

**AGENDA MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
VENETIAN CENTER, 1 DOZIER COURT
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2021 5:30 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The City of Leesburg Commission held a regular meeting on Monday, September 13, 2021, at the Venetian Center. Mayor Christian called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with the following members present:

Commissioner Jimmy Burry
Commissioner Jay Connell
Commissioner Dan Robuck
Commissioner Mike Pederson
Mayor John Christian

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

INVOCATION

Mayor Christian 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

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.

There were no public comments offered this evening.

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.1 and 5.C.3

5.B.1 = Change order to the professional services agreement with CPH, Inc. for the conceptual design of the Pine Street Improvements and engineering services as part of the downtown improvements; and

5.C.3 = Proportionate Share Agreement entered into by and between The School Board of Lake County, Hanover 623 Holdings, LLC., and the City of Leesburg to allow for payment of Lake County School Impact Fees.

Commissioner Burry moved to adopt the Consent Agenda except for **5.B.1 and 5.C.3**, and Commissioner Robuck seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Robuck	Yes
Commissioner Burry	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Mayor Christian	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. Joint Workshop held August 12, 2021 between City Commission & Airport Advisory Board

2. Regular meeting held August 23, 2021

B. PURCHASING ITEMS:

1. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a change order to the professional services agreement with CPH, Inc. for the conceptual design of

the Pine Street Improvements and engineering services as part of downtown improvements for an amount not to exceed \$297,020.00; and providing an effective date.

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 10,909

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

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

Mayor Christian requested comments from the Commission and the audience.

Commissioner Connell stated that he understands this is part of the Main Street Master Plan, but we are talking about spending two hundred and ninety-seven thousand dollars on engineering before we even get to the project, which is going to be close to three million dollars. He would like to see some other projects proposed within the City so the Commission could make a decision on what best benefits the community as a whole and what would give the most bang for the buck. This is a lot of money to spend on one road that just connects Canal to Lake Street. We have more needy projects in the city and he would like to have a choice of where we should spend three million dollars and not just earmark it for one road. **Commissioner Pederson** commented that he was still getting used to government prices, but the two ninety-seven did not shock him. It is a high number, but he asked if three million dollars really was the number to fix Pine Street. He remembers discussing it during the Master Plan process, but he thought it was going to be around one million; three million dollars made him sit up in his chair. **CM Minner** answered that currently we do not have the engineer's estimate, but staff thinks it may be in the ballpark of two million dollars. Back when we did the Downtown Master Plan in 2018, there was a lot of work put into that and we received a lot of public feedback, which included the Partnership, Chamber of Commerce and different downtown groups. LPG put all that information together for us and we came up with a number of projects. There was the Pine Street concept, the Market Street concept was another as far as streets go. Then we broke it down into smaller projects, like pocket parks in the downtown area and trails. We also talked about the gateways, the Third Street gateway and the gateway located at Canal Street and Dixie Avenue, which we voted to pass on. For the budget price, we are looking at two to three million dollars for construction and engineering. If you want to move forward with the project, then you should approve this. That would be the next step. We are currently finishing up a concept on this now and that concept is about 80% complete. Before making a presentation to the Commission on this publicly, he thought this was the next correct step. Then he would go back to the interest group meeting to get more feedback before the next Commission meeting prior to the review. He does not think anything is out of sequence with paying for the contract. We negotiated the best price we could with CPH, Inc.; it is not crazy high, and this has been deemed an important project. He added that this came from the master plan and it is a project the community envisioned and directed. We also have to remember the safety and economic development aspects of this project. Remember the terminus of this project is from Lake Street to Canal Street. On Lake Street, a big stakeholder of this is the hospital and they want to make sure improvements are made to Pine Street because there is a lot of traffic in front of the hospital with pedestrians. They are looking at raised tables and the concept of a roundabout at Rambo Street and Pine Street for traffic calming. Moving back into the commercial corridor of Pine Street towards Canal Street, we get into the commercial and the poolside aspect of this, so this project fits into the scope of the improvements we are making to the area. Frankly, this is a blessing because when we put together the Downtown Master Plan his overall concern was how we were going to fund these projects. With the Pine Street and Market Street concepts being the big animals in this design and with

the American Recover Act monies, Pine Street fits really well. Plus, we will accomplish one of the major goals of the Master Plan and we can use federal dollars to complete it. In turn, that will help us tackle other projects in the Master Plan that do not qualify for the American Recovery Act monies. Now, why should we use American Recovery Act monies on this? Well, the components fit nicely into what the funds are supposed to be used for. First, it is a stormwater improvement project, it is a project that benefits those affected most by Covid and the most important piece is that it is a minority community.

That is a big part of the American Recovery Act. We have businesses in that corridor that have been affected by Covid and this would reinvigorate that corridor and help the system. There is almost a catch-all in the American Recovery Act for money spent on a census track where there is a majority minority population. So, for those reasons, these pieces fit nicely together. He appreciates Commissioner Connell's concerns about other projects, but this project is a little bit of a carryover from previous Commissions. It is one that he believes should be knocked off the books. This is a place that we need and want to invest in to improve on blight and other conditions. We need to make it safer because Pine Street is a historic corridor. We have also invested significantly there with the new pool. **Commissioner Pederson** added, with the price, he was not going to grumble anymore. In the master plan, Market Street and Pine Street were his priorities along with the Commission's priority. Now with the pool there, we have to fix that road. **CM Minner** said that is another part of this project. He does not think it was written in stone when we chose the Pine Street site for the pool, but there was the concept of reinvesting in Pine Street and improving that corridor. Again, he understands where Commissioner Connell is coming from, but there has been a shift in the Commission from when this was first discussed in regards to the pool project. **Mayor Christian** pointed out that for some people, they have been waiting twenty-five to thirty years. He appreciates Commissioner Connell's comments, but just from the residents' perspective of Pine Street and with the pool being there. Those residents who have been business owners in the Pine Street area have been waiting for this project for thirty plus years. Even before 1997, this community has seen many other city projects leapfrog this downtown area. He thinks the City Manager said something that was key, that we should not miss when it comes to the master plan, and that was how we are going to fund these projects. We could make all the plans we want, but we need to know how we are going to pay for them. How do we handle the other projects and how they fit into the funding mechanism of the American Recovery Act? He does not know any other projects from the master plan that could be funded by American Recovery Act monies. This is almost a no-brainer when you think about the master plan and the swimming pool and we can pay for it with federal funds. This is a winner for Pine Street, plus this is something the community has been waiting for, for many years, and it is way overdue. He does not think there is another road or wastewater project that could trump this project, plus be eligible for funding by these federal dollars. **Commissioner Connell** wanted to make it clear that he was not completely opposed to this project. His point was that three million dollars is a lot of money to spend on one single road; especially a road that he is not sure has enough traffic to warrant that. As far as the pool goes, he would suspect that most people would access it from Canal Street to the intersection of Dixie Avenue. With the traffic concerns for LRMC, he is sure those could be addressed with speedbumps if they are concerned with speed running through that area. He lastly questioned the City Manager about the master plan, are we required to comply with the master plan as it was already approved or can it be deviated from. **CM Minner** responded the commission could certainly deviate from the master plan because the master plan is just that, a plan. It was previously adopted by this body, but this commission does change and so do our goals, so we can deviate from that. However, the immediate part of the question was why this project was chosen. That was because in previous years we put together this master plan and we went to the shelf and pulled this one to be funded. As far as recovery monies go and where we should spend the money, we will have another discussion on that later tonight. There are other projects that will become a legislative priority on where the commission wants to go, but we do put forth the recommendations and you should not feel bound by the master plan. The master plan is a guide and that is why this project landed before you. **Commissioner Connell** stated that he would personally like to see some alternative projects so he could weigh them out. He would like to

get the most bang for the buck with three million dollars before approving to spend that kind of money.

We could have a list of which projects qualify for the American Recovery Act money. **Commissioner Burry** pointed out that we have already spent an awful lot of money to put a jewel on that road with the swimming pool. We need to upgrade Pine Street and if this is the amount of money we need to spend, then we need to spend it. **Commissioner Robuck** said he felt this was a good project, but he does understand where Commissioner Connell is concerned. If we were to just weigh this out from an ROI perspective compared to some other projects that we do, the return is not great given the traffic concerns and the lower number of people that will be impacted. As a commission in the past, we have done a good job moving forward to balance out projects and cleanup areas where we have not invested in over time, even if it is not the best project from an investment standpoint, while making sure to prioritize the ones that do bring economic development. When looking at what we have spent on Main Street, Venetian Gardens, Dixie and 441 with the landscaping, along with FDOT at US-27, even though we cannot do anything with that currently until FDOT comes back with more information, we do have a good balance of projects. If every project we do looked like this one, he would have concerns. Our job is to mixup the projects as we are spending money, so on that note, he is in support of this project. **Commissioner Pederson** inquired if this was going to include any archways or gateways. **CM Minner** replied this project includes road construction where the lanes will be narrowed for traffic calming. Then we have the sidewalks, landscaping, street lights, drainage improvements, roundabouts, some brick types with inbelishments in the intersection areas and onstreet parking.

Randy Hepburn stated he was born and raised in Leesburg, right on Pine Street, and he has seen this area at its worst. His mother and aunt both owned restaurants on Pine Street. If you remember, a few years back, the City of Leesburg and the hospital were both sued for discrimination and his mother was put out of business. The hospital and the City took the property on Pine Street. They came in and said they had to put in twenty thousand dollars worth of compression systems. No one could afford to do that back then. So his mom and aunt had to shut their businesses and that was their only way of living. His mom ran that business for over fifty years. Since then, he has not seen too much improvement on Pine Street, nor to this day, and he is now sixty-five years old. If you do not know much about the history of Pine Street, you can look him up and he will inform you of the history of Pine Street. He does not know anyone else in this room that was born and raised on Pine Street. It is very important to him to see this big improvement, because right now, there is nothing much down there. If the City went ahead and considered upgrading and beautifying that area, it would make a heck of a big difference. It would make a difference to him and it would make him feel good. He had to file a lawsuit and he got compensated for the lawsuit against the hospital and the City of Leesburg. He wanted to let everyone know a little bit about the history of Leesburg and we could not go wrong by beautifying Pine Street.

Bettye Stevens-Coney commented that she was not raised on Pine Street, but she was raised in Leesburg. She is from the era where Pine Street was considered the business district for our community. At one time, there were all sorts of businesses on Pine Street. Any business you can think of, except for a church. Our entire community is looking forward to the remaking and revitalization of Pine Street. We started with the Aquatic Center and we are looking forward to that. We are also looking forward to hundreds of people coming in as part of that and the revitalization of Pine Street. We were expecting to have one of the largest pools in the State of Florida right on Pine Street. As she was coming in, she asked Mr. Hepburn if he had all the names assembled of people who used to have businesses on Pine Street and he said yes. He also mentioned that he was collecting pictures of those businesses. Her stance tonight is to further drive the issue home for the revitalization of Pine Street. We need to make sure it is as attractive and as viable not only for the community, but for the State of Florida. That is our vision. Please continue in this forward vein of making Pine Street one of the most viable business districts in the State of Florida.

Mayor Christian stated that he had to abstain from voting on this matter.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Robuck	Yes
Commissioner Burry	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Connell	No
Mayor Christian	Abstain

Three yeas, one nay, one abstain, the Commission adopted the resolution.

C. RESOLUTIONS:

- 1. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, authorizing and directing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a Natural Gas Service Agreement between the City of Leesburg and Hanover 623 Holdings, LLC, for the purpose of setting forth the terms and conditions under which the City will provide Natural Gas Utility Service to the Development referred to as Eagle Tail Landing, Phase 1; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 10,907

- 2. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute such documents as are necessary to conform the City's depository account, maintained for the benefit of Florida Gas Utility, to the latest requirement for the amount of the deposit to be held in escrow; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 10,908

- 3. 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, Hanover 623 Holdings, LLC, and the City of Leesburg, Florida, to allow for payment of Lake County School Impact Fees; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 10,910

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

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

Mayor Christian requested comments from the Commission and the audience.

Commissioner Robuck stated he pulled this item because we always hear from the people that when new developments come up about who will be paying for the schools and how the city does not have enough schools. This is how it works and this is a development that was previously approved. They have not even started construction yet. Before they can even start developing, they have to pay one-point six million dollars up front. In total, they have to pay four-point eight million dollars for school impact fees for a relatively small development. Then they are going to have ad valorem taxes forever and, in this development, that will be a couple of hundred thousand dollars a year.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Burry	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Robuck	Yes
Mayor Christian	Yes

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

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

A. SECOND READING OF ORDINANCES:

- 1. An Ordinance of the City of Leesburg, Florida, renaming Dunlin Street, being an existing street shown on the Plat of Lake Denham, Phase III, as recorded in Plat Book 73, Page 63, Public Records of Lake County, Florida, and lying in Section 03, Township 20 South, Range 24 East; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED ORDINANCE 21-41

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

Commissioner Robuck made a motion to adopt the ordinance and Commissioner Burry seconded the motion.

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

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Robuck	Yes
Commissioner Burry	Yes
Mayor Christian	Yes

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

B. FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES:

1. **An Ordinance of the City of Leesburg, Florida, annexing certain real property consisting of approximately 1,088 +/- acres; and being generally located east of U.S. Highway 27, north of Dewey Robbins Road, and south of County Road 48, lying in Sections 24 and 25, Township 20 South, Range 24 East; and Sections 20, 29, 30, 31, 32, Township 20 South, Range 25 East, Lake County, Florida, providing that said property so annexed shall be liable for its proportionate share of the existing and future indebtedness of said city; providing that such annexed property shall be subject to all laws and ordinances of said city as if all such territory had been a part of the City of Leesburg at the time of passage and approval of said laws and ordinances; providing that such annexed territory shall be placed in City Commission District 3; and providing an effective date (Whispering Hills/Marsan).**

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

Mayor Christian requested comments from the Commission and the audience.

Reginal Thomas, stated he resides in Howey in the Hills. He was a realtor for twenty years, amongst other things. One thing he wanted to state, especially to his neighbors, is that you have to realize there is a direct correlation between the value of your property and schools. We discovered at a previous meeting that if this subdivision goes through we will end up with schools that are overcrowded. We need to understand that we are doing a disservice to the community when our schools are not up to par. If you go to the website, gradeschools.org, it shows that all three schools, the elementary school, the middle school and the high school perform at two out of ten. That is absolutely ridiculous and he does not have any school-aged kids anymore. He has grandchildren now and they do not live in Florida. We need to fix the schools first before we start annexing properties all over the place and making Leesburg as big as possible as far from the center of town. He would have very little to say if this was a fifty-five plus community, because we would not be dealing with schools. You are cheating people. People buying in those subdivisions are going to be cheated because you cannot provide the proper services at the schools.

Tara Tedrow, of Lowndes Law, Orlando, stated she was here on behalf of the applicant. She presented a presentation to cover all three items on the agenda, which consolidates all items to save everyone time. The proposed development is Whispering Hills and is approximately one thousand and eighty-eight acres. It is a mixed-used development consisting of two thousand nine hundred and forty-two residential units, which will not exceed two point seven dwelling units an acre. They have a forty-four acre allotment for the town center. They have four hundred and fifty one thousand square feet of retail uses which are slotted to be neighborhood commercial style retail compatible with the area, while providing the needed amenities to the residents that would be out there. In the commercial areas, twenty percent has to be allocated for open space. Three acres are dedicated to the City for support services and those three acres of dedicated land can be used by the City however they see fit. Under the PUD, the rezoning sets forth very specific development standards, one of which is a minimum of thirty five percent of the entire project has to be open space. This project spans to the east of US-27 with direct connectivity on to US-27. The surrounding area of this potential development is interesting because to the west there is a significant amount of build out of single-family subdivisions. The problem with the pattern of

development today is that we have subdivision after subdivision and none of which has any connectivity. None of them have any cohesive plan and they really do not go really well together. However, we allow people to develop those types of subdivisions all over the state and they do make sense in a lot of areas. For the most efficient utilization of services and to prevent urban sprawl in its finest form, this is the exact type of development that allows us to have master control over a large piece of property. This property was not assembled by going to hundreds of owners. There are two owners that they are currently under contract with. One of the property owners owns one thousand and fifteen acres, so this is certainly a prime piece of property that is being looked at. As to what the future of Leesburg is going to look like, you can see on the westside of US-27 there is a significant amount of residential density with not much support outside of a very small area off US-27 in the county that is commercially zoned. They have an Econolodge and a small strip center with a car wash. To the north of the subject property there are more significant amounts of residential density that already exist.

They are requesting a recommendation of approval consistent with their professional staff and the Planning Commission for the annexation, comprehensive plan as well as the rezoning. The Planning Commission's recommendation of approval came on July 22nd, then on July 30th they held a zoom meeting at the request of some residents. On July 31st, the developer went out and walked some sites with residents who asked them to come out to their properties. In August, they had another voluntary community meeting where they met with residents and showed them updated plans. They have had ongoing communications and they spent a few hours yesterday on the phone with individuals who have expressed concerns. She has made herself available to her clients by phone and email and to anybody who has reached out. They even had an additional meeting onsite with residents who border the property to walk the backyard and look from their vantage point and we could see where things could look a bit different on this piece of property. They discussed the possible change in setbacks or the house configuration to accommodate some of those concerns. There has been a lot of outreach and we have welcomed all of those, and for those who have not spoken to us yet, they would like to continue that dialogue. There is time between the first and second reading for us to continue these plans if we are able to do so. This type of ongoing communication has allowed us to further refine our plans. We have gone through multiple reiterations of those plans all directly responding to issues brought up by the residents who have reached out to us.

In terms of the process, they are in the land use phase for entitlements. They are requesting permission for certain uses and corresponding development standards. We had our Planning Commission hearing, which was to provide a recommendation on the project. We are now having our first reading and then that will be transmitted to the Department of Economic Opportunity. Given the size and scope of this project, there will probably be a sixty-day turnaround, but there is a ten-day business period after tonight to transmit it. Then it comes back and it has to be scheduled for final reading. She assumed we would be looking at at least ninety days between the first and second reading. She asked if any residents that have not reached out yet do so that way, they have time to respond. Plus, it will allow them time to make any substantial changes in response to things they may hear.

Should they receive approval at the second reading, that is when we get into the detailed site study and engineering work phase. At one of our community meetings, we were asked very specific questions about drainage and where exactly certain utility lines would go and why could we not show where every house would be on the property. The reason is simple, because that is not required in the entitlement phase. That is when you have conceptual PUD plans. We have spent about seven figures already just getting to this point. After the second reading, we will have spent another seven figures just on the studies for the size of this project. That is not saying we are asking for sympathy or kudos for that amount of money, that is just what it takes to do a good development project. At that point is when we do the detailed site analysis and figure out all the very hyper-specific questions and answers on drainage

and lot layouts and what is even developable. We have to figure out what the soils are and what they will support. We have to figure out where the golf course should go. They have to decide which locations they should put houses versus where they showed them in the initial concept plan. For those tonight that want more detail, that detail does not come at this phase of entitlements. However, we have tried to give as much detail as we have available.

When it comes to PUD development standards, we were given the PUD by the City staff prior to the Planning Commission hearing. We had no input on it and she says that, so everyone understands that the PUD was not written by the applicant. The development team did not modify it before it was put out publicly and received by the residents. The development standards were created by staff. They were specifically curated to come up with what they believe to be the most consistent and compatible developments given the area that we are in, the types of projects that Leesburg wants to see in future, and they set the bar high. There are multiple phases of the project. The plan is that it will be built in multiple phases over time. We have a commercial development track summary, which shows different tracks throughout the project. It would total up to four hundred and fifty-one thousand square feet over about forty-three acres of the one thousand and eighty-eight acres. With the C-3 zoning standards, that would allow us to do other things on the site. We have a minimum of twenty percent for open space. We have very specific architectural standards that we would have to abide by in terms of residential units. The initial PUD allows for up to two thousand nine hundred and forty-two residential units over the entire site of the project. That equals out to about two-point seven dwelling units per acre at the end of the day. They have gone back and revised their conceptual plan. Since then, they have received some questions as to why they cannot tell them the exact density they are going to build at the end of the day. Quite frankly, it is because they won't know until they are able to get out there and do the detailed site work.

Once they deduct the amount of space needed for the setbacks, landscaping, buffers, open space, wetlands, conservation areas, stormwater ponds, lot size minimums, streets, sidewalks, utilities, amenity areas, golf courses and equestrian trails, all of that just eats away at the amount of space we physically have to put a home on the project site. They will not know what that is going to look like until the end, but they were able to receive the support of staff and the Planning Commission for that with the maximum density that is permitted if it could even fit. When this was first submitted, the entire project had fifth and sixty foot lots. However, in response to the residents' requests, they changed some of the lots to multi-acres, rather than having them all fifty and sixty-foot lots.

Referring to a slide, she showed where the yellow areas would be the highest density and the areas in the blue would be one to two acre lots. Some areas have ten to fifteen thousand square foot lots and then a hundred plus foot lots as well. The red would be the Town Center and the supportive commercial area.

In terms of residential development standards, they are required under the PUD to have an architectural diversity with the maximum two-story building height and a minimum two-car garage. There are some minimal setbacks depending on the building footprints that are actually established for different sized lots. There are residential architectural standards that city staff decide upon in terms of what they would need to build and how the end product needs to look for residential density along with how they need to have a variation in those architectural styles. This is not a cookie-cutter community where every single home will look exactly the same and you can barely find your own house without GPS. This development is going to be very different. It is going to have architectural diversity in a standout community. It is going to be incredibly impressive as well as being a legacy project for the City.

Landscaping will go all along the perimeter of our property anywhere they are next to someone's home who is not part of this PUD. We are required to have a minimum 50 foot-wide buffer to any adjacent property. We would need to have at least a 50-foot buffer with plantings. They also intended to have an equestrian trail along the entire perimeter of the property. There would not be plantings directly adjacent to the surrounding properties. There would also be two canopy trees every one hundred linear

feet, but you would also have an equestrian trail. On the other side of that equestrian trail, we would have additional tree plantings to provide a separation between the lots so there would be some significant buffers from those existing residents. They also changed some of the lot sizes significantly from fifty feet up to multi-acres for some of the residents who directly responded to their concerns. The landscaping has to meet with Waterwise and Florida Friendly Landscaping requirements. They have to have a 50 foot additional separation from any wetland jurisdictional boundary with landscaping per code and there are very specific requirements written in the PUD.

In terms of roadways, the major access is from US-27 with a boulevard-type access along with a roundabout. Sidewalks provide cross connections to all residential and recreational areas. Golf cart paths and parking for golf carts will be on the main boulevards. There will be golf cart paths inside the residential neighborhoods, with some parking in those public areas to accommodate those who would rather travel by golf cart internally in the project rather than by vehicle. The City also will not be responsible for the maintaining or repairing the roadways. They will not be handing these roadways off to the city to pay for them. It will be the responsibility of the developer and eventually the creation of the HOA to care for them.

With recreational requirements, there is a minimum of thirteen point five acres of recreational space. This plan offers significantly more recreational acreage than that, but that amount is just what the PUD states. For the residents who may want to live here in the future, they are not going to build homes and never leave them with no amenities. They are required to build amenities during different phases of the project. They have to have amenities in place before they can pull a certificate of occupancy on a certain number of homes. A certain number of amenities have to be developed before they can continue building, so that the residents can have those amenities to enjoy. Those required amenities include a golf course, two equestrian centers, a swimming pool with a club house, a playground, trails and other activities like a ball field. The required golf course and equestrian areas are not used to compute the required recreational acreage. When she says thirteen point five acres, that does not capture how much they actually have there. That is just the minimum for other parts of the recreational area, but the golf course and the equestrian center are in addition to that.

When it came to traffic analysis, they had their traffic engineer answer specific questions. Referring to a slide, she showed how far they had to go out to study when it comes to studying traffic impacts of a project. Those requirements are not dictated by a developer. They are dictated in the study and methodologies utilized come from the Lake Sumter MPO. The City and the County review it along with Lake Sumter MPO, then they provide input and comments which tell them the type of improvements they need to make in order to mitigate any impact of the project. Referring to the slide, she showed where the roads would be four lanes on the interior and merge into two lanes on the exterior. One thing she noted is that they kept a lot of the two-lane roads in question on the outside of their project. They are not intending to impact those at all, like Number 2 Road and Dewey Robbins. They were asked to take their main entrances off of those roads and they did. The first conceptual plan they had was going to put all the project traffic on Number 2 Road. Then they were told by residents that they did not want us to put cars out there. They asked us to come drive those roads to see and understand the impact that could have.

Now, that access point has been taken away. It would only be used as an allowable emergency access for emergency vehicles, which would be very infrequent. We also conceptually show a two-lane road going onto US-27 but they have to get permission from adjacent property owners for that access. Her client has offered to pay the upfront costs to build the infrastructure on that property that has been approved. They are willing to fund the costs to get access to US-27 if they are able to negotiate that.

There are also some existing right of ways that are not platted on Windmill Road now that they may be able to work with the County, but that is an ongoing conversation. There is a long list of changes that need to be made by the Lake County Public Works, but those are all based on Number 2 Road being the main access point, so they are unsure if those will even apply now. They still have to go through the

process of updating the traffic studies after tonight and they need to have a detailed discussion with City staff. Then they would be able to come back and provide a better understanding of the total figure of what they would pay for. They are estimating about twenty to thirty million dollars for roadway improvements that need to be done internally and externally for this project. Then they still have to figure out the Windmill connection point because it is adjacent to the property. They are going to work hard with staff and other property owners to try and work that out.

When the original concept plan was submitted there were very small lot lines throughout the entirety of the project; City staff and the Planning Commission provided a recommendation of approval based on that. However, we did change our plan. Not because we received pushback from the City. We changed it because we wanted to accommodate the concerns of the surrounding residents who were willing to engage and discuss their concerns with us. The revised concept plan does show the layout of areas where we were able to change some lot lines in the easier areas. It also shows where they conceptually plotted some of the recreational areas to show where they would put the pool, petting zoo, pickleball court, waterpark area, community garden, farmers market, two equestrian centers, the golf course, tennis courts and dog parks. Those are all the amenities that they are going to put throughout the entirety of the project.

Referring to another rendering, she showed where the trails would be laid out. The pink lines should be where the equestrian trails would be and the blue lines showed where the 8-foot-wide golf cart paths would go. These could be used for jogging and exercise. They are multi-use paths that provide connectivity throughout the entire community. That would be a huge amenity and draw for their residents. Of course, those equestrian trails would have to be adequately sized for horses to be able to pass each other. They would be looking at about ten feet in width for those trails. In parcel M, they had four hundred and eighty eight lots, but the surrounding residents asked them to please not do that, so they took it from four hundred and eighty eight lots to just forty-one lots. In about ten years of her career she has never had a client willing to do that ever. Area L is another one that had two hundred and twenty five lots and the developer reduced it down to thirty lots. They reduced it to a hundred and ninety-seven homes in direct response to those neighbors that live directly next to those lots. They met with some residents that live next to this area today at their homes and talked through some things they could do to help them feel 100% certain about supporting this project.

In terms of voluntary plan changes, they are requesting approval even though at second reading they will be bringing back the changes as proposed and they will be incorporated into the PUD. They do not want anyone to think they are giving empty promises that are not going to actually end up in the PUD. There is a list of additional prohibited uses that will not be allowed, like discount dollar stores, consignment shops, pawn shops, smoke shops and junk/scrap yards, landfills, or slaughterhouses. She heard some things being raised and she wanted to immediately put them on the no-list so everyone would know these are things they are not including as part of this project. They will update figure three of the PUD to make sure the larger lots are reflected because those still show as fifty and sixty foot lots.

In Section 14(C), at the last planning commission hearing, a commissioner very specifically said that three acres was great for the city, but what are you going to give to the school board? They had not been asked to give anything to the school board, so she said they would give five acres to the school board.

Then the school board asked if they could make it fifteen acres and they said yes. They have only had very preliminary conversations. It has not gone before the school board and no site has been selected. It is just as the developer says, if they would like to put up a new school they are willing to give up the property. They put language in to say they could have property near a specific area, so their client could dedicate that to the school board.

Section 20(E), they were told by some people that they did not want any more twenty-seven-hole golf

courses, so they reduced it down to nine-holes instead of the twenty-seven that was initially proposed. They were also told that golf courses could be bad for the environment, so she went and researched the best management practice certificates you could get for a golf course. It is apparently the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for golf courses or an equivalent organization. As a certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary based on their environmental management practices for golf courses, that will be another standard imposed upon them to achieve. If you do not know what the ACSP is, they help golf courses with key environmental components like environmental planning, wildlife and habitat management, chemical use reduction and safety, water conservation, water quality management and outreach and education. If you are designated as one of these sanctuaries, you have met with one of their environmental management teams and you have met their standards in all six of the key areas and achieving that certificate means that we are able to reach high levels of environmental protection on our golf course. We would have to develop and implement an environmental management plan, document the results, host a site visit, go through quite a few steps and then go through recertification for as long as that golf course remains in place. There is a provision with wall buffers and they saw that the buffers were pretty robust. If that is what the city wants them to do, they will do it. She thought they may butt up to some residents who may not want a wall. They may want a split rail fence instead, or maybe they would like a split rail fence and more canopy trees rather than a solid wall. She would like to ask staff if they could give some flexibility to the adjacent property owners who provide a written affidavit that states they are okay with something other than a six-foot wall. She would like to be able to have the flexibility to do that without fully amending the PUD to accommodate a neighbors concern. At a community meeting, she heard some concerns about lighting and residents said they love that they can see the stars at night. It is something that they think the new residents would love to see as well. There are some minimum standards under Section 21 of the PUD that are for the dark sky, which includes a lot of different levels of lighting standards. When we say dark sky, we can have a pretty bright sky under the dark sky. She put a very specific section in the PUD that proposes they utilize dark sky and that they designate a design based on lighting zones throughout the development. They would implement the lighting zone standards from the International Dark Sky Association in order to protect the area. You will need to use the two lowest lighting zones and those are LZ1 and LZ2. They are low ambient and moderate ambient and they will be placed where they specifically say lighting is used for safety and convenience, but it does not have to be continuous or uniform. It will not adversely affect flora and fauna or disturb the character of the area. Areas where human activity is moderate or light, they will try to design it very specifically throughout the project so you do not feel like you have parking lot lighting right next to you. City staff would review and approve the lighting plans based on standards and safety considerations. That is why they were put in as an additional proposed condition in the PUD.

In summary, they removed the main entrance from Number 2 Road. They agreed not to transition that to Dewey Robbins. They are looking to gain access across other roadways directly onto US-27. They have offered to pay for the upfront costs for the construction to gain that access. They volunteered to donate land to the school board if needed. They agreed to reduce the required minimum number of golf course holes from twenty-seven to nine and they will strive for that certificate that she described. They added a community garden, a petting zoo, a second equestrian facility, a pickleball court and some more recreational facilities which include a farmer's market component to increase the open green space. They increased the lot sizes buffering certain existing residential properties from fifty and seventy feet up to multiple acre lots. They agreed to increase vegetation buffers significantly next to adjacent properties. They enhanced the dark sky standards to protect against light pollution. When it comes to GMP and code policies, a lot of residents have brought up the RPA. When we talk about RPA policies, they are not under the City of Leesburg. When we look at RPA policies, there are some standards they specifically numerate, such as two-lane county roads, and the analyst shows that they would keep those county roads two lanes within the RPA, so they are not modifying that. The RPA calls for the maximization of buffers and openspaces to provide opportunities for passive recreation and this plan and PUD are maximizing

those. It further talks about the protection of common openspace perpetuity by easement plat or other similar recordings. The PUD already states that if there are wetlands on this site they have to be protected and we would have to dedicate those through conservation easements. When it comes to maintaining, enhancing and protecting the wildlife, we hired Motica to do the initial wildlife surveys so they could come up with a wildlife management plan to provide for significant open space and maximization that buffers and protects other areas to accommodate wildlife. The RPA talks about minimization and alteration of terrain. Her client does not intend to come out and mass grade this property. This is a beautiful area and they want to preserve the natural beauty and the terrain of their site to the greatest extent possible. They want to allow people to take advantage of how beautiful this property is. They want to use the native landscaping as much as possible as required under the RPA and their PUD. The landscaping also needs to meet the Waterwise and Florida Friendly Landscaping requirements. Even though it is not specifically referenced in the PUD or in the city code, those are things that this project is doing. When it comes to GMP and code policies, the project would add residential and non-residential features to the city to further the vision of GMP, including a diverse array of housing options, single and multi-family, which will vary in price and size. They will have complimentary retail uses strategically located within the development. They will have significant acreage for recreation and openspace. They will include some age-restricted components, and they will show an ALF on this property. They include an amenitized lake and water features. The city's policy is about providing opportunities for diverse residential areas. We want efficient use of developable land and this is a great example of efficient use of developable land. In a way, it does not have all the lots crammed into the highest absolute density possible. Instead, they incorporated this master-planned community into something where you would have quality control in a comprehensive approach to allow for future smart growth. They met all comprehensive plan policies regarding mixed-use developments, which were encouraged by the city, with appropriate buffers for compatibility as outlined in the PUD. To ensure that the population density and employment patterns are consistent, one great thing about principal planning and "live, work, play" is that people should not have to be auto-dependent to do everything. You should not have to get into a car to enjoy everything outside the physical walls of your home. They hope to develop communities where people will be able to take a golf cart to go get lunch or to run to the local pharmacy or retail store. She hopes that those complimentary uses will be incorporated within all developments of this magnitude and the comprehensive plan does encourage it.

They have met the rezoning criteria, specifically proper utilization in terms of drainage and providing transportation networks. Those will be needed and completed within a reasonable period of time as required under the PUD. They are allowing for something that is going to be orderly and sustainable over time. There will be quite a bit of growth in the future as well. If you look at population projections, the amount of growth coming into this area over the next five to ten years is going to be tremendous. If it was not us, it would be someone else trying to come in and develop because people want to live in the City of Leesburg. They have come up with a plan that meets the principles under the growth management plan. It is not a growth mitigation plan, it is not a growth prohibition plan, it is a growth management plan. They have done it very effectively and they have the support of both the professional staff and the Planning Commission. They are designing it to ensure appropriate buffering and setbacks to absorb a significant portion of future growth. It will provide for comprehensive development of large areas and propose a diverse mix of uses in accordance with the GMP. She provided a brief video of the proposed development for everyone to watch.

Mayor Christian asked if the changes being proposed to the PUD are those consistent with moving forward. **CA Morrison** answered that all the changes are reductions to density and increases in lot sizes. If they had increased density or made it more intense, then they would have to go back. By reducing the intensity of the development, it does not require another review by the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Robuck stated before the second reading he would like to see a cap on the maximum number of age restrictions and a percentage of the total lots. **Ms. Tedrow** asked for a little more clarification. **Commissioner Robuck** said for clarity he wants the maximum percentage of age restricted development that will be incorporated in the annexation agreement. **Ms. Tedrow** answered that they had shown there were two hundred and fifty for the ALF unit allocation. **Commissioner Robuck** answered that he is okay with that if that is the intent, but he wants that written into the PUD as the maximum along with the annexation agreement that it can never be more than that. **Ms. Tedrow** replied they were going to make age targets in some areas, but they knew two hundred and fifty was the absolute number of age restricted. **Commissioner Robuck** added that with the golf course there is a minimum of nine holes, but anything beyond that, he would want a provision where you cannot use the City's CUP for watering the golf course. You would have to find your own reuse or get your own CUP. He would also like to see more specifics on the equestrian facility before the second reading with respect to how many stalls and what exactly is going to be built there, so we do not have a ten acre fence piece of grass and call it an equestrian facility. **Ms. Tedrow** replied that there is a facility already on the property, but they will get more information on that. **Commissioner Pederson** commented that it was nice to see a master-planned community that was not targeting strictly retirees.

Mayor Christian asked if there were anymore public comments.

Terry Blessing, Blue Sink Road, located off of Number 2 Road, stated she has to travel Number 2 Road every day to get to Bushnell, where she works. Some people say she could take alternative routes, that she could go down Bloomfield, but if anyone has ever been down Bloomfield it is worse than Number 2 Road. She is embarking on something very difficult with trying to protect and maintain the integrity of this area. She is doing this by herself with only the love and support of her neighbors and family. For this reason, she thanked the Marsan Group for taking the main access off of Number 2 Road. She has been to multiple groups and they are very willing and open to discuss any issues. They have an understanding of the necessary safety concerns. Their concern with the preservation of trees and the lifestyle is absolutely excellent. She wished they could see more of that from other developers. She feels that they did their due diligences and she does not know where the traffic engineer is, but she is wonderful too. She diligently worked to look at Number 2 Road and she said we cannot put access there. She also said it is the responsibility of this commission to ensure that the developers are presenting accurate information and if not, even though she does not get to vote for them, she knows there are a lot of other people that neighbor her community and they value what they do. She thanked the commission and the city. She believes this developer is willing to work with all residents. She encouraged anyone who has issues to reach out to them.

Debra Shelley, East Dewey Robbins Road, said she is also with the Citizens for the Preservation of Rural Areas. She wanted to thank Ms. Tedrow and Mr. Marsan for their willingness to work with the community. She certainly appreciates the changes they have made thusfar to delineating some of the trails and the other things that were asked for. With density, it is still showing a concern and that is a big issue. This is a rural protection area and she sees that they have changed the two areas from four hundred and eighty eight to forty one and another area from two hundred and twenty five to thirty. She thinks if that could be done in some of the other areas, that would help the residents understand what the actual density might be. However, it looks like you are still asking for the maximum entitlement of two thousand nine hundred units. You need to subtract that because you have subtracted homes in those two areas. The reason she is here this evening is because of the Interlocal Service Boundary Agreement (ISBA). The ISBA allows for annexations that are not contiguous or compact. You can create onclaves, but there is one section in the ISBA rules that says lands to be annexed must be urban in character, so she would submit that the rural protection area is not urban in character under the county rural protection area comprehensive plan. There are other policies that deal with preserving the rural protection area,

protection of rural neighborhoods and rural lifestyles. She hopes they can continue the dialogue in the future to see what they can do to make this development more integrated with the rural community. She did provide written formal comments to the commission.

Lee Graffins, manager of Plantations at Leesburg, mentioned that he was working with Ms. Tedrow on reducing the golf course holes at their request. A lot of people may or may not know, but Plantations at Leesburg just bought the golf courses located on their property. They appreciate them making that adjustment so they can continue to be successful along with their sister communities in the area. We all know golf courses have become abundant and we are trying to get them back to the quality that they were without putting out too many golf courses. They were very nice about making that immediate decision to cut that down at their request. He has a very vocal community and the buzz on this project has been very low except for their support. His community and residents have been very happy hearing about all the adjustments that have been made. They are very excited to have those amenities come to this area. We are a little bit more rural than everybody and he understands they are not part of the City, but that does not mean we are not a good partner. The residents would love to see all those amenities that are close in proximity. He thanked everyone for taking this into consideration. As Ms. Tedrow said they are doing such a great job making this a whole master plan. He has been in the real estate market for twenty years all over Florida and there is nothing worse than just throwing communities everywhere. We need something master planned that will benefit everybody.

Brian Greiser, South Dewey Robbins Road, Howey in the Hills, stated he wanted to make reference to the rural protected area. It is a rural protected area and it does not seem like it is being protected by anybody, but the residents who live in these rural protected areas. He moved to Howey in the Hills because he wanted to get away from all the urban development. He grew up in a big city. He moved out here for work and everywhere he has been from Sarasota down to St. Cloud is all development. Why does all the land around here have to be developed? They talked in the presentation about maintaining the integrity of the rural community and the beauty of the rural community and he happened to think it looks beautiful just the way it is. What happens when the wildlife flees? He stated he made reference to this the last time he was here with another development. He talked about the gopher tortoises digging under houses. He had to personally deal with it when they built their house on the acreage they have. The last time they were here it only cost about twenty-five hundred per tortoise to relocate it to a different conservation site. Well, now it is five thousand dollars. He is doing a job right now where he cannot find a site that will take a gopher tortoise. He is sure that five thousand dollars will be passed on to the other people. With all the development going on, when you start to bulldoze and clear land out there, where will all the wildlife go? It is going to go to other peoples' lots. The people that are still living here will have to deal with it and we will have to look at all this development. The tortoises will go to their lots and once they start to burrow there and if they get under the foundation, it will weaken the structure of the house. With the cost of inflation and the stupid policies coming out of Washington, how many people have the extra money to pay for somebody to do this? Once you get a permit and you start building, they will start relocating and they may relocate to the back of their property. If they relocate and burrow under his house, by law he cannot move them again. It would be disturbing. He would like to know where these developers are going to move all this wildlife too and how it is going to affect all of them. The presentation shows they were going to maintain rural life. All he sees in the pictures are houses that will not be far from where he lives right now. When they said they were not building cookie cutter houses, all he saw was the same type of house that he would build in St. Cloud and that was basically a box with some trim on it. It is the same type of development that is going on US-27 with KB Homes, so when does it end? He knows we have a big population coming to Florida, but one reason people are coming in is because we have a nice way of life here. We are a low-tax state and most people coming in are fleeing other states that are a total train wreck right now. When you talk about traffic, it is nice that they took that entrance off of Number 2 Road and Dewey Robbins Road, but you cannot tell me

that there is not going to be a traffic situation. He just sat there and listened to them talk about traffic situations on Pine Street in Leesburg and now you want to bring in three thousand more homes. With Dewey Robbins they were also talking about a Hodges Development with another four hundred homes and there are up-ding dozens more developments going on around here. You cannot tell me there is not going to be a traffic problem. Also, the first gentleman talked about schools and if we brought all these people in, we would have overcrowded schools. The kids are going to suffer. He is not for this development and with the presentation, he is not convinced. He will stand here and fight.

Jeff Fraiser, Turkey Lake Road, said he thought it was a good presentation, but hopes the developer does exactly what they say. With the rural protection area, how does developing the area actually protect the area? He does not know if anyone has looked at the rural protection code on the Lake County site. It refers to five to forty acre lots. It is not one or two acres for the largest. He thinks they have done a good job, but he has not had the pleasure of speaking with Ms. Tedrow. In the future, he would like the opportunity to discuss some of the issues, so maybe we could do more.

Lori Howell, Number 2 Road in Howey in the Hills said she had some unusual flooding at her property back in 2018. She spoke with Mr. Masey's ranch hands during that time and they told her that he also had some pretty bad flooding on his property which was up over the fence. Her concern is if there are already flooding issues on the property and they start moving dirt and water around, they are going to have problems with flooding on her property. If they are doing retention ponds and things like that in the development, it is going to create a problem with sinkholes like they have in The Villages. We could have sinkholes opening up like they do in the middle of 441. She talked to Ms. Tedrow about it earlier today and she is taking that into consideration. She wanted to thank them for all the concessions they had made so far. The fact is, when she moved to the property she bought, she bought it knowing it was in the rural protection area and it had to be five acres to every house. She finds it a little disturbing and, thank goodness, they have a developer that is willing to work with the community, because it is a little disturbing that they are looking out for them more than some of the elected officials are looking out for them. She feels like the developer is putting more into this than anyone else.

2. An Ordinance amending the Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Leesburg, changing the Future Land Use Map Designation of certain property containing 1,088 +/- acres from Lake County Rural to City of Leesburg Neighborhood Mixed Use, for a property generally located east of U.S. Highway 27, north of Dewey Robbins Road, and south of County Road 48, as legally described in Sections 24 and 25, Township 20 South, Range 24 East; and Sections 20, 29, 30, 31, 32, Township 20 South, Range 25 East, Lake County, Florida; and providing an effective date. (Whispering Hills/ Marsan)

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

Mayor Christian requested comments from the Commission and the audience.

Commissioner Robuck questioned if this is the one that needs to be transmitted to the state. **CM Minner** replied yes.

Commissioner Robuck made a motion to transmit the comprehensive plan to the state and Commissioner Burry seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Robuck	Yes
Commissioner Burry	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Mayor Christian	Yes

Five yeas, no nays, the Commission approved the transmission of the comprehensive plan to the state.

3. **An Ordinance of the City of Leesburg, Florida, changing the zoning on approximately 1,088 +/- acres from Lake County A (Agriculture) to City of Leesburg PUD (Planned Unit Development) to allow for mixed use development for a property generally located east of U.S. Highway 27, north of Dewey Robbins Road, and south of County Road 48, as legally described in Sections 24 and 25, Township 20 South, Range 24 East; and Sections 20, 29, 30, 31, 32, Township 20 South, Range 25 East, Lake County, Florida; and providing an effective date. (Whispering Hills/ Marsan)**

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

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

C. NON-ROUTINE ITEMS:

1. Public Hearing for Fire Assessment Program

Mayor Christian announced that this was a public hearing for the fire assessment.

2. **Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, relating to the provision of Fire Protection Services, facilities and programs in the City of Leesburg, Florida; imposing Fire Protection Assessments against assessed property located within the City for the Fiscal Year Beginning October 1, 2021; approving the rate of assessment; approving the assessment roll; and providing for an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 10,911

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

Commissioner Burry made a motion to adopt the resolution and Commissioner Robuck seconded the motion.

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

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Robuck	Yes
Commissioner Burry	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Connell	Yes
Mayor Christian	Yes

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

- 3. Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Leesburg, Florida, adopting the Language Access Plan for Limited English Proficiency Persons for the Rebuild Florida General Infrastructure Program Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Disaster Mitigation Program and other Federally Funded Grant Programs to harden the City of Leesburg Griffin Road Facility; and providing an effective date.**

ADOPTED RESOLUTION 10,912

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

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

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

The roll call vote was:

Commissioner Burry	Yes
Commissioner Pederson	Yes
Commissioner Connell	Yes
Commissioner Robuck	Yes
Mayor Christian	Yes

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

4. Consider American Recovery Act Potential Projects

CM Minner stated the purpose of this item is to solicit input from the Commission and to formalize how to spend the American Recovery Act funds when the City receives them. The City will be receiving approximately eleven-point eight-five million dollars. Staff spending recommendations would be four hundred thousand dollars to the Boys and Girls Club, which would cover operational revenue replacement and would assist the Boys and Girls Club to ensure they have a program for our youngsters in the community. They were significantly impacted by COVID. The second item would be the CDC; both West and the Leesburg CDC would receive seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The purpose of that is to make sure the funds get into the hands of those most affected by COVID. Those are non-profit organizations and he would ask the commission to enter into formal agreements with them to

review the projects they pick in the future to ensure the projects picked qualify for the American Recovery Act.

Third, is a revenue replacement for the City of Leesburg. According to the federal government, the City of Leesburg had a revenue loss and as part of the American Recovery Program there is a formulaic approach. When we ran the numbers, the city was eligible for about a million dollars to recoup our "quote on quote" loss. If we took this money, it would free up city money to do various other projects and the recommendations. Thinking immediately, there could be the sports marketing contract with Alison Strange's group that could be paid from these funds. The Rails to Trails money that we discussed could be paid for with these funds and that leaves about half a million dollars. Another consideration could be to shift the money and give some funding where, instead of increasing the gas contribution for FY/22, we use cash. He would provide more details on that at Thursday's meeting.

Earlier this evening we talked about the Pine Street redevelopment project for two point four million dollars. Finally, with the wastewater treatment plant, as we move out of the increase, the rehab project will probably end up moving into a time where we need to expand the turnpike plant from 4.5MGD to 6MGD. That project is estimated at about thirty million dollars in costs. The utility expansion and improvement of the Recovery Act, that project would be eligible for those funds. So, at six point five million, not quite a third of that project could be covered and that would be extremely helpful to the general fund. Those projects total eleven point eight million dollars and there is about fifty-seven thousand dollars left which he would recommend they reserve to pay GSG. They contracted with them in a previous meeting to help with the paperwork and to work with administration and that contract is reimbursable with the Recovery Funds. All these projects line out the money and the money comes in two draws. We have yet to receive the first draw, which will be about half of that eleven point eight million dollars. In the spring we will look for the second draw and then, by 2025, all the funds have to be spent. We targeted these projects because the infrastructure portion of it helps us mitigate some of the costs and benefits the whole community. We replenish some of our costs on a citywide basis and we also use the funds to target those who were affected most by COVID. It is a well rounded approach and it gets the money out to the projects that help us the most and the folks that were affected the most. There is no formal requirement to have a spending plan. He just thought it would be a good idea to have this plan so we could formalize it and announce it to the public.

Commissioner Connell asked for the money to go to the West CDC and the Leesburg CDC on whatever projects they pick. Will they bring those projects back for review and approval or will they have sole discretion on how they spend that seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars? **CM Minner** replied that it could be setup any way we want. His recommendation would be that it be reviewed and a formal contract be put together. He does not think the CDC would have any issues with that. **Commissioner Connell** said he wanted to go on the record saying he was not against the Pine Street redevelopment project. Earlier he just wanted to see some other projects presented and to be afforded the opportunity to weigh them all against each other to see what was best beneficial to the City. With that said, he voted against it earlier and he would not be in approval of allocating two point four million dollars of this money towards this project without having some other projects to compare it to. **Commissioner Robuck** stated that with the Boys and Girls Club, he was okay with it, but he would like to see details as to why and how they lost revenue and where this would be going in their budget, because he would want to understand where the four hundred thousand dollars would be going. He echoed Commissioner Connell's comments on the CDC on having to bring the projects forward to the Commission for approval of where the money is being spent. **Commissioner Pederson** commented that he does not have any solutions or recommendations tonight, but he would like to see us find a way to spend the money more evenly throughout the city. With the turnpike wastewater facility, is that strictly The Villages or is that other retirement communities? **CM Minner** answered it would be for the Whispering Hills type of

growth and those sort of expansions. He would go on the record and say the expansion up to 6MGD would also cover The Villages' growth. **Commissioner Pederson** said he would not mind seeing that number pulled back a little bit and maybe spent around the city. **Commissioner Burry** remarked that he is pretty good with the numbers. With the turnpike, he would spend more money there if we had it, but where would we take it away from? He thinks it is a pretty good number. **Mayor Christian** commented that Max Parker is in the audience and he represents the West CDC. He does not think there would be any problems because they have already provided a wish list on projects they would like to see done.

With the East Leesburg CDC he can say there would be no issue with bringing the Commission a full report on what they plan to do and when they move forward on projects, but they have identified several projects that they feel would alleviate the city of a lot of issues that we face within our Police Department and issues that we have seen. Some of the affordable housing rental units that we have gotten away with, like the Magnolia Street property, we still have people who are living in their properties illegally and we have to call the police department to come assist. They started remodeling nine apartments, and they have identified four more units in Carver Heights, which makes that thirteen affordable rental units plus twenty-three new jobs. Plus, on Pine Street we have a pool coming up, so this will accelerate the East Leesburg CDC and the remodeling of commercial buildings on Pine Street. He thinks what they have identified are ways to partner with the City to make our goals which are similar come to life.

Dr. Erika Jasper thanked the City Manager for the breakdown. She also thanked the federal government for giving eleven point eight million dollars to the City of Leesburg. It will make such a significant impact on our community and it is going to add money that we do not have to take out of the budget every year. She wanted to comment regarding the Pine Street renovation. She works at the hospital, UF Health, and she works at night. There are times that she has to take that street coming out of the hospital going to the parking garage to her car at night. She then had to drive down Pine Street to get home, so that would be an added plus not only the hospital and Pine Street, but to the City of Leesburg as a whole. Not only for safety precautions, but it would beautify that area. As mentioned, the pool is coming and it would be an added plus to spend that money. We do have those funds and it is a blessing that the American Recovery Act and the government have those funds. Also, the CDC West Leesburg and the Leesburg CDC, the Boys and Girls Club are an all around total blessing to our community. She thanked the city manager again for the breakdown, the commissioners and the federal government.

Max Parker, West Leesburg CDC President, thanked the commission for allowing them the opportunity to do what they do in West Leesburg. They have been partnering with the City and they have no problems submitting anything for approval. They have already submitted a list of things they would like to do.

Candance Chapman, West Leesburg CDC, thanked the staff for the recommendations and opportunity. For the list that President Parker was alluding to, that list was submitted. It would bring more safety to the area. It would provide avenues for people who want to come and live in the Carver Heights community. They have programs for residential curb appeal, which would change the lighting on streets like Stinson, Georgia, Waitman and Beecher Street. They know that Carver Heights has had crime in certain areas and revitalizing it and changing it would definitely bring added safety to the community. The commercial incubation program would be a program that they would bring before them for approval. With that money they are alluding to giving them, they would acquire and build property that would focus on approving temporary business locations for business owners. Business owners who have businesses that closed due to COVID-19 and other services to the community. The residential and commercial acquisition program specifically, there is a store that is renowned for drugs and crime in the Carver Heights community and that is one of their major projects where they are trying to acquire that property and change it into some form of a farmers' market where the community could come and use it as a positive outsource. It could be a place that brings in income and revenue for the community. The

facade improvement grant would also aim to eliminate eyesores by updating the exteriors of the subject property and removing deterioration of properties such as Ms. Pauls located on Nebraska Street. These are some of the programs that they are thinking about using the seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars that they are alluding to give them. They are very grateful and thankful.

Randy Hepburn, Eastside CDC, said he would really like that money to come to the east, allocated to the east side of the CDC. The things that he had seen in that community as a kid and growing up, he knew they could use that money in that area. One of the things he personally knows is they had buildings down there, but he would like to open up a soul food restaurant so everyone could come down there who would like to get some good soul cooking. He would like to have it pleasant so that everybody would feel good. He remembers a few years ago when white folks would not even come on Pine Street and he would like to change that image. It is time to change these images and get down to business and be real. We are all people, so that money should come to them and we should not be allocated. We talk about putting money everywhere else. We need to put this money into our community. It is time to change, it is time to put money into this community. He knows there are a lot of things, but put some money that you have never put in our community that is why we are so far behind now.

CM Minner said he would bring this back along with other options to consider next month. They can put together a formal resolution that pinpoints where it will be going. **Commissioner Pederson** added that he does not want to fund it fully with these dollars, but could we allocate some funds towards Market Street, which is part of the master plan downtown. **CM Minner** stated potentially.

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 July 2021

No comments.

8. CITY ATTORNEY ITEMS:

CA Morrison had no comments to offer tonight.

9. CITY MANAGER ITEMS:

CM Minner wanted to remind everyone that on Thursday, September 16th, we have our first hearing on the budgets and the tentative millage public hearing which starts at 5:00 p.m. here at the Venetian Center.

10. ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Pederson had nothing.

Commissioner Burry had nothing.

Commissioner Robuck had nothing.

Commissioner Connell had nothing.

Mayor Christian stated that he wanted to go on the record with all the citizens of the City of Leesburg because tonight this commission made some very bold decision-making as it relates to Pine Street, very specifically, the Leesburg CDC's. Just like Mr. Hepburn was very vocal when talking about Pine Street and the history of Pine Street. Many people are not aware of or may not have read the Federal Consent Decree that was signed in 1997. It specifically talks about the gates to the City and things that the City is required to do, as well as the Hospital. On page six, it talks about the City's responsibilities to the CDC. When Al Minner became the City Manager of Leesburg after he got settled in, not as the Mayor of the Commission, but as the President of the Leesburg CDC, he did a phenomenal job sharing financial resources. Ken Thomas, worked with the CDC to implement, formulate and develop the CDC's plan as it states in the Federal Consent Decree. We have not seen or heard from any CDC boardmembers or members of the community. No one has come in to the City Commission beating on the table quoting anything from the Federal Consent Decree. The City Manager has done an admirable job with the recommendations and funding for both CDC's. It was bold and very courageous of him. He thanked the Commission for allowing him to make that recommendation because in years past this never would have happened. In the Federal Consent Decree, on page seven, it states if funds should become available that should support or fund CDC activities; the CDC could come in and request that. When we saw the seven million dollars from selling the land to The Villages, we could have asked for money, but the CDC did not do that. When these federal dollars came in, he went to approach the City manager and found out that this was already in the making. The City Manager had already made the formulation on how he thought the money should be spent to meet the federal guidelines. He wanted to personally say to the City Manager, as the Mayor of this City, and to set the tone for many other cities around this community, like Eustis, who is getting eleven-point million dollars, and the City of Wildwood, who got three-point six million dollars. There are communities that were not even thought about that are blighted and they have been looked over for years. The City of Leesburg and Pine Street have been looked over for many years. The Carver Heights area has been looked over for many years as far as financial improvements go. He has been on this Commission for about eighteen/nineteen years and everything that they have asked for in Carver Heights and East Leesburg has literally been a fight. From the community saying give us some funding, but we need this funding. He has seen other organizations come in here with just a piece of paper and some boardmembers and, without a second thought, they were given a million dollars. He wanted to commend this Commission and the City Manager for being bold by saying there is a need in our community and for putting this recommendation forward. He hopes this Commission really understands the impact of what we did tonight looking at blighted areas and being intentional that we want to change the conditions. We heard about it and we read about it in the newspapers. We also hear our Police Chief talk about it, but in order for us to make significant changes, it requires significant dollars. Tonight, he is proud to say, as a resident and the Mayor of Leesburg, that we did something bold to repair Pine Street. That road jogs and if you are not paying attention, you will literally hit the curb in front of the barbeque stand, and it has been like that for years. No one has said let's fix it, so to this Commission and this staff he commends fixing a problem that we have just become used to living with. The time is done for us saying we are going to just accept it. If we see something that needs to be changed, we change it and tonight we made a big bold effort. He told someone outside the Federal Consent Decree, this is one of the biggest moves the City of Leesburg has made for the African American community within the City of Leesburg. Again, he wanted to go on the record saying the teen center was great, the gym was great and the pool was great, but this has been a strategic and well-thought out plan for our city. He thanked everyone for even considering this. For the West Leesburg CDC, he knows they have been working on projects for a long time and with this infusion of cash it would accelerate the ideas and goals they have. With the Boys and Girls Club, we are a partner with them, so we do not just

say here is some money, we hold people's feet to the fire. We have other non-profits that we give millions of dollars in revenue where maybe we could do the Rails to Trails. The trails came in asking for help, so now maybe we can give money to them. Now, we almost have a revenue source where we can actually do some trail developments in our City where we can continue to make our City move forward.

Again, he commended the staff and the Commission on being forward thinkers, bold and bodacious, on making a great decision tonight. As we move forward, he looks forward to seeing great things happen throughout our entire City.

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.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.