AGENDA MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
CITY HALL, 501 W MEADOW STREET
MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2024 5:30 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

The City of Leesburg Commission held a regular meeting on Monday, January 8, 2024, 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

The invocation and Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America was given at the Organizational Meeting held immediately prior to this meeting.

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

2. PROCLAMATIONS:

A. None

3. PRESENTATIONS:

A. None

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.

Carol Nichols of 2061 Montclair Road said she resides in the community of Old Country Condominiums.

It is a small community. She previously asked for some signs to be installed in her community. The city manager tasked that to the police department. They gave them three really nice signs that said "No Trespassing, Violators will be Prosecuted." It did help stop some people from breaking through their fence. However, it is happening again and it is getting worse. She brought with her a lot of police reports and most of them are from people breaking through the fence and trespassing. It has gotten worse because people are now stealing. The last incident was a couple of weeks ago. A neighbor saw it happen at one o'clock in the morning. That neighbor was outside smoking when he saw a guy come from the grassy area into someone's lanai to steal a bike. He called the police and the police arrived in time to stop that person from stealing the bike. The downside, that person ran across and jumped the fence into Berry Park. That is where they always go. The fence is flimsy. You push it and it breaks. They run through there to get into Berry Park and that is how they get away. They never seem to get caught. They are trespassing because these are private roads. They pay to keep them up. She thanked the Public Works Director and Deputy for fixing the fence that was broken by a tree which fell from the city lift station. The city also put up barbed wire which runs across the city property. That barbed wire stops at their property. She was not there to ask for money, she was seeking permission to install barbed wire along the top of their fence. They do not have much fence, but they are asking for the ability to override the rules due to special circumstances. They live right next to Berry Park, and she is scared because people are going into their lanais and stealing. She asked them to grant permission, so they could install barbed wire. **CM Minner** responded that he would get back with her. He needed to get with the planning and zoning director. They would go out and visit the site. Obviously, the city has to follow the code, but if there is an exception, they will get it figured out.

Elliot Ward of 7112 Main Street thanked the city for painting the garbage cans and for taking the moss out of the trees at his end of town. It looks excellent.

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

Commissioner Reisman moved to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented, and Commissioner Pederson 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 Consent Agenda, as follows:
(Each item has its coordinated resolution number listed below the header)

A. CITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES:

1. Regular meeting held December 11, 2023

2. **Regular meeting held December 18, 2023**

B. PURCHASING ITEMS:

1. **Purchase request by Fleet Services for the purchase of one (1) new side loading refuse truck.**

C. RESOLUTIONS:

1. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing the City Commission to direct Staff to include the addition of wet-slips at the Venetian Cove Marina to future Marina Construction Project designs and proposals; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,762

2. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing applying for and accepting, if awarded, a grant from the Florida Department of Health for the purchase of one (1) set of battery operated, hydraulic rescue tools; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,763

3. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida designating one member and one alternate member to the Lake County Library Advisory Board for a four-year term beginning February 29, 2024, and ending February 28, 2028; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,764

4. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, approving a Proportionate Share Agreement entered into by and between the School Board of Lake County, Florida, TLC Whitemarsh, LLC, and the City of Leesburg, Florida, to allow for payment of Lake County School Impact Fees; and providing an effective date. (Preservation Place Proportionate Share)**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,765

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND NON-ROUTINE ITEMS:

A. SECOND READING OF ORDINANCES

1. An Ordinance of the City of Leesburg, Florida, changing the zoning on approximately 0.08 +/- acres from City of Leesburg SPUD (Planned Unit Development) and R-3 (High Density Residential) to City of Leesburg P (Public) to resolve an encroachment from 314 Canal Street onto 300 Canal Street, for a property generally located south of Pine Street and east of S Canal Street, lying in Section 26, Township 19 South, Range 24 East, Lake County, Florida; and providing an effective date. (CAC Canal Street RZ)

ADOPTED ORDINANCE 24-01

Mayor Burry asked the city attorney to swear everyone in. **CA Watson** asked anyone in attendance who wished to provide testimony on item 6. A.1 (CAC Canal Street - Rezoning) to stand and raise their right. He then swore them in.

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

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

Mayor Burry requested comments from the Commission and the audience.

PZD Miller stated this item was basically a land swap. It would clear up the boundary lines and allow for appropriate future development between the Children's Advocacy Center and the Community Development Corporation. Both organizations are located on Canal Street. This would resolve a building encroachment issue from 314 South Canal to 300 South Canal. It would also correct a split zoning. Split zoning does happen from time to time, and occasionally we see one parcel having two different zoning classifications. They try to avoid that, and they clean them up as they find them. This is a simple, straightforward rezoning and land swap. **Mayor Burry** asked the applicant if she had any comments. From the audience, she responded she would answer questions if the commission had any. There were no further questions or comments.

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 ordinance.

2. An Ordinance of the City of Leesburg, Florida amending the City Code of Ordinances by modifying Chapter 7, Article II - "Building Standards" and Chapter 10, Article II - "Fire Protection and Prevention" to conform with revised Florida Building Code - Eighth Edition (2023); providing for severability; providing for conflicts; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED ORDINANCE 24-02

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

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

Mayor Burry requested comments from the Commission and the audience.

CM Minner said this was a house cleaning item. It will add new modifications from the state legislature for Florida Building Codes. From time to time, these are required to be updated.

Mayor Burry asked for any further comments. There were none.

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 ordinance.

B. FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES

1. None

C. NON-ROUTINE ITEMS

1. Resolutions authorizing the appointment of members to various Leesburg City Boards

a. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida appointing one member to the Leesburg Police Pension Plan Trustee Board for a Four-Year term to expire December 31, 2027; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,766

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.

CM Minner stated this item was for the appointment of one member to the Leesburg Police Pension Plan Trustee Board. It is a four-year term and William "Bud" Bowlin is the current member who wishes to continue serving on this board.

Mayor Burry asked for any further comments or questions. There were none.

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 adopted the resolution.

CM Minner commented that John Summersdorf was recommended by the pension board to be reappointed. This is a five-member board where the members of the pension pick a member and the commission picks a member. They just reappointed Mr. Bowlin and John Summersdorf's appointment is ending. His reappointment is based on the recommendation of the pension board. That item will be on the January 22nd agenda for Commission ratification.

b. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida appointing two members to the Carver Heights / Montclair Area Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Board for a Four-Year term to expire December 31, 2027; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,767

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 stated they need to appoint two members for a four-year term. He asked for any recommendations.

Commissioner Berry asked if she could make a recommendation before the applicants spoke. **Mayor Burry** answered yes. **Commissioner Berry** said these two boards hold significant importance to her district. She has the privilege of having two CRA boards in her district. She was excited to provide her recommendations. She believed it was crucial to formally state and clarify the basis of her recommendations. Having two CRA boards present a unique opportunity to engage and empower enthusiastic, interested and highly qualified individuals who are eager to lead and contribute to their respective community. Her primary goal was to ensure that both the Carver Heights Montclair Area CRA and the Greater Leesburg Community CRA continue to offer residents valuable opportunities to take leadership roles, gain knowledge and collaborate with the city government to enhance the community.

When making her recommendations, she aimed to foster greater community involvement, diverse skills and knowledge sharing in collaborative efforts that will ultimately lead to improvement of the neighborhoods and the well-being of the residents. For the Carver Heights CRA, she recommended Teresa Conner and Robert Alderman Jr. **Mayor Burry** asked if there were any other comments from the commission. There were none.

Robert Alderman Jr. said he resides in Carver Heights on Beecher Street. He would like to offer his valuable input because he lives in that community. He sees what goes on day to day, but he does not see everything because he works. He could add input to contribute to the betterment of the community. He could offer ideas and advice about what could be placed in the community to make it more appealing to others and make it safer. They could provide better access for the elderly because they need an outlet. There are a lot of things that do not have outlets. They could create a better environment to stop trouble from happening. They need to provide better outlets for the elderly and young people. There are a lot of young people in this area, and they need more ways to collaborate. They could come up with ideas to make things better.

Theresa Conner commented that she applied for the Carver Heights CRA. She is a member of the community, and she has resided here for thirty plus years. It would be a pleasure to help the Carver Heights CRA improve and revitalize the area. She could offer a fresh set of eyes. She has been a nurse for forty-two years. She is capable of helping the community. She has assessed the area, and she can help improve upon it. She is willing to work with the commission. Kevin Conner is her brother, and he held a position on this board. Her father is Abraham Conner. He was a builder in the city. She believed he helped build city hall. In closing, her family does a cancer program yearly, and they are committed to serving. They have done this for the past thirteen years. She brought that to the community, so they could learn more about cancer illnesses. They raised close to forty thousand dollars, and they provided that check to the American Cancer Society. She really wants to be a part of this board. She wants to uplift the neighborhood and get it back to where it should be. She wanted to reiterate what Mr. Alderman said because she does have a mission. She would love to see the elderly have somewhere to go during the day. They need to have activities within the community. There could be an elderly Uber that picks them up to do things. She would love to get the younger people involved throughout the area. They would then have more pride in their community, and they would appreciate where they live.

Dr. Erika Jasper stated she was a current member of the Carver Heights CRA. She had a wonderful time ministering with the commission. She thanked them for their excellent leadership. Her position was up for grabs. She loves the City of Leesburg. She is involved in various activities and boards throughout the city. She also serves throughout Lake County. She serves on the Leesburg CDC, and she is the executive on the Homes In Partnership board. She is very involved in the Leesburg community. She knows people have spoken about getting involved, but the real question is what are they doing now to take the CRA to a greater level. She has continuously worked with the CRA. She is involved with Sandra Wilson, the Housing Director, to improve housing for local residents. She has a local scholarship fund where she has blessed some of the students and residents of Leesburg. She was super excited about serving another four years. She would like to move forward to greater things for the beautiful City of Leesburg. She was born and raised in Leesburg. She is a graduate of Leesburg High School, class of 1996. She was excited and asked for the commission's vote since they already have a working relationship.

Orlinda Littlejohn said she was a candidate for this position. She was raised in Leesburg. She was from the Carver Heights area. She has traveled, she lived in Tampa and China. She graduated from Florida A&M and is now back home. There are a lot of things that have not changed in her neighborhood. Erika Jasper worked with her along with Commissioner Berry. She loves the collaboration that these women are doing, and she knows they can do more. She would like to be a part of that. She would like to see the community grow. She believes by partnering with the city commission they could work together to see some true change. If she was on board she would help and assist any way she could. She asked for their consideration.

Mayor Burry thanked all four applicants for coming out and giving a presentation. **Commissioner Pederson** said he would like to see Dr. Erika Jasper reappointed. He would make a motion to nominate her. **CM Minner** pointed out that there was a motion on the floor made by Commissioner Berry to nominate Teresa Conner and Robert Alderman Jr. He asked if she would reiterate her motion.

Commissioner Berry made a motion to nominate Teresa Conner to the Carver Heights Montclair Area Community Redevelopment Agency and Commissioner Connell 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 the nomination.

Commissoner Berry made a motion to nominate Robert Alderman Jr. to the Carver Heights Montclair Area Community Redevelopment Agency and Commissioner Connell seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was:

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

Four yeas, one nay, the Commission approved the nomination. The Commission approved the resolution.

c. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida appointing two members to the Greater Leesburg Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Board for a Four-Year term to expire December 31, 2027; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,768

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.

CM Minner stated there is an east and west side to this CRA. The Greater Leesburg Community Redevelopment Agency is a seven-member body. It is made up of five city commissioners plus two members appointed by the city commission. The appointments will serve a four-year term. The appointed members must reside or conduct business in the CRA as follows; one appointed member must live or conduct business on the east side of Canal Street and the other appointed member must live or conduct business on the west side of Canal Street. They are electing two folks at this time. One for each side. Betty Stevens-Coney currently serves on the east side and James Reid serves on the west side. Both terms ended December 2023. There are two applicants for the east side and three applicants for the west side. **Commissioner Berry** mentioned that she would like to recommend Samantha Ponder for the east side and John Sokol for the west side. **Mayor Burry** asked if there were any other comments. **Commissioner Reisman** stated he would wait until they have heard from the candidates.

Betty Stevens-Coney stated it has been a pleasure to serve on the Greater Leesburg CRA since 2019. It would be her pleasure to continue to serve on this committee and to continue the work they have started. She has been working in the Leesburg area for years. If they look at the definition of work, whether it be a noun or a verb, she could render proof that defines the work. For example, she has been on the Greater Leesburg CRA since the mid 1990s. Serving as a founding charter member, she worked and led the city to demolish over fifty houses and created what is now called the Heritage Village. They created over thirty houses for residents of the area. When it comes to work, she has served at all the schools in the Leesburg area, more particularly on the east side. She had surrendered her time for the work that was started by Jim Archie and Jim Miller. She produced just under fifty presentations about the history of Leesburg. They may remember John Lesley. She hosted that too. She produced all of them. She did the research and the presentation for all of them. She has been serving this community for the majority of her life. She is currently working to create historical markers that would be placed at various locations; like St Stephens African Methodist Episcopal Church which is the site of the first school, as well as Mount Olive Church. They received approval to install bathrooms in John L. Johnson Park. There are presently no bathrooms there. Just the other day, a gentleman told her that he no longer went to that park because there was no place to relieve himself. She would like to continue serving because there is more work that needs to be done around the community. She loves the City of Leesburg, and she loves working in the community.

Mayor Burry asked if Samantha Ponder was in attendance and if she would like to make a presentation. **CM Minner** responded that Samanta Ponder could not make it. However, she contacted the city and expressed her desire to be on the CRA. **Mayor Burry** stated they have heard all the presentations. He asked if there were any other comments from the commission regarding the selection of the east side. There were none.

Commissioner Barry made a motion to appointment Samantha Ponder as the representative for the east side and Commissioner Connell 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 approved the East side nomination.

Mayor Burry stated they would move over to the west side.

Michael Huey stated he was a business owner in downtown Leesburg. He was probably the youngest applicant with the shortest resume. However, that did not stop him from having a desire to help and improve the community. He has built relationships with landlords and local business owners. He has positive relationships with all of them. He plans on living in this town. He would like to spend the rest of his life here. He would like to see the community improved. That is why he applied for this board.

John Sokol said he was a business owner downtown. He has been here since 2016. He owns two businesses, The Warehouse and the Great Chicago Fire Brewery. He was also a landowner. He owns four pieces of property in the downtown area. He has a vested interest on both sides. The downtown is the anchor for a lot of things that happen in Leesburg. He has seen a lot of positive growth, and he would love to see that growth continue. He was a past president of the Downtown Leesburg Business Association, and he now serves as the vice president of that association. He was also a member of the Rotary Club. He believes he could add a lot to this community. With owning property, he has realized the value of a business and how that business should have a voice. He would like to be involved and make a difference in the community. He was raised with the saying that you cannot take something out of the community unless you are willing to put something back in the community. He would like to do that, and he would like to be on this board.

Elliot Ward said he was the owner of Blue Island Sportswear. He was the new kid on the block. He currently serves on the Leesburg Chamber Board. His passion to serve speaks for itself. He has worked with several commissioners. Regardless if he is appointed or not, he will still push to improve the downtown. He lives in Leesburg, and he has invested a lot of money here. He would be more than happy to help.

Commissioner Berry made a motion to appoint John Sokol as the representative for the west side and Commissioner Pederson 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 West side nomination. The Commission passed the resolution.

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

A. None

8. CITY ATTORNEY ITEMS:

CA Watson said he had no items to report on. He wished everyone a Happy New Year and is looking forward to a good 2024.

9. CITY MANAGER ITEMS:

CM Minner said he had some reminders. First, on Friday, January 12th, at 7:30 a.m. at the Venetian Center, they will be having a community breakfast honoring Dr. Martin Luther King. Then on Saturday, January 20th, starting at 11:00 a.m. in downtown Leesburg, they will hold the annual Martin Luther King Parade. Following the parade, there will be a Soulfest downtown from noon till six o'clock. There will be vendors, artists, food, and music. It will be a great celebration honoring Dr. Martin Luther King. He hoped everyone could make it. He also noted that House Bill 1277 was filed by Representative Cabrera out of South Florida. This is a repeat of the anti-municipal utility bill that was filed last year. More specifically, this is the electric utility legislation that was put before the state legislature last year. It currently does not have a senate companion bill. Fingers are crossed, and hopefully we will escape this. He will provide future updates. The Florida Municipal Electric Association (FMEA) and Florida Municipal Power Association (FMPA) are on it. He has spoken with Ryan Matthews, a lobbyist, about this, and he plans to speak with him again this week. This will be a bill to watch as the session moves forward.

10. ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Pederson had no comment.

Commissioner Berry had nothing to comment on.

Commissioner Connell had no comment.

Commissioner Reisman questioned Bikefest and the discussion they had regarding alcohol. **CM Minner** answered it was forthcoming. There is a draft resolution but, due to the holidays, it has not moved forward yet. They should see it in the next meeting or two.

Mayor Burry had nothing to discuss.

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.

Commissioner Reisman made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Pederson. The meeting adjourned at 6:09 p.m.