



**CITY OF FLORA
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
131 EAST SECOND STREET**

October 7, 2024 – 4:30 P.M.

City Clerk Kaci O'Dell administered the Oath of Office to new Chief of Police Jeremy Ruger. Jeremy's wife, Whitney, held the Bible as he was sworn in.

City Clerk Kaci O'Dell administered the Oath of Office to new Assistant Chief of Police Kaleb Greenwood. Kaleb's wife, Heather, held the Bible as he was sworn in.

City Clerk Kaci O'Dell administered the Oath of Office to new Sergeant Scott Schumer. Scott's wife, Trisha, held the Bible as he was sworn in.

OPENING CEREMONIES

Mayor Rick Slaughter called the Regular Council Meeting of the City of Flora to order and City Clerk Kaci O'Dell called roll. Present were Mayor Rick Slaughter, Commissioner Linda Spicer, Commissioner Jeremy Henderson, Commissioner Phil Wiley and Commissioner Jim Fehrenbacher.

Others in attendance were City Attorney Bob Coble, Chief of Police Jeremy Ruger, City Administrator/Economic Development Director Mike Stanford, City Clerk Kaci O'Dell, City Treasurer Kim Adair, Building and Zoning Official Chad Bayles and Superintendent of Public Services Toby Rinehart. One media representative, several guests, and family and friends of the newly appointed employees were in attendance.

Mayor Rick Slaughter led the Pledge of Allegiance and Commissioner Phil Wiley offered the Invocation.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jen Henson on behalf of Storm Brewing, LLC asked for Council approval to host a band on the sidewalk outside of 102 E. 2nd St. the night of October 26, 2024.

A MOTION TO APPROVE STORM BREWING, LLC TO USE THE SIDEWALK FOR A BAND AT 102 E. 2ND ST ON OCTOBER 26, 2024, WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER SPICER; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FEHRENBACHER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

Bill Atwood on behalf of the Ministerial Alliance was present to seek Council approval to use Library Park on October 13, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. It will be an evening of prayer and devotion for victims of the recent hurricanes.

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINISTERIAL ALLIANCE TO USE LIBRARY PARK ON OCTOBER 13, 2024, WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILEY; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SPICER

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA FOR THE OCTOBER 7, 2024, REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING FOR THE CITY OF FLORA WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER FEHRENBACHER; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SPICER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

CONSENT AGENDA

The following items were listed under the Consent Agenda:

- APPROVE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2024
- APPROVE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 24, 2024
- APPROVE SCHEDULE OF BILLS FOR SEPTEMBER 11, 2024 THROUGH OCTOBER 1, 2024

Commissioner Henderson stated that he would like an addition to the Special Council Meeting Minutes of September 24, 2024. He wishes to add a statement made by Matt Johnson, Engineer with Fehr Graham, regarding that training would be provided from operators at the Colorado plant (who are currently using our proposed design). Commissioner Henderson feels this is important in the event the current Council is no longer here when the plant is completed.

Commissioner Wiley asked Matt Johnson if we were still in agreement, that Fehr Graham would be bringing in operators to train and he replied they would try to get the operators from the Colorado Plant to Flora.

Commissioner Henderson also brought up a payment included on the schedule of bills to Drew Lane Consultants and asked why it was paid if the grant money had not been received yet. He recommended not sending any future contract payments until they have fulfilled their end of the contract.

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA WITHOUT THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 24, 2024 WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILEY; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SPICER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

REGULAR BUSINESS

Mayor Rick Slaughter introduced Matt Johnson, Engineer with Fehr Graham who was present to speak about possible funding for the Wastewater Plant. Mr. Johnson prepared a mock scoring for IEPA funding and compared the scores to facilities of communities that received funding for FY 25. Mr. Johnson believes there is a reasonable chance that Flora could qualify for principal forgiveness and funding, based on the scoring sheet. However, applying would delay the beginning of construction by one calendar year. Instead of construction starting in spring 2025, it would start in spring of 2026.

To this date, the project cost is \$27,813,000. In writing, from USDA the City has a \$5.2 million grant, with the remainder on a 40 year loan with 2% interest. An annual payment of \$821,640.00. If approved for IEPA funding, there is a chance for principal forgiveness with a cap of \$4.8 million each phase, with the remainder on a 30 year loan with 1% interest. An annual payment of \$880,512.00. USDA funding is in writing and IEPA funding is a maybe. If the City applies for IEPA funding and does not qualify, USDA funding is still secured.

Commissioner Henderson stated he is in favor of changing the design and the financing source. City Attorney Bob Coble informed the council in order to change the design, it must be on the Agenda before a motion can be made.

Commissioner Spicer asked Matt Johnson what it would cost the City to submit a new design. Johnson answered that a new design would be significant, an additional 6 figures.

Commissioner Wiley asked if the City decided to change the design, what would the process be and how long would it take to be completed. Matt Johnson replied that the Council would instruct Fehr Graham to prepare a proposal, then the proposal would go on an Agenda for discussion and be voted on. It would take 4-6 months to prepare a new design.

If the City applied for IEPA funding and decided to change the design, a plan amendment would need filed. Same for USDA funding. The City's USDA funding was provided under AIS (American Iron and Steel). Which means domestic supplies must be used. Since the USDA funding was approved, another federal regulation came out, BABA (Build America, Buy America). This means any funding the City applies for going forward must be BABA compliant. This adds another step in domestic supply, manufactured items also need to be from domestic supply. This shrinks the supply chain and we can expect costs to go up.

Matt Johnson closed with saying the IEPA encourages new technology. Fehr Graham believes improvements and progress needs to be made in how wastewater is treated. The only difference with the current design is the configuration. The biology, science, treatment, mechanisms are all the same. It will oxidize in the same way, use the same microbes, and produce the same amount of sludge.

A MOTION TO APPROVE FEHR GRAHAM TO APPLY FOR FUNDING WITH THE IEPA FOR THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT WAS MADE BY MAYOR RICK SLAUGHTER; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WILEY.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
No – None
Abstain – None; Absent – None

A MOTION TO APPOINT GUYE DURRE TO THE FIRE AND POLICE BOARD EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 7, 2024 FOR A 3 YEAR TERM WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILEY; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SPICER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
No – None
Abstain – None; Absent – None

A MOTION TO APPOINT CHRIS THOMPSON TO THE TOURISM COMMITTEE EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 7, 2024 FOR A 2 YEAR TERM WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILEY; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FEHRENBACHER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
No – None
Abstain – None; Absent – None

A MOTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 24-3379 APPROVING THE CITY OF FLORA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER SPICER; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WILEY.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
No – None
Abstain – None; Absent – None

Commissioner Linda Spicer thanked everyone for the hard work on Ford days and appreciates the Police escort for the young winners this week.

Commissioner Jeremy Henderson stated two employees from the City's Electric Department went to Georgia to help with damage from storms. They learned a lot and were able to help a lot of people. Henderson hopes that the City can continue to help like that in the future.

Commissioner Phil Wiley wanted to thank the employees who went out of town and also those that stayed to work on our own storm damage. Employees worked day and night while we had several spots without electricity. Next, he reminded everyone it is homecoming week and let your kids know to be safe.

Commissioner Jim Fehrenbacher had a request relating to an IDOT project on N. Main due to water leak.

A MOTION TO PASS ORDINANCE NO. 24-3380, APPROVING A REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF CHANGE OF PLANS WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER SPICER; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WILEY.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
No – None
Abstain – None; Absent – None

Chief of Police Jeremy Ruger had one item for council.

A MOTION TO APPROVE THE REMOVAL OF FORMER POLICE CHIEF GUYE DURRE FROM BANKING INSTITUTIONS AND ADD ASSISTANT CHIEF OF POLICE KALEB GREENWOOD WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILEY; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FEHRENBACHER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

City Administrator/Economic Development Director Mike Stanford wanted to point out that the project relating to Ordinance 24-3380 that Commissioner Fehrenbacher asked for approval, is under budget even with the change. The original budget was \$1.1 million and after the approved payment, that brings the total to: \$1,019,000.

Stanford's first item on the agenda was not a budgeted item, but a necessity to improve the safety conditions for employees.

A MOTION TO APPROVE A QUOTE FROM SCHULTE SUPPLY, INC. FOR GUILLOTINE CUTTER (\$16,945.00) WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILEY; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FEHRENBACHER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

A MOTION TO PASS ORDINANCE NO. 24-3377 APPROVING THE SALE OF 729 N. STATE, FLORA, ILLINOIS WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILEY; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER FEHRENBACHER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

A MOTION TO PASS ORDINANCE NO. 24-3378 APPROVING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF FLORA AND ILLINOIS FOP LABOR COUNCIL REPRESENTING THE CITY OF FLORA POLICE DEPARTMENT – TELECOMMUNICATORS WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER FEHRENBACHER; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SPICER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

City Administrator/Economic Development Director Mike Stanford announced some good news he received last week. The City has received notification of an awarded grant in the amount of \$668,700 for Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). This project includes sidewalks along Worthey Street from north of US Route 50 to 8th Street. The City is very excited for this much needed grant to provide a safe route for pedestrians going to and from Walmart. However, it is likely this project could take 3-5 years to be completed.

Mr. Stanford also mentioned the Recycling Event over the weekend with B & H Recycling went well and wanted to thank everyone who took advantage of the event. B & H Recycling informed the City they would like to host another event next spring.

City Clerk Kaci O'Dell asked for approval of two items.

A MOTION TO APPROVE CLOSED SESSION MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 16, 2024 WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILEY; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SPICER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

A MOTION TO PASS A RESOLUTION REGARDING THE RELEASE OF CLOSED SESSION MINUTES WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER FEHRENBACHER; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SPICER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

Building and Zoning Official Chad Bayles asked for approval of one item.

A MOTION TO PASS ORDINANCE NO. 24-3376 APPROVING THE BID FOR THE SALE OF 220 W 2ND STREET, FLORA, ILLINOIS WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILEY; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SPICER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

Superintendent of Public Services Toby Rinehart presented several items for approval.

A MOTION TO APPROVE JOB CHANGE FOR MATTHEW HARGIS FROM WATER JOURNEYMAN (\$35.56/HOUR) TO LINEMAN 1ST NINE MONTH (\$34.57/HOUR) EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 8, 2024 WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILEY; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SPICER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

A MOTION TO APPROVE JOB CHANGE FOR JON C. MASTERS FROM GAS JOURNEYMAN (\$36.57/HOUR) TO WATER/SEWER SERVICEMAN 1ST YEAR APPRENTICE (\$30.55/HOUR) EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 8, 2024 WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER FEHRENBACHER; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WILEY.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

A MOTION TO APPROVE JOB CHANGE FOR GENE DARROUGH FROM WASTEWATER CLASS II OPERATOR (\$34.38/HOUR) TO GAS 1ST YEAR APPRENTICE (\$32.14/HOUR) EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 8, 2024 WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILEY; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SPICER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

A MOTION TO APPROVE JOB CHANGE FOR TRENTON BROWN FROM WASTEWATER OPERATOR 3RD SHIFT TO WASTEWATER OPERATOR SWING SHIFT (NO CHANGE IN PAY) EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 8, 2024 WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER FEHRENBACHER; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SPICER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None

A MOTION TO APPROVE ADVERTISING FOR THE WASTEWATER OPERATOR 3RD SHIFT OPENING WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILEY; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER SPICER.

- Vote: Yes – Slaughter, Spicer, Henderson, Wiley, Fehrenbacher
- No – None
- Abstain – None; Absent – None


ADJOURN

At approximately 5:27 p.m. with no further business to discuss, Mayor Slaughter requested a motion to adjourn.

COMMISSIONER FEHRENBACHER MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WILEY. COUNCIL MEMBERS CONCURRED AND MAYOR SLAUGHTER DECLARED SAID MEETING ADJOURNED.



 Kaci R. O'Dell, City Clerk



 Rick J. Slaughter, Mayor

Approved by City Council on: October 21, 2024