

July 1, 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 Davis
Vice President Lizanich
Councilwoman Bega
Councilwoman Hepfer
Councilman Craig
Mayor Plaisted

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

The Invocation was given by Councilwoman Hepfer and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by the City Council.

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to accept the Agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. The motion carried.

PRE-SCHEDULED APPEARANCES

4)a) FLC Years of Service Recognition – Mayor Plaisted was presented a plaque and pin from the Florida League of Cities for 25 years of service as an Elected Official of the City of Inverness. City Manager Williams and Council congratulated him.

PUBLIC HEARINGS / WORKSHOP

None

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING

Gary Thompson addressed the Council regarding a recent rejection of construction plans by Community Development Department. He provided a handout with additional information and details. He questioned the reason for the rejection.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Bill Listing*
 - Recommendation – Approval
- b) Council Minutes* – 06/17/2025
 - Recommendation - Approval

Councilwoman Bega motioned to accept the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT

None

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

10)a) South Highlands Septic to Sewer Project Grant Amendment* with City Manager Williams stating the South Highlands Septic to Sewer Project is currently in the design phase, and when cost estimates for the residents were cost-prohibitive, a modification of the grant terms was sought. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) negotiated a grant amendment that eliminated the local match requirement and reduced the scope of construction from five phases to two phases. FDEP also agreed to fund the full project design (all remaining phases) with grant dollars. The Council considered to look at offsetting the City's sewer capacity fee (\$2,720) most likely eliminating the need to levy any assessment. Asst. City Manager Calascione provided additional detailed information regarding the project. Councilwoman Hepfer applauded the cut of the cost to the residents. President Davis stated this is a win-win situation, with no match funds from the City and resurfacing of the streets. **Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to approve amendment to the DEP grant agreement for the South Highlands Septic to Sewer Grant as presented and authorize the City Manager to execute the document. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. The motion carried.**

10)b) South Highlands Septic to Sewer Professional Services with City Manager Williams stating the City's contracted engineering firm Kimley Horn has completed the design of Phase 1 of the South Highlands Septic to Sewer Project, a project that includes five phases in total. The attached professional services proposal from Kimley Horn for Task Assignment 1, covers the design of Phases 2-5 and the other services including Data Collection, GIS Database Development, Kick-off Meeting; Subconsultant Services; Engineering Design and Permitting; Grant Administration Assistance; and Bid Administration. The proposed cost is \$905,000 and is 100% covered by Florida Department of Environmental Protection grant funds under the terms of Grant WG068 Amendment 1. Asst. City Manager Calascione provided additional information regarding the project. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to approve the proposal for professional services with Kimley Horn in the amount of \$905,000 as presented and authorize the City Manager to execute the document. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried.**

10)c) Whispering Pines Park New Entrance Construction Bid Award* with City Manager Williams stating the State awarded the City a \$1,000,000 grant with \$200,000 of matching funds provided by the City to build the new entrance from US 41 to Whispering Pines Park. The City issued a Request for Proposal and received numerous submissions. The City's contracted engineer, Lochner along with staff performed due diligence to recommend the lowest and best option. The bids received were Cathcart Construction Co. - \$1,289,009.50; CW Roberts Construction - \$857,800.00; DB Civil Construction - \$755,806.00; Gibbs Register Inc. - \$949,787.00; Hartman Civil Construction Inc. - \$537,888.00; and Pave-Rite Inc. - \$832,256.22. Parks & Rec Director Worley provided a brief presentation regarding the project. Mayor Plaisted questioned the alignment of the new entrance. Councilman Craig asked about the perimeter trail and the crosswalk. **Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to award the bid to Hartman Civil Construction Inc. in the amount of \$537,888.00 for the construction of the Whispering Pines Park New Entrance and authorize the City Manager execute the agreement, issue a notice to proceed and manage change orders to the project. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.**

10)d) FY 2025-26 Florida Firefighter Assistance Grant Program* with City Manager Williams stating the Florida Department of Financial Services Division of State Fire Marshal has issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity for the FY2025-26 Florida Firefighter Assistance Grant Program, to improve the emergency response capability of volunteer fire departments and combination fire departments. Grant funding is only available for training, PPE, SCBA's, safety-related equipment and tools, wildland fire fighting and urban interface protective clothing and equipment, and cost-share subsidy for AFG apparatus awards. The fire department asked approval to apply for funding to purchase 5 complete Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA), 5 SCBA face pieces and 10 SCBA bottles valued at \$52,143.50. This grant requires no matching funds from the City. Fire Chief Bessler provided additional information regarding the grant program. **Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to approve the Fire Department to apply for funding from the FY 2025-26 Florida Firefighter Assistance Grant Program. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.**

10)e) Ordinance 2024-849 City Utility Liens– First Reading* with City Manager Williams stating this ordinance is a modification to City Ordinance Chapter 22, Section 93. Section 93 of the Code of Ordinances related to the payment of fees and bills issued monthly for services provided. The modification is to clarify the process and fees related to the issuance and release of liens on properties for unpaid bills. Finance Director Koter provided additional information. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to have the Clerk read Ordinance 2025-849 by Title only. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried.**

ORDINANCE 2025- 849

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF INVERNESS, FLORIDA, AMENDING SECTION 22-93 OF THE CITY'S CODE OF ORDINANCES ENTITLED PAYMENT OF FEES AND BILLS REQUIRED TO ADD CLARIFICATION ON PLACEMENT OF LIENS ASSOCIATED WITH PAYMENT OF BILLS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND INTERPRETING THIS ORDINANCE; PROVIDING FOR INCLUSION INTO THE CODE AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Councilwoman Bega motioned to approve Ordinance 2025-849 by rollcall vote on a first reading. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. Roll call vote was as follows: Councilwoman Bega, yes; Councilwoman Hepfer, yes; Councilwoman Lizanich, yes; Councilman Craig, yes; and President Davis, yes. The motion carried.

10)f) Project/Program Updates (*Verbal*)

- July 3 Patriotic Evening will be the biggest event of the year, and very aware of the possible weather conditions.
- Spoke of details to the handout regarding E-bicycles.
- Referenced the Zartico "Discover Crystal River" Strategic AI Report covering May 2024 to May 2025. Noted the changes in primary visitor destination with Crystal River decreasing from 45% to 31%, and Inverness increasing from 18% to 29%.

COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS

Mayor Plaisted was grateful for the FLC award for 25 years of public service. Has been a pleasure to serve with the other Elected Officials. Looking forward to July 3 event.

Councilwoman Bega thanked Councilwoman Hepfer and Mayor Plaisted for their support for the recent production at the Valerie Theatre. Looks forward to July 3 Patriotic Evening.

Councilwoman Hepfer stated the success of the City and Council is that they like each other and work to make Inverness better.

Councilman Craig spoke of the predicted weather for July 3 and invited everyone to come out and enjoy the event.

Council President Davis was excited to serve with all the Elected Officials and that July 3 will be a great event.

CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA

Debbie Wheatley appreciated that the City continues with the opening prayer and pledge. Spoke to the Whispering Pines Park new entrance and trail, and the users of the trail.

Meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

City Clerk

Council President