August 5, 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 Lizanich. The motion carried.

**PRE-SCHEDULED APPEARANCES**

**5)a) Legislative Update – Sunrise Group** with Government Affairs Consultant Andrew Kalel providing a 2025 legislative update highlighting the last session to include fluoride regulations, hemp legislation, tracking devices used in crimes, etc. 20% fewer bills were passed compared to previous years. He provided state budget highlights, Citrus County appropriations, and various House Bills. Noted that the Whispering Pines Park RV Campground was not included on either budget for the Senate and the House. He provided details of various policy outcomes, and spoke to the Community Redevelopment Agency reform, that did not pass.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS / WORKSHOP**

**6)a) City Council Full Budget Workshop – Public Notice DATE**: February 28, 2025

PLEASE BE ADVISED **BUDGET RELATED WORKSHOPS FOR FY 2025/26** ARE CALLED FOR THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF INVERNESS, AT 212 W. MAIN STREET, INVERNESS, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS:

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| April | 1, 2025 | 5:30pm | Overview Workshop of Projects & Goals |
| May | 6, 2025 | 5:30pm | Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Workshop |
| August | 5, 2025 | 5:30pm | City-Wide Budget Workshop |
| Sept. | 2, 2025 | 5:30pm | Tentative Budget Adoption - 1st Public Hearing **RESCHEDULED** |
| **Sept.** | **3, 2025** | **5:01pm** | **Tentative Budget Adoption - 1st Public Hearing** |
| Sept. | 16, 2025 | 5:30pm | Final Budget Adoption - Final Public Hearing |

/s/ Gene Davis
President of City Council

City Manager Williams began the 2025/26 full City-Wide Budget Workshop and presentation referencing the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2026. The workshop was to allow staff to make a presentation and provide highlights on key elements.

**Plan** – proposed spending for FY 2026 to increase 5.32% in operating expenditures in the General Fund over Fiscal Year 2025. The spending plan focuses on Capital Projects including roads and streets, infrastructure, expected levels of service, etc. It also addresses maintenance and growth of reserves to address maintaining existing assets. **All Funds** compared expenditures of FY2025 and FY2026, with total appropriated expenditures, transfers, reserves, and balances – FY2025 $89,813,671 and FY2026 $74,364,508. **General Fund** expenditures of FY2025 and FY2026, with total appropriated expenditures, transfers, reserves, and balances – FY2025 $35,267,527 and FY2026 $35,153,690. City Manager Williams continued with **General Fund Reserves** referencing prepaid expenses, equipment, litigation, buildings, fire, infrastructure, etc. Comparison included FY2024 (actual) at $14,813,477; FY2025 (budgeted) at $20,761,376, and FY 2026 (projected) at $19,085,060. **General Government Fund Balances** referencing ICRA – unreserved and CIP – unreserved with FY2024 (actual) at $11,256,192; FY2025 (budgeted) at $2,679,572, and FY 2026 (projected) at $1,892,036. **Utility Fund Reserves and Fund Balance** were FY2024 (actual) at $8,243,852; FY2025 (budgeted) at $15,541,306; and FY2026 (projected) at $17,992,526. **Cemetery Fund Balances** referencing unrestricted and perpetual care with FY2024 (actual) at $1,204,856; FY2025 (budgeted) at $1,192,762, and FY 2026 (projected) at $1,181,104. President Davis requested City Manager Williams provide details regarding ICRA, including the hospital, TIF funding, etc.

**Fund** – City Manager referenced that this budget was built using the Proposed Tentative Millage of 7.56, although it was previously set at 7.66. **All Funds Revenue Comparison** spoke to ad-valorem taxes, permits, grants, service charges, etc. with Total Revenues, Transfers and Balances for FY2025 (budgeted) at $89,813,671 and FY2026 (proposed) at $74,364,508.

**Execute** – City Manager Williams spoke of spending geared toward specific accomplishments and return on investments; focus on Capital Improvement Projects that address citizen needs; and promoting operational efficiencies. **Functional Areas** – *General Government* will maintain staffing levels at competitive rates, project/growth management, lobbying efforts, grant, and cooperative funding, intergovernmental and community partnerships, and policy development and implementation. *Economic Development* noted incentive programs, CRA plan/annual report, infrastructure investment and Medical Arts District, Transportation addressed road resurfacing and improvement, multimodal, and infrastructure investment and partnerships. *Public Safety & Fire Dept.* will include volunteer recruitment and development, level of service/ISO rating, and utilization of revenue opportunities (grants). *Enhanced Law Enforcement* related to the Citrus County Sheriff's Office agreement. *Cultural Recreation* focused on marketing and programming that maintains and creates energy and momentum and continue public private partnerships (PPP) for events, vendors, and facility operators. *Physical Environment* will monitor management of parks system, parking and lighting improvements, and shared downtown sanitation. *Cemetery* addressed promotion of pre-need sales, landscaping enhancement, and intergovernmental and community partnerships. City Manager Williams reminded Council this is a proposed budget. Councilwoman Lizanich spoke of the decreased millage rate and the increase in COLA and thanked everyone for their hard work.

Mayor Plaisted thought the 5% COLA was excellent, as the City staff is like family. Spoke of the population in Citrus County in the last 4 years. Councilwoman Bega noted this is the 6th year that the millage rate has been lowered. Spoke of increased County impact fees and any effect on the City. City Manager Williams detailed how impact fees are disbursed. Councilwoman Hepfer stated this is an excellent budget and recognized staff for their hard work. President Davis appreciated that the budget was transparent and concise.
City Manager Williams announced Public Hearings to adopt the Budget will be September 3, 2025 at 5:01pm for the tentative adoption hearing and September 16, 2025 at 5:30pm for the final adoption hearing. The workshop was closed.

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETING**
Debbie Wheatley was thankful for the wonderful presentation of the budget and questioned ICRA, with City Manager Williams providing details explaining tax increment financing.

Karen Esty spoke of reviewing the County grant with Congressman Bilirakis, spoke of Independence sidewalk and funding possibilities, etc.

**CITY ATTORNEY REPORT**
None

**CONSENT AGENDA**

a) Bill Listing*
   - Recommendation – Approval
b) Council Minutes* – 07/15/2025
   - 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**

**11)a) Architectural Professional Services – Inverness Government Center*** with Asst. City Manager Calascione stating the Inverness Government Center (IGC) is approaching twenty years of age and while it continues to be one of the most robust and functional buildings in the County, it is also in need of some updates for safety and functionality to meet the current demands of a public building. These upgrades will also benefit the proposed tenancy of government staff and/or elected officials as the County looks to the City in addressing their space needs. WGI, Inc., offered proposal for designing upgrades to the IGC lobby and Council Chambers. The proposal in the amount of $37,750 would include architectural concept design and mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) engineering services. The professional services proposal from WGI provides: performance of due diligence and preparation of initial design concepts for functional, security, and aesthetic upgrades of IGC's main lobby and council chambers; access control; space planning; integration of digital signage and kiosk technology; etc. Councilman Craig spoke to future considerations regarding security. Mayor Plaisted spoke of the history of the IGC. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to approve the proposal for architectural professional**

**services with WGI, Inc. in the amount of $37,750 as presented. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried.**

**11)b) FY 2025-26 Florida Firefighter Cancer Decontamination Equipment Grant*** with Fire Chief Bessler stating the City of Inverness Fire Department has applied for grant funding to purchase and install a PPE washer extractor to properly clean contaminated turnout gear and reduce occupational exposure to carcinogens and other hazardous substances. The acquisition of a compliant, NFPA 1851-certified washer extractor will significantly reduce health risks posed by soiled gear, help prolong the life of PPE, and ensure our firefighters are equipped and protected to perform their duties safely. This funding is being made possible by the Division of State Fire Marshal's FY2025-2026 Florida Firefighter Cancer Decontamination Equipment Grant and requires a 25% match. The matching funds have been budgeted for FY 2025-26. The total cost of the project is $7,668.00, and the City's match is $1,917.00. ***Informational only.***

**11)c) Project/Program Updates** ***(Verbal)***

- Public Art – Hospital Crosswalk with ACM Calascione presenting a proposed crosswalk on Grace Street and FDOT stipulations. Painted benches will be proposed with location, and noted examples of painted benches in other cities.
- WPP Pool Programs Schedule with Asst. Parks & Rec Director Bechtel explaining upcoming changes to the pool operating times and noted this issue this season regarding a shortage of lifeguards.
- Back to School with P & R Director Worley spoke of the upcoming event this Thursday from 5:00pm – 7:00pm at the Depot Pavilion. There will be 40+ community partners/vendors with all school ages invited.
- Other with City Manager referencing back to school and working with CCSO for a plan regarding youth in City parks issues. Spoke of the newly installed guardrail near the Middle School. Call 911 if issues are witnessed. Stated the gateway/wayfinding sign installations has started.

**COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS**

Mayor Plaisted was grateful the Council meetings are so positive and spoke of past times.

Councilman Craig provided a recent TDC meeting report, spoke of the Withlacoochee State Trail, upcoming bike ride, tours, etc.

Council President Davis stated the residents are the pulse of our community.

**CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA**

Georgia Litz and a fellow citizen spoke of being proud of our community and of use of the pool.

Debbie Wheatley questioned the TDC funding that was discussed earlier this year.

Meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

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City Clerk Council President