

**CITY OF LABELLE
REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING**

Mayor Wilkins opened the regular October Commission Meeting at 6:00 p.m. A roll call was taken, and all Commissioners were present. Ron Zimmerly, Finance Director, led the opening prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Wilkins made a presentation to Dave Lyons to recognize his years of service to the City as Mayor and Commissioner.

The next presentation was special recognition of employees transferred from the City to Woodard & Curran. Wilkins provided plaques and recognition to each employee stating their number of years of service. The Commission thanked them for their service to the City.

Wilkins closed the Commission meeting in order to open the Local Planning Agency meeting at 6:05 p.m.

Wilkins re-opened the regular Commission meeting at 6:15 p.m. to recognize the appointment of Brent Stevens as the new Fire Chief. She explained his credentials and welcomed Interim Fire Chief David White to present Chief Stevens with his pin. Interim Chief White administered the oath. The Commission congratulated Chief Stevens and thanked the Fire Department for their hard work and dedication. The regular Commission meeting was recessed to re-open the LPA at 6:25 p.m.

Wilkins re-opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m. and asked for a motion on the consent agenda. She noted she would like to pull the Fire Department Report and the Engineering Report from consent for discussion later in the meeting. No other Commissioners or members of the public requested an item to be pulled.

Akin made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Spratt seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

It was noted public hearing items 1 and 2 regarding Lincoln Avenue rezoning and overlay are being continued to the November 11, 2021 meeting. Wilkins noted properties in 1,000 feet of the proposed rezoning should be notified by mail of the public hearing.

Wilkins took up Resolution 2021-68 ratifying Resolutions 2021-63, 2021-64, 2021-65, 2021-66 and 2021-67 regarding the Local State of Emergency for COVID-19.

Spratt made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-68. Smith seconded the motion.

Spratt noted she was concerned the City Hall was closed to the public. Wilkins noted the City Hall re-opened that day.

Following discussion, the motion carried 5-0.

Wilkins noted the contract was not available for Florida Utility Solutions, Inc. as it was not provided in the back-up. City Attorney, Derek Rooney, explained the contract is related to the Green Tree package plant maintenance and noted Staff's progress. He also noted the discussions with the housing authority and the cost associated with the Florida Utility Solutions contract would be a "pass through" from the City to Green Tree.

Derek Rooney provided an overview of opioid funding and disbursement from the class action lawsuit outlined in Opioid Resolution 2021-69. He explained the purpose of the resolution to give the County more negotiation power and funding by having municipalities join them under one funding agreement. Following discussion and on the advice of counsel, the Commission tabled the item until the November meeting.

Wilkins read Resolution 2021-70 into the record relating to bank authorizations.

Spratt made a motion to approve Resolution 2021-70. Commissioner Ratica seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

Wilkins introduced the request for funding from the JV Basketball team. It was discussed that funding requests can be continuous, and many other groups may seek similar funding. Spratt noted each commissioner could donate \$50 personally. Ratica indicated agreement. Fire Chief Stevens suggested creating a fund for such requests, and require organizations to write grant proposals. There was discussion on how to make equitable donations in the community and create a process for vetting requests.

Wilkins noted the Engineering Report was pulled to discuss the septic to sewer conversion project. She noted Phase 2 is going out to bid soon, and they want to incorporate replacing the water lines in that section of the City. Wilkins noted that Laura Constantino is updating the bid to include both water and sewer. Ron Zimmerly clarified it would be an addendum as the sewer project was already out to bid.

Wilkins asked if Linda Clark was present for her request to present on LaBelle Area Family Oriented Recreational Association. Ms. Clark was not in attendance.

Heath Daniels noted the Swamp Cabbage Festival was requesting the same roads to be closed for the parade and the 5K run for the 2022 festival. It was noted that the routes were not changing from what was approved in 2021, and the FDOT application materials from last year are accurate. Crespo indicated she would file the paperwork with FDOT to secure approval for the road closures, noting approved meeting minutes are required as part of the application.

Akin made a motion to approve the road closures for the festival and the 5K as requested. Commissioner Spratt seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

Wilkins introduced Kelly Boone with the LaBelle Downtown Revitalization Corp. to provide an update on the AARP grant. Kelly noted she would be updating the grant to remove the corn hole boards and keep just chess and checker boards. Wilkins asked for confirmation that all improvements be complete by the end of January prior to the Swamp Cabbage Festival. Boone noted that was the intent. It was noted the boards would be ADA compliant with pavilion/coverings. The Commissioners indicated their support. Kelly also noted the sidewalk would continue to allow access to the gaming area. Kelly discussed other improvements relating to the gazebo. There was discussion on future improvements and the Commission thanked Kelly for her hard work.

Akin made a motion to approve the chess and checker boards with pavilions as presented by Kelly Boone. Commissioner Spratt seconded the motion.

Shellie Lowe, head of Swamp Cabbage Festival, commented that the location of the game boards and the amount of space that they take up in the park would conflict with Swamp Cabbage festivities. It was explained the boards will take up vendor space. There was discussion on placing the game boards along the perimeter of the area. Later it was discussed this proposal would interfere with oak trees plantings. There was

extensive discussion on balancing use of the park year-round with the needs of the Swamp Cabbage Festival. It was agreed that Boone would work with the Swamp Cabbage Festival Committee to locate the boards in a location that was as amenable as possible to both groups.

Following discussion, Akin withdrew his motion. Commissioner Ratica made a motion to accept the proposal by Kelly Boone as presented. Commissioner Spratt seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

Wilkins introduced Ms. Cor-nan Coldiron. She requested Cypress Street be closed from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. on Saturday, October 23rd for the Eastside First Baptist Church Fall Festival.

Commissioner Ratica made a motion to accept the proposal as presented. Commissioner Spratt seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

Gary Hull noted he would work with the church on the closure and appropriate security measures.

Wilkins introduced a new organizational chart and explained delegation of the different roles and tasks of Staff. She encouraged the Commission to discuss with Staff and it could be taken up at a future meeting.

Chief Stevens addressed the Commission and thanked the Commissioners for coming to the fire station. He invited all Commissioners to visit the department. He noted the American flag and City flag would be placed on the truck.

Wilkins moved to Commissioner reports/discussion items.

Smith had nothing to report.

Spratt asked for progress in maintenance at Ford and Sunset Park. Wilkins noted the city committed to facilitating a monthly clean-up that and she asked Staff to coordinate with the community as well as the local FDOT to have their assistance. Gary Hull committed to meeting with John Anderson at FDOT to request cooperation.

Ratica noted concern on the Trading Post. Wilkins noted that the property was under contract to be purchased and redeveloped. The City Attorney noted he would pursue code enforcement proceedings. There was discussion on the disrepair of the building. Gary Hull confirmed the new code enforcement officer would start on Monday, October 18th.

Akin noted that he hopes the Barron Park game board locations can be resolved. There was further discussion on code enforcement best practices.


Wilkins explained the creation of the Land Development Office to house building, planning, code enforcement and IT departments/staff. She explained the auditor will allow permit payments to be taken in at a separate office and brought to City Hall. She also noted on the Lincoln Avenue corridor rezone that the public will be notified in 1,000 feet of the rezoning area.

Spratt made a motion to adjourn. Ratica seconded the motion.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:50 p.m.

October 14, 2021

APPROVED:


Julie C. Wilkins, Mayor

Attest:


Thomas A. Smith, Clerk-Commissioner