

January 20, 2026  
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 (*arrived at 5:54pm*)

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 Bega motioned to accept the Agenda with moving Item 4)a) until after the Mayor's arrival. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried.

#### **PRE-SCHEDULED APPEARANCES**

**4)a) Employee Service Awards** with Mayor Plaisted presenting work history summaries and awards to the following: Woody Worley – 5 years and Stacey Iddings – 10 years.

#### **PUBLIC HEARINGS / WORKSHOP**

None

#### **OPEN PUBLIC MEETING**

DeeVon Quirolo representing Sierra Club Adventure Coast spoke of the fertilizer ordinance and effects of fertilizer on waterways. Highlighted noted language that differed from the ordinance by the BOCC and City of Crystal River. Suggested to delay the ordinance process.

Maxine Connor with Citrus Conservation spoke to the language difference in the various ordinances and suggested changes to eliminate confusion regarding the rainy season.

David Whitesell with the Downtown Rotary thanked the City and staff for all of their assistance with the lighting of the Christmas tree at the historic Courthouse and all of the many events.

Karen Esty spoke of the Independence Highway sidewalk and the email sent to the Hernando/Citrus MPO executive director. Noting this is a safety issue and would benefit all. Spoke of funding and will contact Senator Massullo regarding this issue.

Sandy Levin with the Downtown Business Partnership displayed a new map of the downtown and businesses and spoke of the various aspects.

Michael Puzino spoke of the upcoming 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States and any 4<sup>th</sup> of July plans. City Manager Williams confirmed planning is in motion. Mr. Puzino questioned if Inverness would get a Trader Joe's with City Manager stating that is not a City decision.

## **CITY ATTORNEY REPORT**

City Attorney Hartley spoke of the recently acquired Manning property and the next steps in the process.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- a) Bill Listing\*
  - Recommendation – Approval
- b) Council Minutes\* – 01/06/2026
  - Recommendation - Approval

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

## **CITY CLERK'S REPORT**

None

## **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

**10)a) N. Pine Avenue Stormwater and Parking Project Bid Award\*** with Assistant City Manager Calascione providing a PowerPoint presentation stating the City secured a \$450,000 Stormwater Grant from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to improve existing stormwater facilities on North Pine Avenue, consistent with the City's Stormwater Masterplan. Previously, Council approved expansions to include increased parking spaces on the City's property and resurfacing of the existing parking area. The consolidated project will add 28 new parking spaces and over 435,000 gallons of stormwater treatment capacity for storm events which will help protect our area's lakes and springs. The City recently issued a Request for Proposal (RFP 2025-02-DPW) for the project. The City's contracted engineering firm, Lochner, in concert with staff, performed due diligence in order to recommend the lowest and best bidder. The bids received were: Art Walker Construction - \$838,658.00; Hartman Civil Construction - \$473,888.00; Pave-Rite Inc. - \$477,731.88; Earthscapes Unlimited - \$409,535.73; John L. Finch Contracting - \$717,709.00; MidSouth Inc. - \$693,791,60; and T & C Underground Inc. - \$373,735.00. Additionally, \$38,647.95 was requested for inspection (CEI) services from Lochner, and to authorize construction and engineering. Councilman Craig questioned the tree removal with Asst. City Manager relating root issues and the trees will be replaced. Councilwoman Bega questioned grant funding and contingency funds with City Manager Williams highlighted this is to address effects on surrounding properties. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to award the bid to T&C Underground Inc. in the amount of \$373,735 for the construction of the N. Pine Avenue Stormwater and Parking Improvements, adding \$40,000 in contingency funds, and authorize CEI services from Lochner in the amount of \$38,647.95 and authorize the City Manager to execute the agreement, issue a notice to proceed, and manage change orders to the project. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried.**

**10)b) Professional Services for Wallace Brooks Skate Park and Basketball Court\*** with Parks & Rec Director Worley providing a presentation stating park improvements have been budgeted in the 2026 CIP to include a basketball court and a skate park located next to Wallace Brooks Park on the 19,000 square foot City-owned parcel just to the west of the existing large parking lot and south of the existing volleyball courts. Kimley Horn, Inc, one of the City's contracted engineering firms, will provide the professional services proposal for

these park improvements' design. The proposal includes a concept design, construction documents, permits, and coordination with contractors during the bidding process. Councilwoman Bega questioned if skateboarding was still popular and of liability to the City. Parks Director Worley stated this structure is multi-use for skateboarding and bikes. President Davis confirmed if the basketball court will be fenced. Councilwoman Hepfer recalled in 1998 this idea was brought up, with Mayor Plaisted agreeing this is deja vu. **Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to approve the proposal by Kimley-Horn, Inc. in the amount of \$42,300 for the professional services as presented and authorize the City Manager to execute the document. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. The motion carried.**

**10)c) Ordinance 2026-853 Fertilizer Application Practices– First Reading\*** with Community Development Director Shoemaker stating Council previously discussed fertilizer application practices within City limits and consensus was for staff to return a draft ordinance for consideration. The draft ordinance was based on recommendations from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to have the Clerk read Ordinance 2026-853 by Title only. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.**

#### **ORDINANCE 2026- 853**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF INVERNESS AMENDING CHAPTER 22 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES BY ADDING ARTICLE V, REGULATING THE USE OF FERTILIZER WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION, CONFLICTS, AND SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

City Manager Williams provided further details to Council questions regarding State standards, how this would be enforced, differing language from ordinances by BOCC and Crystal River, etc. It was noted the City's ordinance was created using a template from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Council consensus was to amend the language regarding the months of the year and setbacks to mirror the County and Crystal River. **Councilwoman Lizanich motioned to approve Ordinance 2026-853 as discussed by rollcall vote on a first reading. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. 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)d) Medical Marijuana Treatment Centers\*** with Community Development Director Shoemaker stating recently Council discussed reinstating a ban on new medical marijuana dispensaries within City limits with consensus that staff draft ordinance for consideration. The draft ordinance was reviewed by the City Attorney, who provided the opinion that the ordinance requires an amendment to the Land Development Code (LDC). Amendments to the LDC are first referred to the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) to review and forward a recommendation to Council. This matter will be presented a PZC hearing on Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>; City Council First Reading on February 17<sup>th</sup>; and City Council Public Hearing, Second Reading and Adoption on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. City Attorney Hartley reminded this will require two Public Hearings. Councilwoman Lizanich requested crime report data relating to the dispensaries, as many opinions relate the dispensaries and safety concerns. ***No action required.***

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

- Small Town Saturday Night with Director Worley reminding it is this Saturday and the weather will be perfect for the Homegrown band with Highway 41 band opening.
- Helping Families Holiday Donations with Finance Director Koter stating the \$14,000 donations received helped approx. 156 Inverness families avoid service interruptions and shutoffs in both December and January.
- Other with City Manager noted there is a lot going on in the City such as the upcoming 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of USA, Big Bass, Bluegrass & BBQ event, keeping watch on the legislature, etc. Spoke of the Whispering Pines Park lease and discussions with the State are progressing.

#### **COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS**

Council President Davis presented the **City Clerk Employment Agreement\*** and it was noted Ms. Jackson was appointed as City Clerk in December of 2015 and has continuously served in that role since her appointment. The City Clerk is a Charter officer responsible for performing duties prescribed by the City Charter, City Code, and other applicable law, as well as such additional duties as may be assigned by the City Council. Ms. Jackson serves as City Clerk by appointment of the City Council pursuant to the City Charter. The City has also entered into an employment agreement with the City Clerk that governs the terms and conditions of her employment in that appointed office. That agreement is set to expire, and both the City and the City Clerk desire to enter into a new agreement addressing those terms going forward. At the January 6, 2026, Council meeting, Council directed the Council President meet with the City Clerk, and with the assistance and input of City Attorney, to develop a proposed new employment agreement for final consideration at the January 20, 2026, Council meeting. Councilwoman Lizanich spoke of various attributes of the City Clerk and thanked her for all she does for the Council and the City. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to approve the employment agreement with Susan Jackson to continue as the City Clerk as presented. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.**

Mayor Plaisted spoke to the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the US and a flag brochure he received. He referenced correspondence he received regarding an event in Tamps for COPS organization.

Councilwoman Bega noted the current Quality Cities magazine from the Florida League of Cities has the Mayor's years of service highlighted on page 9. Admired the new sign at the CCSO substation on Dampier Street building.

Councilwoman Hepfer stated it is an honor to be here to serve for the greater good.

Councilwoman Lizanich noted speaking at the recent Dr. MLK, Jr. event. Stated the kids at this meeting was excited about the skateboard park and basketball court. She thanked the employees who received years of service recognition. Spoke of upcoming meetings for the CCCC.

Councilman Craig noted the caboose is almost finished outside with the funds donated for that specific project. Spoke of the Cultural Alliance providing funding to paint the various turtle installations around the City. Referenced the Helping Families program, and it was so nice to see the community looking after each other.

Council President Davis noted that Councilman Craig spearheaded the caboose project and it was a great effort. He stated that many people do not realize the Withlacoochee State Trail was a railroad line.

**CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA**

Sandy Levin commended Council for the skate park project and noted it is a family sport that draws people together.

Maxine Connor referenced the fertilizer ordinance being a 24<sup>th</sup> hour suggestion and spoke to the ordinance language, etc. Noted that fertilizer cannot be banned from retail selling and spoke of the springs, rainfall, nutrients, etc.

Debbie Wheatley stated it is great to come to the City with questions and gets answers from the City Manager and City Clerk.

Meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

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City Clerk

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Council President