

December 16, 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) Christmas Lamp Post Winners with Program Coordinator Brown accompanied by the Mayor and Council members presenting the awards to the following participants:
Most Festive – 2nd Place was Luciid Designs and 1st Place was Inverness Elks #2522. Most Creative – 2nd Place was Fit Full Force and 1st Place was Inverness Little League. People's Choice went to Purpose & Promise Learning Academy.

PUBLIC HEARINGS / WORKSHOP

None

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING

The following members of the audience spoke of concerns of additional medical marijuana dispensaries coming into the City limits: Jeff Burke, Renea Teaster, John Labriola, Steve Jones, Cynthia King, Carmelita Seda Crothers, Michael Laurain, Mike O'Connel, Debbie Wheatley, and Robert Robinson II.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Bill Listing*
 - Recommendation – Approval
- b) Council Minutes* – 12/02/2025
 - Recommendation - Approval

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

CITY CLERK'S REPORT

None

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

10)a) 2027 Budget Development Schedule* with City Manager Williams stating the enclosed budget development schedule is structured to support the work necessary to build, discuss and adopt the upcoming Fiscal 2026-27 City-Wide Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Budget. Similar to prior years, this budget planning and development cycle will be established to align with dates of regularly scheduled Council meetings. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to confirm the Budget Development Schedule for Fiscal Cycle 2026-27. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.**

10)b) US 41 North Septic to Sewer Professional Services* with Assistant City Manager Calascione stating the City's contracted engineering firm, Kimley Horn has been tasked with the design of the US 41 North Septic to Sewer Project. The project will serve 117 parcels, with approximately 67 already developed and utilizing septic tanks (33 commercial and 34 residential). The vacant parcels include 32 commercial parcels, 9 residential parcels, 19 industrial parcels, and 8 government-owned parcels. The total project consists of approximately 9,000 linear feet (LF) of water main along the Withlacoochee State Trail from its intersection with US 41N to East Arlington Street, 7,700 LF of gravity sewer, 13,500 LF of force main, two local or regional lift stations, and approximately 20 individual grinder pump stations, and 1.5 miles of existing roadway restoration which includes a northern section and a southern section of a 12" force main that will connect to the City's Master Lift Station on Mill Avenue. To keep progressing toward 60% design plans, the engineering services scope would expand to cover the entire project area design and permitting along the Withlacoochee State Trail. The City applied for a Florida Department of Environmental Protection and was awarded a grant totaling \$4,881,000; therefore, the City would not have to provide local match funding. City Manager Williams detailed various aspects of the improvements to be made. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to approve Amendment 2 to IPO 26 for professional services with Kimley Horn in the amount of \$126,100 as presented and authorize the City Manager to execute the document. Seconded by Councilman Craig. The motion carried.**

10)c) Vehicle Purchase – Brush Truck – Fire Department* with Fire Chief Bessler stating the Fire Department currently utilizes a 2005 Ford F-550 4x4 for brush fire response and off-road incidents. This apparatus has exceeded the NFPA's recommended 15-year service life for frontline vehicles and is no longer cost-effective to maintain due to increasing difficulty in obtaining replacement parts. Staff is recommending the purchase of a 2026 Ford F-350 4x4 truck for the amount of \$51,278 to replace the existing F-550. **Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to approve the purchase of a 2026 Ford F-350 truck in the amount of \$51,278 through Nick Nicholas Ford in keeping with the State government pricing. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.**

10)d) Vehicle Purchase – Ladder Truck - Fire Department* with Fire Chief Bessler requesting the **purchase** of a new ladder truck for the City Fire Department. This allocation was based on a March 2024 price quote of \$1,300,000 for an available unit at that time. The federal share represented 55% of the projected cost, with a required City match of 45% (\$585,000). Market conditions changed significantly, with current ladder truck prices

commonly exceeding \$2,000,000 with extended 2-4 years building the truck, resulting in limited availability and competitive purchasing for completed units. E-One in Ocala is currently completing a ladder truck that was ordered by another department and subsequently made available when the customer opted for a different model. This unit meets the operational needs of our Fire Department and will be completed in March 2026. It is available to the City at government pricing for the cost of \$1,629,507 through the Florida Sheriff's Cooperative Purchasing Program. This is for the purchase of the aforementioned E-One ladder truck, utilizing the \$715,000 in Federal Appropriations, with the support by Congressman Bilirakis, and supplementing the remaining cost (\$585,000 originally projected + \$329,507 price increase) with available Fire Department Reserve funds. He also spoke of the potential improvement of the City's ISO rating. Councilman Craig spoke of Congressman Bilirakis and his support which allowed the City to receive the only grant with 9 others not funded. City Manager Williams explained the cost difference and that this truck is local and near completion. **Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to approve the purchase of a 2026 E-One 100' Cyclone II Ladder Truck in the amount of \$1,629,507 through E-One's authorized dealer Matheny Fire & Emergency Co. utilizing government pricing and funding the balance of \$914,507 from the Fire Department Reserve. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. The motion carried.**

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

- Helping Families Holiday Donation – Program Update with Finance Director Koter announcing that in the month of December 81 families had received financial assistance to avoid an interruption in utility services. It is anticipated there are enough funds to provide this assistance again in January 2026. City Manager Williams explained the program for anyone unaware of the assistance.
- WPP Workshop December 17, 2025 at 5:30pm will provide a learning experience of the history of Whispering Pines Park, looking to the future and options to be considered.
- Other included a reminder that the City would be closed Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday for the Christmas holiday. Announced the Mayor's State of the City will be on the January 6, 2026 Council meeting agenda.
- Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS

Mayor Plaisted spoke of his recent injury of breaking his leg causing him to miss his 1st Christmas Parade while he has been an elected official. Spoke of recent "Elvis" visit. He commended the audience members for their comments and he is in favor of the ban of additional dispensaries. Spoke of a relative who had issues with medical marijuana.

Councilwoman Bega praised a City staff member who has been working to clean sidewalks in the downtown and what a great job. Announced this weekend will be the Christmas Show at the Valerie Theatre and 100% of ticket sales will be donated to the Citrus United Basket.

Councilwoman Hepfer thanked the audience members who spoke and she also agreed to the ban, and supports an Ordinance be proposed at an upcoming Council meeting. Noted how much fun the Christmas Parade was for all, especially the children. We are a Small Town Done Right.

Councilwoman Lizanich stated the dispensaries should be placed on an upcoming agenda for discussion, as well as the fertilizer ordinance that was presented by the Sierra Club at a previous Council meeting. City Manager Williams suggested the second meeting in January for the 1st readings.

Councilman Craig spoke of his previous work with DARE for many years, and of Colorado and medical marijuana. Noted it is against the law to drive under the influence, even with the medical marijuana card.

Council President Davis affirmed the consensus of the Council to direct staff to proceed with the development of an Ordinance regarding the medical marijuana dispensary ban. Thanked those in attendance that spoke and provided their opinions.

Every Elected Official wished everyone a very blessed Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA

Debbie Wheatley spoke of her prayers were answered regarding the ladder truck for the fire department.

John Labriola thanked Council for their consideration regarding an Ordinance banning future medical marijuana dispensaries in the City limits.

Meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

City Clerk

Council President