AGENDA MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
CITY HALL, 501 W MEADOW STREET
MONDAY, AUGUST 26, 2024 5:30 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

The City of Leesburg Commission held a regular meeting on Monday, August 26, 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, Deputy City Clerk (DCC) Anna Rottermond, 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:

A. None

Mayor Burry read a proclamation into record recognizing City Clerk, J. Andi Purvis for her dedication and commitment to the City of Leesburg and its residents, and encouraged all citizens to join in extending a wholehearted congratulation on her completion of the demanding curriculum required to attain the Master Municipal Clerk designation.

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.

Frazier Marshall 2106 Angelfish Loop thanked the City of Leesburg, the City Commission and the Airport Manager for the First Annual Fly-In. It was very good and the people he talked to really enjoyed themselves. He also thanked Commissioner Reisman because he was involved with the youth. He shared very good information. **Commissioner Reisman** gave kudos to the airport manager. She took this idea and ran with it, and she did a phenomenal job. It would not have been the success it was without her. We totaled three hundred and fifty plus cars, eight hundred plus people, and we had fifty to sixty airplanes come in. It was a hustling morning and Jack from Avcon came. He wanted to publicly thank her because she did a great job. He is looking forward to doing it again next year.

James Hobgood thanked the public works department as well as the recreation department for assisting with their first annual Revive Night of Worship, which was held Thursday on the front lawn of city hall. There were about three hundred and fifty people who came out. It was a great night. They had to put up a giant LED wall along with some other stuff. The public works guys did a great job. He publicly thanked them for helping to make it a successful event. He also wanted to ask about his next course of action, whether it would be a sit down so they could talk about the homeless problem in the downtown. He has been in business for five months, and he has had three major run-ins with homeless folks downtown. One of which culminated last Friday when someone walked into their establishment and took a service member's purse and ran out the door. He was not the only one downtown, and he did not want to point a finger. He simply wanted to ask the city what the plan was for handling these issues. Does he need to have a conversation with the police chief? He wanted to come here on public record asking the commission to start a conversation about what can be done to ensure the safety of the business owners and citizens. They continually have folks coming to them saying they do not feel safe coming downtown. Their congregation has a lot of senior citizens, and they do not feel safe coming downtown because of the homeless folks. They have homeless folks sitting at their front door when they arrive between 6:30 to 7:30 in the morning. There is one that sleeps outside his front door and another one who sits on the park bench across the street the entire day. He was there as a concerned business owner to ask the commission if there was a plan of action moving forward or could we start a conversation about it. He understands there are two sides to these types of things, but he wanted to start that conversation.

Elliot of Blue Island Sportswear, 7112 West Main Street said he was on the Board of Directors for the Leesburg Chamber, and he chairs the downtown entertainment for the Downtown Leesburg Business Association. He knows the city has a long-term plan for parking, because the minute that word comes out everybody's eyes roll, and we are all tired of hearing about it. He hears it every day from customers that come in because they cannot find a parking spot. He was there to speak about the Orange Avenue parking lot. **Mayor Burry** explained that this item is on the agenda, and it will be discussed later. The public comment section of the agenda is open for things not on the agenda. They would give him ample time to speak about this later.

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. FY 25 Budget Workshop held July 2, 2024

2. FY 25 Budget Workshop held July 9, 2024

3. FY 25 Budget Workshop held July 11, 2024

4. FY 25 Budget Workshop held July 15, 2024

5. Regular meeting held August 12, 2024

B. PURCHASING ITEMS:

1. None

C. RESOLUTIONS:

1. Resolutions authorizing execution of FAA FY 2024 Airport Infrastructure Grant Agreement No. 3-12-0042-032-2024 and execution of a Task Order with AVCON, Inc., for professional services, related to the Wildlife Hazard Management Plan; and providing an effective date.

a. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute FAA FY 2024 Airport Infrastructure Grant Agreement No. 3-12-0042-032-2024, for the Wildlife Hazard Management Plan; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,875

b. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a Task Order with AVCON, Inc., for professional services for the Wildlife Hazard Management Plan, for the Leesburg International Airport; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,876

2. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a Lease Agreement with Family Furniture & Carpet, Inc., for the commercial premises described as 8626 U.S. Highway 441, Leesburg, Florida, 34788; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,877

3. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute an agreement with Cutrale Citrus Juices USA, Inc. terminating the Interconnection and Parallel Operation Agreement; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,878

4. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, accepting and approving a plat for Hodges Reserve Phase 1, a subdivision of the City of Leesburg, Florida, being a portion of Section 31, Township 20 South, Range 25 East, Lake County, Florida, and accepting and dedicating to the use of the public any easements or public places shown thereon as being dedicated to the public; and providing an effective date. (Hodges Reserve Phase 1)**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,879

5. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, accepting a Corrective Utility Easement to the City of Leesburg from Michael Stoyanovich and Janet Cary Stoyanovich, for the purpose of granting the City an Easement over the property described therein; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,880

6. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, accepting a Utility Easement to the City of Leesburg from RK United Properties, LLC for the purpose of granting the City an Easement over the property described therein; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,881

7. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, accepting a Utility Easement to the City of Leesburg from Samuel Clayton Rector and Annette Demeree Rector for the purpose of granting the City an Easement over the property described therein; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,882

8. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, accepting a Utility Easement affecting the property described therein from BW Leesburg 44 Main, LLC, joined by Valley National Bank; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,883

9. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, authorizing the Leesburg Police Department to apply for, and if awarded, accept the Grant from the Wal-Mart Spark Good Community Grant Program for Youth Outreach Services; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,884

10. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, pursuant to Section 196.1978(3)(o), Florida Statutes, electing to not exempt property under section 196.1978(3)(d)1.a., Florida Statutes, commonly known as the "Live Local Act Property Tax Exemption;" and providing for an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,885

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND NON-ROUTINE ITEMS:

A. SECOND READING OF ORDINANCES

1. **None**

B. FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES

1. **None**

C. NON-ROUTINE ITEMS

1. Presentation - U.S. Highway 441/27 CRA FY 24/25 Budget Recap

CM Minner started by saying, as discussed during the budget workshop meetings, we need to revisit a couple of different divisions of the budget. For U.S. Highway 441/27 CRA, it was decided to schedule this discussion during a regular meeting to save time. After going through this, they may want to direct some action or no action at all. With that, this CRA is sitting on a lot of cash because that was the plan for the last ten years. To recap, remember the bottom fell out of this budget the day we signed the bond back in 2010, and we decided to stash cash away to cover the bond and we recalibrated the baseline of the CRA. That was one of their great accomplishments. This CRA now generates cash, and it currently sits at $4.5 million dollars.

Referring to a slide, this CRA now brings in pretty solid revenue. It is one of the strongest growing CRA's we have. This CRA brings in about three million dollars a year, and we stash that cash. There were a couple of miscellaneous projects, and we talked about some different operating expenses. We have operating expenses along with some miscellaneous stuff that includes the South Leesburg Advertisement Program that was put in this budget to try and market South Leesburg. We have the debt payment, which is a big one, and we talked about transferring two million dollars to help the Susan Street project. Moving to the next slide, he showed the debt. They have a couple of million dollars left to consider. They could leave it there or modify it a little bit. The only new news he has received is that the county is teetering a little bit, and he just received that word today. One of the biggest shifts we did was move money from U.S. Highway 441/27 CRA for the Susan Street project. Now, sitting at the county's desk is an approved $1 million dollar grant from the TDC fund. Tomorrow it was scheduled for a $2 million dollar modified TDC grant, but it appears the county will kick the can down on that because they have not finished their CIP funding. So, will it be $2 million dollars in programming? That is the question, and we will find out more in October. If we lose funding from the county TDC for the grant, this is where he would come back to fill in the budget gap. He recommended that they continue to march forward.
Another new piece of information that came in was that the federal government gave a new rule on the American Recovery Act funds and that money needs to be allocated by December 31, 2024, and it needs to be spent by December 31, 2025. The definition of allocated is starting to tighten up because they want to see contractual stuff. Whether somebody comes in and shows us a contract is still unclear. However, the biggest pieces of money left that need to be spent from the American Recovery Act funds are the two million dollars for Susan Street and the one million dollars for the marina. He has spoken with the public works director and the recreation director about this, because we need to expedite getting these projects to procurement so we can have a signed contract by the end of the year. He was pretty confident that they could do that. As long as we have a signed contract by the end of the year, we will have that money spent by the end of next year. Now, whether this is a blue or red thing and depending on who wins the White House, that could dictate another change in the policy. However, right now, it is anybody's guess. Those two things are out there floating, which puts a little bit of a cloud on funding. He also had some conversations with Commissioner Reisman about some sign grant increases that are not in this budget yet. That concluded the presentation.

Commissioner Berry asked about the American Recovery Act money that was given to the two CDC's. Will these be affected and has that money been allocated and spent? **CM Minner** answered that the money had been allocated and spent. They were provided $750,000 each. He believes the Leesburg CDC has pretty much spent all of it and the West Leesburg CDC has a lot of that in reserve for their one apartment complex or duplex concept that they were talking about. However, from the definition of the federal government, a contract showing how it's spent, we have. **Mayor Burry** asked if there were any other questions. **Commissioner Reisman** said it would be wise to hold off on the sign grant program until we receive confirmation from the county. At this time, he would hold off on that request. **Commissioner Pederson** questioned the two million dollars for Susan Street. Are we moving the funds or just budgeting? **CM Minner** replied they were just budgeting. **Mayor Burry** asked if there were any other questions. There were none. He asked if they needed consensus. **CM Minner** answered no. He has the consensus now. He will provide the budget in this format as they discussed during the budget workshop. **Mayor Burry** wanted to confirm that the two million dollars would be held in reserve. **CM Minner** agreed.

2. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, authorizing the conversion of Orange Street Parking into 3-hour Parking Only; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 11,886

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 Reisman said he was fine with this. However, he wanted to make sure we keep up with enforcement. There are other parking areas downtown being abused, and if we relax a little on it, people will retreat back to their old ways. We need to keep up with enforcement. **Commissioner Pederson** stated this was positive for the downtown and he fully supports it. **Mayor Burry** commented that the United Methodist Church at the corner of Ninth and Main Street has come to the Downtown Business Community to let them know that employees of downtown businesses are more than welcome to park in their parking lot at no cost. They would enter off of Lee Street and there are two rows of parking behind what is now Lake Prep School. They have direct parking that they own. It is on Lee Street, it wraps around and comes back to Main. They have been very nice to say employees can park there at no charge. This will free up more space for customers in the downtown as long as they can get the employees and owners to utilize it. He was all in favor of the parking lot off Orange Street being 3-hour parking rather than all-day parking.

Elliot of Blue Island Sportswear, 7112 West Main Street thanked them for considering the 3-hour parking on Orange Street. He went to Pastor Dave, and they were looking at seventy plus parking spots. He parks there and walks. However, the city needs to enforce the parking to change the culture. We need people to come downtown for the businesses to thrive and continue. It was not just him, because he hears it every day from customers and other business owners. Seventy plus parking spots is a substantial thing. He gave a shout-out to Pastor Dave for letting them do that. He has labeled the parking spots with a blue sticker, so people will know. They can also park at the Deaf and Blind, which is even closer. So, for the people who park there all day, they can take a few more steps.

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.

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

None

8. CITY ATTORNEY ITEMS:

CA Watson commented at the last meeting that there was an issue regarding Blurock and an amendment to extend the closing and the governmental approval period. That amendment has been signed and delivered. Everything is moving forward according to that contract. He wished everyone a great rest of the week.

9. CITY MANAGER ITEMS:

CM Minner wanted to follow up on the city attorney's comment. He had the opportunity to talk with Dan Tatro and Joe Schuemann from Blurock. They are anxious to move forward. At the end of the day, the deal will come down to two major issues and, hopefully, they can get them resolved. First is the alignment on College Avenue, with their entrance and the college campus driveway entry into their big parking lot, which is just north of Highway 441. That is a really important issue. The county did not want them to be aligned because they were worried about queuing, which would kick the common driveway more to the north and that would be a problem for them. As they move more to the north, they have to shift their big building to the south and if they have to move that building south more, there will be height issues. So, hopefully that gets squared away. There are two more issues, one being in their due diligence. They need to provide some further traffic data in order for the county to change their preliminary recommendation. The other issue is a requirement for additional stormwater. With this stormwater issue, St. John is asking for more stormwater because they want absolutely zero run off going into Silver Lake. That pushes their issue a little bit more than what they thought. They have been back talking with him and the airport manager about easements and different things they can do to push and/or double their stormwater over into the runway protection zone (RPZ). That will come back before the airport board and St John's. They are talking about different easements and all sorts of different stuff. Those are the big issues, and hopefully they can figure out how to make this work so they can get the deal closed.

A. Power Cost Adjustment Increase October 1, 2024 ($10 / 1000 KWH to $20 / 1000 KWH)

CM Minner said even though this was an administrative matter, he wanted to bring it to their attention and give an explanation for why they needed to increase the power cost. He did not have an opportunity to put this before the electric advisory board due to scheduling issues, but this needs to be implemented as quickly as possible.

Referring to a slide, he said, we try to keep $3 million dollars in a reserve account for the power cost adjustment. The green line represents the balance from the start of the fiscal year and as we cross the black line, which is $3 million dollars, that is not uncommon as long as we see us hanging out around $3 million dollars. Now, what is alarming is, if we keep the current power cost adjustment rate of one penny a kilowatt, which is ten dollars per one thousand kilowatts, we will see that dropping through the end of the fiscal year. The fall looks good, but as we get into the wacky winter months when our demand is high, we see that number going negative and the trend continues as we get back into the hot months. The numbers continue to drop. That is a trend that we cannot make. He would go back to when we increased the power cost to seven cents. We increased that late and dramatically because we were sitting on a substantial amount of cash in the electric fund. However, the electric fund cannot sustain any type of decrease in a negative value. When the power cost of three million dollars goes away, that means we have to go into the electric fund general reserve, and they do not have the cash to sustain paying the power bill. We had come up with an amount that needed to rewrite the ship and that number was two cents a kilowatt. Instead of a power cost of ten dollars, it would be twenty dollars, which is represented by the yellow line on the chart. Unfortunately, what we see, is if we apply the two cents in October, we stabilize the account, but as the peak starts going wacky and life happens, the number starts to drop to zero in out-years. That is not enough of a cap to keep that balance, because the cycle is the spring and fall months, which is where we have good months, and in the winter and summer months we have bad months. What we see in the 18-month projection is an inability to maintain $3 million dollars in our savings account. He recommended that with effect from October 1st we increase to two cents and tentatively, in April, halfway through the fiscal year, we increase to 2.5 cents. Right now, our rate for 1,000 kilowatts is $117.94. For the first thousand, the base bill right now is $107.00. We would make the rate per 1,000 kilowatts $127.94. On the website we have a chart that compares our competitive advantage or disadvantage with other regional utilities and, essentially, at $127.94, we would still be a very competitive utility in this region. We would be significantly cheaper than Duke, which hangs at about $160.00, and we would be about hand in hand with SECO. Mount Dora has the most competitive rate right now, and they are hanging at about $115.00. Although this is bad news, competitively we are still a very competitive utility. If he had to pinpoint one reason for that, it would be transmission costs. There was a chart in the packet, and he talked about it briefly in his report, but basically what we see is about a 20% increase in transmission costs, and that 20% increase translates to about $2 to $3 million dollars. When we hang out around $3 million dollars, and we get hit with another $2 to $3 million dollar increase, that is where we see it. He would pinpoint transmission costs, and that goes through Duke and FPL, which have just increased. So, pretty much when we went down to one cent their transmission cost increased, and two months later we are seeing the effects. If they have been reading the news, we see that Duke just filed for another increase at the Public Service Commission, which was approved. The Public Service Commission bragged about it a little bit because it was not as much as they wanted, but it was still an increase. So, unfortunately, we are seeing some crazy stuff happen in the electric industry. Unfortunately, barring the increase, this fund cannot sustain it, so we have to increase the power cost adjustment. The increase will be scheduled for October 1st, and we will get notice out to the public. We will get a press release out, and do an update on the Leesburg Rate Watch Section of our website. Staff will notify the customers through these two methods informing them that the rate is going up.

Commissioner Pederson said, referring to the transmission lines, are they impacting all municipal providers? He was referring to communities who purchase from FMPA. **CM Minner** replied yes. Pretty much every municipal electric utility uses Duke and/or FPL for their transmission. **Commissioner Pederson** commented that he wanted that to be clear so the public understood. **Commissioner Reisman** asked if we lowered rates too quickly and if that put us in this situation? **CM Minner** answered no. Even if we kicked this can down the road, eventually we would have to do an increase. What we did was, in the hot summer months, by lowering the rate, we gave our customers a break, and we gave them money back. Anytime we can return money to the rate payers, we need to do that. We do not want to see a bouncing yo-yo power cost adjustment, but there is a pretty fine line between how much money we keep versus how much money we give back to the customers. Our strategy has been to give it back to the customers as soon as we can. Hence, the two-tiered approach. We did not want to jack it up now to two and a half or three cents, because we would be sitting on a hoard of money because at this time it would be too much. We are trying to do it incrementally at a rate that we can sustain for a six-month period. That is reasonable. **Commissioner Berry** asked if the increase for April or March was for two and a half cents? **CM Minner** answered that two cents would be October 1st. October is strategic because it gives us enough time to notify customers and October is when the AC starts to get turned off. Hopefully, we will see the kilowatt consumption go down even though the rate is going up, which equals about the same net bill. There could be a number of factors in the next six months to where we can kick the can down the road come April, but based on our projections we are not seeing it. If we saw some indicators that allow us to push off the rate increase, he would be back saying we can push that off. For example, if we have a great winter where it is super mild consistently, and we do not peak out, that will help push down the projected losses. Referring to a chart, he showed the matrix for the power cost adjustments. It was a crazy chart, but that was the matrix for how they came up with this every month. At the top of the chart he showed the fixed energy costs, which are the ones that change. Again, the city's bill resembles the demand customer bill, because it is all based on demand. If the whole community peaks out high at 125/118 megawatts, then we will see really high bills even with high consumption. If we see that peak demand stays around 98, 100, or 105, then that is nice consistent usage and the utilities will make a little bit of money. Those are the factors that will help keep the power costs down or delay. If we get a cold snap in December, January, and February, those are pretty indicative months, and we do it based on history. If it is mild, we can probably kick the April can down the road. If it is cold, then no, they cannot. **Mayor Burry** asked if there were any other comments or questions. There were none. He asked if this would be brought back? **CM Minner** replied he would bring it back in April and report accordingly. Whether it is good or bad, they will hear from him. If it is as projected on the charts, they will hear from him towards April about an increase.

B. Consider Pickle Ball Courts

CM Minner said he and the mayor received an email from the chairman of the recreation advisory board, and before we put the FY 25 budget to bed next month, he wanted to know if they should consider the pickleball concept. Obviously, this is a fad. It has been in the region and the county has built pickleball courts at Pear Park and other communities are putting them in with lights. They are in The Villages everywhere. It is a constant topic with the recreation board to the extent that they received a letter from the chairman asking the commission to consider building pickleball courts. If they consider building pickleball courts, there are options. One option is to take out the tennis courts that are on Palmetto. There are four of them, and the ratio is one tennis court to two pickleball courts. If they converted the Palmetto tennis courts into pickleball courts that cost would be about $100,000. That would be the super easy solution. The other side of the equation is, while there is not a lot of tennis being played on those courts right now, the folks who do play there, if those courts are gone, will come in and complain. That includes the high school, the USTA, and First Academy. Those are shaping up to be our last tennis courts in town, so before we get rid of those tennis courts, we should look at other options. This would be the less expensive option, but it may not be the better option. Another option is to build pickleball courts, and we have property where the old public works shed was just north of Lakefront TV. It would be Second Street and Palmetto, in that block. We could get six to eight pickleball courts constructed on that existing property. That ballpark estimate is about half a million dollars for new pickleball courts. For funding, instead of putting it in the FY 25 budget, they should fund it this year. However, there would be ramifications to that and we talked about this with Main Street. We were looking to bringing over some DST money to do Main Street and shift over Downtown CRA money to do parking. We are sitting on about $1.5 million dollars of DST money that remains unspent, and we wanted to keep that in our pocket for downtown expenses. If they want to build pickleball courts, that is where they would grab that money from this fiscal year. All he needs is a consensus today if they want pickleball courts, or they can wait and think about it. They could come back to the next meeting to talk about it further. However, that is where he would take that allocation from. So, instead of sitting on $1.5 million dollars of unallocated DST money for the downtown, he would pinch off half a million dollars of DST money to build pickleball courts, or they could continue on the road and push pickleball courts for another year. The hope of the recreation board committee was that the city commission would talk about it because they know it is a want. It does not mean they have to do it this year, but it is a want.

Mayor Burry asked about the property where the old shed was. If they were to build brand-new courts, were there any limitations to the property for what it could be used for? Are there problems with diesel fuel contamination? Are there things we cannot do there, where pickleball would be fine? **CM Minner** answered they would probably need to do a survey. **Mayor Burry** mentioned the only reason he brought it up was because they talked for years about the Palmetto/Second Street corridor to Venetian Gardens and how they could tie in Main Street to have better traffic in that area. He does not play pickleball, but one of his kids plays. He plays five nights, and he drives to Pear Park to play. He knows it is a big deal and building them close to facilities that serve beverages after playing pickleball would be very good for the downtown. **Commissioner Reisman** added that there are public restrooms located near there by Lakefront TV. **Mayor Burry** agreed. **Commissioner Pederson** commented that people have been bending his ear about pickleball. It was on his wish list coming into budget, but he did not want to risk sacrificing parking downtown. Parking has been pushed back over the years, so he kept quiet about pickleball. We have been talking about parking for years, ever since we made the Downtown Master Redevelopment plan. He would hate to see that money go elsewhere. He does not want to lose the parking. He would rather get the parking done and push pickleball back a year. There was mention of tennis courts, but are the shuffleboard courts being used? **CM Minner** responded that the shuffleboard court is the same phenomenon as tennis courts. Even though there is not a huge contingent that are using them now, in the winter months we do have a pretty good contingent. If they opted to get rid of shuffleboard courts for pickleball, we would have an equal argument from a different group of people. **Commissioner Pederson** wanted to know if there could be some give and take because his first reaction was about whether they could convert two tennis courts to four pickleball courts. They could keep two courts and have four pickleball courts. They could maybe take some of the space from shuffleboard, but he does not even know how many shuffleboard courts we have. **CM Minner** stated splitting the baby is something he loves to do, because they see him do it all the time, but in this case he would not split the baby because there are groups that use them. When they are used, they are used. **Mayor Burry** stated they need those four tennis courts for the high schools. **Commissioner Pederson** asked if the recommendation was to build them to the north. **CM Minner** agreed. **Commissioner Pederson** said if we had the money he would love it, but he does not want to jeopardize parking because it has been kicked to the curb for four years now. **CM Minner** remarked that they have the $1.6 million dollars in the budget to be approved in September for parking with spillover money that is sitting in the DST fund of $1.5 million dollars. If they took half a million dollars and put it towards pickleball, they would still have $1 million dollars to supplement parking. **Commissioner Pederson** pointed out that he was afraid the $1.5 to $1.6 million dollars would not get it. Parking is important to him and the downtown, and it has been pushed back. This was his number one priority this year for budgeting, and it needed to be done. He kept his mouth shut on pickleball even though he fully supports pickleball, but we need to get the parking done. We can push pickleball courts back a year. **Commissioner Reisman** agreed with Commissioner Pederson that we need to get the parking done. Then we could move forward with a pickleball. He believes pickleball is needed, but we have been pushing parking off for a long time. **Commissioner Pederson** wanted to know how many pickleball courts could be built to the north of the building. **CM Minner** answered about six to eight courts. **Commissioner Berry** commented that she knows Commissioner Pederson's priority is parking, but her priority still sits with home improvements for the area. However, pickleball courts are definitely a major need and people do play. Pear Park is a good distance away and this would add value to the downtown area as well as the Venetian Center. We should also consider adding some at the teen center over in the Carver Heights area if that was an option. **Commissioner Pederson** said, going off Mayor Burry's comment, he remembers years ago there was talk about connecting the Venetian Center to downtown. If we do build pickleball courts to the north, can we start thinking about how that will work? Years ago there was a dream of a walkway or bike path type route from the downtown to the Venetian Center. **Mayor Burry** stated the courts would be right along the trail to begin with, so they could go down Canal Street from the trail and get to the Venetian Gardens. **Commissioner Pederson** remarked years ago that the Leesburg Partnership had a grandiose plan, and there was talk of a walkway/bike path and there was talk about going across Dixie. He was just going off the Mayor's idea of creating a walkway to get people to come downtown after they play. **Commissioner Connell** wanted to know how many parking spaces they would add to the downtown for $1.6 million dollars. **CM Minner** said he did not have that number. The additional parking areas would be a negative because they have to remove non-conforming spots along Main Street and the side streets. He believes that number was eighteen to twenty, so if they took away all the non-conforming spaces they would lose about twenty spaces, and he hoped to get those back. For a lack of a better area, we are looking at The Partnership and Magnolia area. The concept was to knock down that building, which is about 5,000 square feet, so we could pick up a few more spots. We also have a grassy area at the southeast corner that goes around the water tower. Maybe we can enter into a partnership with Life Stream in hopes of picking up a good number of centralized parking spots and have them designed properly. That way, after losing the non-conforming spots, we will gain overall. Until we put the pencil on paper, he does not know what the number will be. **Commissioner Berry** asked if it was possible that the parking might be more than $1.6 million dollars? **CM Minner** answered yes. **Commissioner Connell** wanted to know where the additional money would come from. **CM Minner** replied it would come from the DST money that they did not spend on pickleball. **Commissioner Connell** said he thought the $500,000 would come out of the 1.6 million dollars to spend on pickleball. **CM Minner** agreed and said that would leave $1 million dollars, so there would be money there for parking if we overflowed. **Commissioner Connell** questioned if we spent $500,000 on pickleball, what does that leave for the downtown parking? **CM Minner** responded it would be about $1 million dollars above the $1.6 million dollars that is currently budgeted. **Mayor Burry** remarked that $1.6 million dollars is budgeted and $1.5 million dollars is in reserve, so if we took $500,000 for pickleball we would only have one million dollars left for parking. **CM Minner** agreed. **Commissioner Berry** asked if it went over the anticipated $1.6 million dollars with the additional DST holding, how would they handle that? **CM Minner** said they would take it out of that $1 million dollars. **Mayor Burry** commented with respect to the tennis courts. We have eight courts because we have four on Palmetto, and we have a few at the Susan Street complex, but once Susan Street is completed there will be no tennis courts there. **CM Minner** agreed. **Mayor Burry** continued to say that resurfacing the existing four to move to pickleball would not be the best, because even though pickleball is very popular it would take the tennis courts to nothing. That would not be fair. He was still in favor of the location being in that corridor, but he understood the parking issue. **Commissioner Berry** asked if one tennis court would make two pickleball courts. **Mayor Burry** agreed.

10. ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Connell had nothing to comment on.

Commissioner Reisman said he wanted to follow up on where we were with code enforcement and making some changes to the code for improving the corridors. He thanked Commissioner Berry for coming out on Saturday. She came out with school board representative Mollie Cunningham on Saturday for the Fly In. It was a huge success. On September 21st, we will have the Leesburg Blue Foundation 5K at the airport. Even if you do not walk or run, you can still come out and show support for our Leesburg

Police Department through that foundation.

Commissioner Pederson had no comment this evening.

Commissioner Berry gave kudos to the public works team for coming through and providing assistance to constituents. She got a great response for their actions last week. She then questioned agenda item 5.C.3, is it possible to make a recommendation to establish a contractual agreement with Cutrale if no business comes in there after a year that they are responsible for knocking the buildings down so they will not measure up to being blight? Can that building just sit there forever if no one comes? **CM Minner** replied yes. It can sit there forever if no one comes. The city or municipal corporation will not have any authority to order demolition or removal of a facility unless it is found to be in blighted condition such that it is not remedied. Basically, the law says they must be provided every opportunity to remedy and modify the codes as they go along. The closing of that facility was a concern, but he can assure the commission that they are doing their best to get it marketed through LEAD and Lake County Economic Development. The facility has been closed essentially since July 31st, which was when they stopped taking gas service. At the end of the day, we will have to depend on Cutrale to take care of their property, and hopefully they are looking to market it, or maybe they have plans to refurbish it and get back in there when their business model says so. Speaking frankly, and directly, we have to embrace the fact that the facility in all likelihood will not be used for citrus. Citrus has moved south of Highway 60 these days. We have not picked fruit in Lake County since way before his arrival. So, the fact that Cutrale used that facility as part of their manufacturing process, trucking everything up from Polk County was great. We were lucky to have had that facility open as long as we did. As a side note, when we had issues with billing and those types of things with Cutrale, we had some payouts on the gas side and the electric side, where we had to pay for some billing errors. As part of the settlement agreement, we tried to stipulate to them that they would remain open, but they were very non-committal to that. That was six or seven years ago. Unfortunately, at the end of the day, that is Cutrale property, and they will have to follow the codes and rules of the community. All indications say they will. **Commissioner Pederson** wanted to know if they were going to list it for sale or were they just mothballing it for now? **CM Minner** replied that he did not know. **Commissioner Berry** asked if one year was reasonable for marketing to somebody else or another industry to come through? **CM Minner** answered that if that facility was refurbished and somebody came there within the next year, that would be a coo. However, we need to embrace the fact that the facility will remain empty for some time. **Commissioner Reisman** wanted to ensure that code enforcement stays on top of it because a lot of their overflow lots are grass and there is a lot of property there that needs to be addressed. Some of it is already getting overgrown. Code enforcement needs to get on that property to be sure that it does not deteriorate more than it already is. **Commissioner Pederson** believed they were motivated to sell. At least that is what he hoped. **Commissioner Berry** finalized her comments by reminding everyone that in District One they will be providing neighborhood preparedness information for hurricanes or disasters that may strike. They will also hold a voter registration drive. Deputy Chief Ryan and Captain Stevenson will be there with Lake County Emergency Office Manager Megan Milanese, who will give a presentation. It will be held on Thursday, August 29th, from 6-8pm at the Door of Hope Ministries located at 1111 Pamela Street. They are partnering with the Leesburg CDC East and the Leesburg CDC West. She extended an invitation to anyone wishing to attend.

Mayor Burry had no further comment.

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 Berry, the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.