

March 18, 2025
5:30 PM

The City Council of the City of Inverness met on the above date in Regular Session at 212 W. Main Street, with the following members present:

President Hepfer
Vice President Davis
Councilwoman Bega
Councilwoman Lizanich
Councilman Craig
Mayor Plaisted

Also present were City Manager Williams, City Attorney Hartley, Staff Members, and City Clerk Jackson.

The Invocation was given by Councilman Davis and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by the City Council.

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Councilwoman Lizanich motioned to accept the Agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilman Davis. The motion carried.

PRE-SCHEDULED APPEARANCES

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS / WORKSHOP

5)a) 2024 Inverness Community Redevelopment Agency Annual Report* noting in October 1990, the Inverness City Council created the City's first Community Redevelopment Agency, together with creation of the Inverness Community Redevelopment Agency (ICRA) consisting of seven board members to serve as the governing body of the Agency. In 2014, significant changes were made to its community redevelopment plan and expanded the CRA from 47 acres to 1,203 acres, to include the Medical Arts District and the US Hwy 41 North corridor. The 2024 report provided updates on projects in the approved 5-year CIP; potential projects for budget development; history of the ICRA; and information related to the bond issue and total project cost, the 2024 Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Fund Balance. Community Development Director Shoemaker provided a detailed PowerPoint presentation of the annual report and spoke of various projects. City Manager Williams spoke of various points of interest. **The Public Hearing was opened. No one spoke for or against the Annual Report. The Public Hearing was closed. Councilman Davis motioned to approve Inverness Community Redevelopment Agency 2024 Annual March 31 Report as presented and transmit to Florida Commerce, the Citrus County BOCC, and post to City website. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.**

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING

Debbie Wheatley spoke of the Bike Fest and how it ran smoothly and was highly attended.

Karen Esty thanked Council for the letter of support regarding the request for a sidewalk on Independence Highway. She noted she has also received letters of support from the Citrus County School Board, Citrus County Sheriff's Office, and will be receiving one from the Citrus County BOCC, Provided details of the process.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Bill Listing*
 - Recommendation – Approval
- b) Council Minutes – 03/04/2025*
 - Recommendation - Approval

Councilwoman Lizanich motioned to accept the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilman Davis. The motion carried.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT

9)a) Council Reorganization and Board Appointments* with City Clerk Jackson referencing the **City Charter, Section 2.10**, states **“annually on the third Tuesday in March, City Council Members shall meet for the purpose of reorganization, and at such meeting choose a new president and vice-president.”** Selection of the Council President and Vice-President has followed a rotation to provide an opportunity for each Councilmember to serve as President. All appointments will commence the next day following this meeting. In addition to the above, appointments to various boards and committees are decided. A separate document to identify member appointments to mandatory and elective committees was included. **Councilwoman Hepfer nominated Councilman Davis for Council President. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. Councilman Davis nominated Councilwoman Lizanich for Vice President. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. The motions carried.**

Council members appointed to various boards as follows:

Citrus County Chamber of Commerce	Councilman Gene Davis
Citrus County Special Library	
District Governing Board	Councilwoman Crystal Lizanich
Community Charitable Foundation	Councilwoman Crystal Lizanich
Alternate to CCCCCF	Councilwoman Linda Bega
Tourist Development Council	Councilman Tom Craig
Withlacoochee Regional Water Supply	Councilman Gene Davis
Keep Citrus County Beautiful (KCCB)	Councilwoman Linda Bega
Hernando/Citrus MPO	Councilman Gene Davis
Alternate to MPO	Councilman Tom Craig
Valerie Theatre Board	Councilwoman Linda Bega

City Clerk Jackson addressed the upcoming travel budget for Council. Suggested each member consider any training, conferences, etc. to be attended next fiscal year. As the budget process continues, an amount is to be determined for a single budget line for all

travel by Council members. City Manager Williams further added details and explanations.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

10)a) Banking Services Bid Award* with Finance Director Koter provided a general overview of the submittals and details of the bid process, highlighting each option. City Manager Williams explained why there were two options for the banking services. The primary objective of the RFP was to obtain banking services that will provide the least cost for required banking services, interest earnings on account balances, and efficient/effective customer service. The following four banks submitted proposals: Brannen Bank, Capital City Bank, Regions Bank, Seacoast Bank. Staff reviewed all four proposals for completeness and qualifications. Brannen offered the lowest cost for services compared to the other submittals. However, the offered interest rate on total account balances would be significantly less. Based on current interest rates this would equate to an estimated interest earning on account balances of 1.5%, with a minimum to never be less than 0.15%. Brannen bank is well-established and in the local community with a branch directly next to the Government Center. The City holds a CD and Money Market investment accounts with Brannen. Capital City Bank is the current banking provider for the City and offered the second-lowest pricing with the second-best rates for interest earnings within their submittal. Based on the submittal the minimum interest would be 3% interest for total account balances less the minimum balances required for interest forbearance to be more than total costs of banking services provided. Effectively, this would provide a net cost benefit. The City has an established relationship with the Capital City Treasury team mostly based in Tallahassee. Councilman Craig questioned interest earning potential compared to cost of services. Councilwoman Bega questioned if the current bank had changed their structure. Councilman Davis thought it was a good idea to look local. **Councilman Davis motioned to award the bid for banking services to Brannen Bank and authorize the City Manager to execute the agreement. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.**

10)b) Traffic Calming Improvements at Ella Avenue and Zephyr Street with Public Works Director Pell provided an update and referenced consulting with Lochner and spoke of ideas and options. He spoke of adding double yellow lines, rumble strips, stop signs, etc. He presented a map highlighting the plans for that area's traffic issues. Councilwoman Lizanich questioned the material of the rumble strips. City Manager Williams reiterated this is a temporary fix to the issues of that area. The recommendation is the first step. The hope is possible improvement of the traffic once the US 41N widening project is completed. Mayor Plaisted spoke of concerns as he lives in the area and has noticed increased traffic speed. Council President Hepfer questioned the cost of the rumble strips and spoke of other issues in her neighborhood.

10)c) Project/Program Updates (Verbal)

- Liberty Park Boardwalk Rehab with Parks & Rec Director Worley provided an update on the project noting issues that were discovered from the original build. Project started last week and should be completed by the end of May. Councilman Davis stated people love the boardwalk and nature. City Manager noted the land in that area is owned by the State.

- Pine St. Stormwater and Parking Lot Improvements with Asst. City Manager Calascione providing an update of the project and the 26 new parking spots being created. Spoke of stormwater alterations.
- Turner Camp – Middle School Traffic and spoke of meeting with School Board. The issue is clear, and a solution should be in place before the next school year.
- Recap of recent events included Big Bass, Bluegrass, & BBQ, Nature Coast Bike Fest, etc. Spoke of the many partnerships that help make this the Small Town Done Right.
- Upcoming Events included Teen’s Night Out, Dragonboat races, Brew Fest, etc. All thanked to our partners.
- Other with City Manager referencing an issue with the installation of the shade structures in the Liberty Park playground, but a local contractor has agreed to complete the installation by early summer. Spoke of the Whispering Pines Park Admin building and CORE building renovations and who would be in each building. Citrus BOCC has agreed to move forward with IGC lease.

COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS

Mayor Plaisted spoke of the recent Bay News 9 interview, USA Today voting, Bike Fest, etc. Spoke of conversation with people attending the St. Patrick’s Festival.

Councilman Craig looks forward to being the TDC representative for the City.

Councilman Davis thanked Council President Hepfer for serving this past year and looks forward to another great year. Stated people brag about Liberty Park and spoke of the history of the trail. Spoke of Althea Franklin as a lifelong city resident.

Councilwoman Lizanich thanked staff for all they do, and thanked Karen Esty for her amazing work trying to get funding for a sidewalk on Independence Highway.

Councilwoman Bega stated the Big Bass, Bluegrass, and BBQ was great and well organized. Noted the Liberty Park playground is constantly busy with children.

Council President Hepfer spoke of the amazing events and appreciates the staff’s hard work. Thanked all for her year of being Council President. Noted family that came to Inverness to attend the Big Bass, Bluegrass, & BBQ event. Was informed that the Bike Fest loved the park, how organized it was, etc.

CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA

Debbie Wheatley spoke of Inverness in the running for the USA Today “Best Small Town in the South”. She encouraged all to vote.

Meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

City Clerk

Council President