

June 4, 2024
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 – *Absent*
Vice President Davis
Councilwoman Bega
Councilwoman Lizanich
Councilman McBride
Mayor Plaisted – *Absent*

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

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

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

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

PRE-SCHEDULED APPEARANCES

Inverness Fire Department Community Awards Recognition with Fire Chief Bessler stating several of our Fire Department members recently received local and federal awards in recognition of their heroism and outstanding service to our community. Lieutenant Samuel Schey and Firefighter Caleb Deal received the VFW Post 4337 Public Servant of the Year Award for the heroic rescue of an elderly woman and dog from a house fire. Lieutenant Matthew Hare received the U.S. Congressional 12th District 1st Responder of the Year Award from Congressional Representative Gus Bilirakis for outstanding work ethic and steadfast dedication and service to the Fire Department and our community. All were congratulated and thanked for their continued commitment to excellence and community service.

PUBLIC HEARINGS / WORKSHOP

None

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING

Mimi Clark spoke of the Market at the Depot and the vendors that cancel, are no shows, or late arrivals. She recommended for Council to consider a fee or suspension for those offenders.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Bill Listing*
 - Recommendation – Approval
- b) Council Minutes – 05/21/2024*
 - Recommendation – Approval

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

CITY CLERK'S REPORT

9)a) Ordinance 2024-831 Canvassing Board Referendum – First Reading* with City Clerk Jackson stating this Ordinance is to address language in the City Charter regarding a City Canvassing Board, as referenced in Article IV, Section 4.06 of the City Charter. City Attorney Hartley stated since approx. 2006, there has been an Interlocal agreement between the City and the Citrus County Supervisor of Elections Office (SOE) during an election year, which agreed for the Citrus County Canvassing Board to canvass City ballots. Following discussions with Citrus County Supervisor of Elections Baird, the Department of State's Office of General Counsel, and research of City records, it was recommended that the City delegate the function of canvassing the election to the County's Canvassing Board to insure the most secure, efficient, and accurate canvassing of General Election ballots. This Ordinance for Council consideration calls for amending the City Charter to provide consistency with the intended practice. This solution serves the best interests of the City and electorate. **Councilwoman Lizanich motioned to have the Clerk read Ordinance 2024-831 by Title only. Seconded by Councilman McBride. The motion carried.**

ORDINANCE 2024- 831

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF INVERNESS, FLORIDA, PROVIDING FOR A REFERENDUM ELECTION TO BE HELD ON AUGUST 20, 2024; AMENDING THE CITY CHARTER BY REPEALING PART I, ARTICLE IV, SECTION 4.06. – CITY CANVASSING BOARD; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Councilman McBride motioned to approve Ordinance 2024-831 by roll-call vote on a first reading. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. Roll call vote was as follows: Councilwoman Bega, yes; Councilwoman Lizanich, yes; Councilman McBride, yes; Vice President Davis, yes. The motion carried.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

10)a) Fiscal Year End 2023 Audit Report* with City Manager Williams stating audit is an essential and required critical review of the financial status and inner workings of City Government. Public entities are in part measured by how they collect, appropriate, invest, expense and account for monetary resources. The process to conduct a thorough audit takes months and requires interaction between City Finance staff with representatives from the independent audit firm. Tammy Campbell of McDirmit Davis & Company reported the purpose of the internal audit is to provide independent assurance that the City's risk management, governance, investment, and internal control processes are operating effectively. the audit covered financial statements for Fiscal Year 2022-2023. She stated the City is in good financial health and in compliance and provided details of the positive financial report. It was reported this audit was unmodified, which is the best, and included various increases and good reserves. Internal controls are operating well and there were no comments or issues to be addressed. Councilman McBride questioned the corrections on page 2 with Ms. Campbell explaining the reasons. **Councilman McBride motioned to accept the Financial Statements, Supplementary Information and Independent Auditor Reports for year**

ending September 30, 2023, and authorize the documents be forwarded with all related paperwork to the Office of the State Auditor General. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.

10)b) Contract Award – Wayfinding Signage Phase 1* with City Manager Williams stating calling Community Development Director Shoemaker to make the presentation. The bid process, the 2 phases of the project, bid tabulation, etc. was detailed. GAI-Community Services Group (CSG) assisted with creating welcoming experience entering the City with a new street signage system to match the City's brand to guide residents and visitors to key points within the City. The project RFP 2024-01-CDD was published in the Citrus Chronicle, on the City's website and through Demand Star, on March 3 with a mandatory pre-bid meeting on March 15. There were twelve requests for the bid package, eight participants at the pre-bid meeting and four bids submitted on April 3, 2024. Gateway signage includes two of the Type A Landscape Gateway Monuments, large entry monuments to the City to be installed at the Northeast corner of Highway 44 and Pleasant Grove Road; and the Southeast corner of Highway 44 and U.S. 41. Gateway signage also includes five of the Type B Portrait Gateway Monuments. These entry pillars will be installed at the following locations: U.S. 41 at Zephyr Street; Pleasant Grove and Grove Manor Boulevard; South Apopka and Inverness Boulevard; U.S. 41 and Mossy Oak Drive; and Independence at Reagan Street West. The final Gateway group included five Type C Downtown Gateway at Tompkins Street and North Citrus Way; Main Street and Seminole Avenue; Main Street and South Apopka Avenue; U.S. Hwy 41 South and MLK Blvd; and at an undesignated location. Phase 2 of the bid included 71 Wayfinding signs as follows: forty-nine (49) directional signs; eight (8) parking directional signs; seven (7) pedestrian kiosks; and seven (7) pedestrian directional signs. The FY 24 budgeted funds for the Gateway and Wayfinding Signage Project total \$354,000, moving forward with only the Phase 1 Gateway Signage work. Councilman McBride questioned the start date with Director Shoemaker noting approx. 30 days, followed by 3-4 months of fabrication, for a total of approx. 7-9 months. Councilwoman Bega questioned if the 2 phases could have different contractors with City Manager Williams stating there could be a rebid of Phase II in the future. Councilwoman Lizanich asked of the materials would be the same from different contractors with it being noted there are specs that will be met when fabricating the signage. **Councilman McBride motioned to select AC Signs as vendor to furnish and install twelve (12) Gateway Signs in the amount of \$285,785 and authorize the City Manager to execute the peccary documents and manage change orders to the project accordingly. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. The motion carried.**

10)c) 310 E. Dampier Street – Lot Purchase* with City Manager Williams stating for many years the City has attempted to acquire the vacant lot located at 312 East Dampier Street, the former site of the Standard Oil Company distribution location. The property has been in the ownership of the Smith family for decades with no plans for future development. The property lies adjacent to the master lift station, Wallace Brooks Park and the Withlacoochee State Trail with frontage along Cooter Pond. Environmental concerns hindered previous attempts to acquire the property. however, the current owners have taken extraordinary steps to remediate the site and obtained full clearances from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for site. In March 2024, the City obtained an appraisal for the property for a fair market value of \$224,000. The City made an offer for \$200,000 that has been accepted by the owner contingent on Council approval. In the

proposed offer, the City will fund the title commitment and review/acceptance of the environmental assessments and remediation performed previously. Councilman McBride asked how the offer of \$200,000 was determined with City Manager Williams noting the City agreed to handle the title work and there would not be a realtor commission involved. **Councilwoman Lizanich motioned to approve the purchase agreement as presented and authorize the City Manager to proceed with the acquisition. Seconded by Councilman McBride. The motion carried.**

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

- July 3 Patriotic Evening is a big event with huge interest. This year it will be under City management. Sponsors and partners have donated approx. \$40,000 to date for the event.
- Code Compliance Initiatives regarding an uptick in unpermitted work. There are proper requirements to be followed and staff is working to get this under control. Spoke of rules regarding political signs as this is an election year.
- Other included Small Town Saturday Night being a great event. Noted the metal sculpture of the owls in the tree, located in the IGC lobby, will be moving to another state.

COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS

Councilwoman Bega stated the Water Tower at the Depot District looks fantastic with the new lighting. Questioned the company marking lines on Dampier with City Manager stating it involves high speed internet. Public Works Director Dilmore added it includes gas lines, fiber, etc. as well. Question a possible vendor for the Wallace Brooks Park vendor building with City Manager Williams stating that will be a focus after July 4.

Councilman McBride questioned the building next to Mama's Kountry Kitchen with City Manager speaking of interest in the condition of the building, etc.

Councilman Davis thanked the City Manager and staff for all they do and the great financial report.

CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA

Leslie Barras spoke of the Dampier St. property and the possible past uses and chemicals involved.

Meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

City Clerk

Council President