the partner only provides five thousand dollars, since there would be no restrictions. We would be penalizing the person who does not have a partner because they would have a five-year requirement on their deed. **Mayor Burry** asked if the homeowners have the option of partnership. Could they uncouple that partnership and say they just want to go with the city? **CM Minner** said yes. **Mayor Burry** stated it would then be up to the homeowner. **Commissioner Pederson** remarked that the homeowner would want to go the other direction. They are not going to want a clawback provision. He was okay with the program, but Commissioner Connell brought up an interesting point. **CM Minner** said in Commissioner Connell's example, as he understood it, if the partner comes in and says there is only ten thousand dollars' worth of improvements, there should only be five from the partner and five from the city. That way, the city is not paying more when the homeowner has the waiver of the repayment. He only wants the city to match whatever the partner provides in order to waive the lien. However, in some cases, that may not work, because there could be improvements needed to the house that surpass what the partner brings to the table. They may need additional city money. He understands, but that will be a call that they make when the application is brought to them for approval. If they go with a partner, it spreads the wealth and they will need to make the exception in the home grant program to waive the lien requirement. **Commissioner Berry** added that part of the plan was the approval of twenty five thousand dollars per house if needed, but the partner would determine what is needed based on the weatherization. They are the ones that do the assessment of the house. She cannot imagine an assessment being more, but they have the option to choose more if it is needed. She did not see how they could ask the city for the fifteen thousand dollars when the partner only gave five thousand dollars. It should be the other way around. **CM Minner** said with no disrespect, he understands Commissioner Connell's comments. His concern is because federal programs are slightly different than city programs for what can be spent. If they limit the program to only match what the federal program brings, then some improvements may not be able to be made. This would limit potential improvements. He understands the philosophy, but it does not take the program where they want it to go, which is to maximize total improvements to the houses that need it. **Commissioner Berry** agreed, that was the goal. **Commissioner Pederson** stated he expects to have quite a few applicants and, if there were a bundle of applicants, that could be a factor. **CM Minner** stated this program will be done as the applications come in. They will be ranked based on the criteria in the grant, which is how much money we have, first come first serve, and what needs to be done. That criterion is in there, so when they see these contracts they will have been prioritized already. **Commissioner Pederson** said that Commissioner Connell brought up a great point, but he would like to move forward with this as is. This is the first year and we can come back later and reevaluate it. We can look at what was done, how the money was spent, and if there was a problem, tweak it. People worked hard on this and they brought a good product forward. He is willing to try it as presented. He questioned how they would distinguish between the two organizations? **CM Minner** responded that Habitat for Humanity and Lake Community Action Agency had existing HUD monies/existing grant monies in their accounts. There are existing open grants that have funding. **Commissioner Pederson** said he was happy with both of them, but he was curious how they would distinguish between them. **CM Minner** replied that they are on a HUD cycle. They have existing monies that are ready to be allocated for this purpose in Leesburg. The partners numbers will change on the federal calendar. **Mayor Burry** asked for a motion for the city to accept partnerships in this program. They can then talk later about the memorandum of understandings.

Commissioner Berry made a motion to accept the program as presented by the housing department and Commissioner Pederson seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Berry	Yes
Commissioner Connell	No
Commissioner Reisman	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Mayor Burry	Yes

Four yeas, one nay, the Commission adopted the resolution.

a. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Leesburg and Habitat for Humanities of Lake-Sumter for the Housing Repair Grant Program; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,738

Commissioner Reisman introduced the resolution to be read by title only. CC Purvis read the resolution by title only.

Commissioner Reisman made a motion to adopt the resolution and Commissioner Pederson seconded the motion.

Mayor Burry requested comments from the commission and the audience. There were none. He pointed out that this was just saying that they approve Habitat for Humanity of Lake-Sumter as a partner and the memorandum of understanding lays out what that partnership does.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Reisman	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Berry	Yes
Mayor Burry	Yes

Five yeas, no nays, the Commission adopted the resolution.

b. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a Memorandum of

Understanding (MOU) between the City of Leesburg and the Lake Community Action Agency, Inc., for the Home Repair Grant Program; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,739

Commissioner Pederson introduced the resolution to be read by title only. CC Purvis read the resolution by title only.

Commissioner Reisman made a motion to adopt the resolution and Commissioner Pederson seconded the motion.

Mayor Burry requested comments from the Commission and the audience. There were none.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Reisman	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Berry	Yes
Commissioner Connell	Yes
Mayor Burry	Yes

Five yeas, no nays, the Commission adopted the resolution.

3. Discussion Item - Commission Meetings that fall on an Observed Holiday in 2024

Mayor Burry stated this was a discussion item. There are three meetings next calendar year that fall on holidays, which consist of the organizational meeting, January 1st, Memorial Day, May 27th and Veterans Day, November 11th. These three holidays fall on a Monday when there is a regularly scheduled city commission meeting. Last year the same thing happened for the organizational meeting and they decided to move it to the day of the first meeting, just have it a half hour beforehand. They were able to hold that organizational meeting and assign committees. He believes that worked out well and they should do that again. If the commission agrees, then they can have that meeting on January 8, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. **Commissioner Pederson** agreed, that sounded good to him. With the other two meetings, they could push them back one day and hold them on that Tuesday. **Mayor Burry** agreed. He asked if anyone else had any other thoughts. There were none.

7. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS:
The following reports are provided to the Commission in accordance with the Charter/Ordinances. No action required.

A. Financial Reports as of August 2023

Mayor Burry asked if there were any questions regarding this report. There were none.

B. Financial Reports as of September 2023

Mayor Burry asked if there were any questions regarding this report. There were none.

8. CITY ATTORNEY ITEMS:

CA Watson had no items to address this evening.

9. CITY MANAGER ITEMS:

CM Minner commented on behalf of the city commission and city staff, he wanted to recognize Betty Richardson. Unfortunately, Betty had been ill over the last few years and she passed away on November 4th, a few days shy of her 83rd birthday. Betty worked for the city for about thirty-four years in the clerk's office. She was the city clerk for ten years. She was very dedicated. He attended her service today and it was very moving. Both her sons gave really nice presentations about their mother, which included all the things she did. The only thing he wanted to quip about was that he never knew Betty to be late. Betty was always there for the city commission meetings right at 5:30 p.m. With that, he wanted to offer condolences, prayers, and support for the Richardson family.

10. ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Pederson had nothing to comment on.

Commissioner Berry had nothing further to discuss.

Commissioner Connell had no comment.

Commissioner Reisman congratulated K-9 Officer, Joe Heuser and K-9 Nick. They took second place in the 2023 Space Coast Police K-9 Competition. He asked if there were any updates on the gambling facilities? **CM Minner** answered no and he would get with him after the meeting on that. **Commissioner Reisman** said he noticed a lot of food trucks popping up everywhere, all over the city. Are there any regulations for those? **CM Minner** stated he would need to get with the chief and code enforcement on that.

Mayor Burry pointed out that they were celebrating a birthday today. The city's fearless leader has a birthday today. Everyone wished him a very happy birthday. **CM Minner** thanked everyone. **Mayor Burry** asked how old he was and **CM Minner** answered fifty-three.

11. ADJOURN:

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES NEEDING ASSISTANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY OF THESE PROCEEDINGS SHOULD CONTACT THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT, ADA COORDINATOR, AT 728-9740, 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING.

F.S.S. 286.0105 "If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Commission with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, they will need a record of the proceedings, and that for such purpose they may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based." The City of Leesburg does not provide this verbatim record.

With a motion by Commissioner Reisman and a second by Commissioner Pederson, the meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.