



CITY COMMISSION MEETING HAINES CITY, FLORIDA

MINUTES

March 10, 2025, 7:00 p.m.

City Hall Commission Chambers

620 E. Main Street, Haines City, FL 33844

Phone: 863-421-9921 Web: hainescity.com

Present: Commissioner Anne Huffman
Vice-Mayor/Commissioner Morris West
Mayor, Omar Arroyo
Commissioner Vernel Smith
Commissioner Kim Downing

Staff in Attendance: City Manager, James Elensky
City Attorney, Fred Reilly
City Clerk, Sharon Lauther

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Mayor called the City Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 PM on March 10, 2025 in the City Commission Chambers, located at 620 E Main Street, Haines City, FL.

2. INVOCATION

Pastor Justin Michaels provided the invocation.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Mayor led the pledge of allegiance.

4. PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

4.a Donate Life Month

City Clerk Lauther read the proclamation into the record. Erica Clare, Lifelink Public Affairs Coordinator, accepted the proclamation. Commissioner Huffman, a heart transplant recipient, presented the proclamation.

4.b Certificate of Excellence

City Clerk Sharon Lauther recognized Boys & Gils Club Paris Gonzalez for her achievement as the Polk County Youth of the Year. Ms. Gonzalez will be competing in Tallahassee in April at a statewide competition.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

Discussion took place regarding proper advertising for placing board members. Commissioner Downing motioned to pull item 5d.- the two applicants for consideration from the consent agenda and advertise and submit a comprehensive list for consideration seconded by Vice-Mayor/Commissioner West. Mayor Arroyo opened the public hearing. No one came forward and the public hearing was closed.

Moved by Morris West

Seconded by Vernel Smith

Approve consent as a whole.

Carried Unanimously

5.a City Commission Meeting Minutes 02.20.2025

5.b City Commission Workshop Minutes 02.20.2025

5.c Cemetery Deeds

5.d Board of Adjustments Committee Appointment

6. OLD BUSINESS

6.a Ordinance No. 24-2091 – Adoption of a Large Scale Land Use Amendment for RWS Ranch Property from City Low Density Residential in the North Ridge (LDR-NR) to City Medium Density Residential in the North Ridge (MDR-NR)

James Keene, Public Services Administrator stated there were no changes from the 1st reading.

Eric Rollins- 2701 RWS Ranch Road. Mr. Rollins inquired about paving and access

Randall (inaudible)- concern about the access road encroaching on his property. Questions regarding how many apartments were going to be built on this project. Discussion regarding increased traffic on US 27 took place.

Chris Cay- 137 5th St., Winter Haven - representing the developer- stated that traffic studies, will have to be done and comply with city and state regulations before any development begins.

Commissioner Smith introduced Ordinance No. 24-2091. Attorney Reilly read the ordinance into the record.

Moved by Vernel Smith

Seconded by Morris West

Staff requests the City Commission to adopt and approve Ordinance No. 24-2091 for a Large Scale Land Use Amendment for RWS Ranch Property from City Low Density Residential in the North Ridge (LDR-NR) to City Medium Density Residential (MDR-NR).

Carried Unanimously

6.b Ordinance No. 25-2100 De-Annexation of Three (3) Real Estate Parcels – Second Reading

Fred Reilly, City Attorney reviewed the de-annexation of three (3) real estate parcels. The parcels are functionally useless and will be turned over to the County. Mayor Arroyo opened the public hearing. No one came forward and the public hearing was closed. Vice Mayor West introduced Ordinance No. 25-2100

Moved by Morris West

Seconded by Kim Downing

Staff recommends the City Commission approve the de-annexation of three (3) parcels of real property located south of Salisbury Avenue and north of Bradbury Road in Haines City, FL on second reading.

Carried Unanimously

- 6.c Ordinance No. 25-2102 Prohibiting Smoking or Vaping in Public Parks – Second Reading

Terrell Griffin, Parks and Recreation Director, stated that there were no changes from the first reading. Discussion took place regarding fines and enforcement. Signage will be in English and Spanish. Troy Livingstone, President for SWAT Students Working Against Tobacco and McCarthur Sander thanked the Commission for taking a proactive approach to help eliminate smoking in public spaces. Commissioner Downing introduced Ordinance No. 25-2102

Moved by Morris West

Seconded by Anne Huffman

Staff recommends the City Commission approve the Ordinance, on second reading, establishing restriction as to smoking within the boundaries of any public parks that the municipality owns.

Carried Unanimously

- 6.d Ordinance No. 25-2103 Closure and Re-Routing of Public Streets – Second Reading

James Keene, Public Services Administrator discussed the closings that would be occurring when construction will be occurring for the new annex being built. This is a 18 month project. stated that clear instructions needed to be advertised on all social media platforms. Kitty Manuel- 1001 Avenue C- asked if the information can be put on the water bill and also be in English and Spanish. Commissioner Huffman introduced Ordinance No. 25-2103

Moved by Anne Huffman

Seconded by Kim Downing

Staff recommends the City Commission approve an Ordinance, on second reading, closing certain portions of 7th Street and re-routing traffic on

certain portions of Main Street to accommodate the construction zones related to the Andrew R. Reilly Annex Building construction project.

Carried Unanimously

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.a Contract Award for Request for Proposals (RFP) 24-21 Red Light and School Zone Speed Detection Cameras

Fred Reilly, City Attorney presented the contract award for request for proposals (RFP) 24-21 Red Light and School Zone Speed Detection Cameras. There were 4 bids presented. City staff determined after thorough review the selection to accept the proposal from Verra Mobility to be presented for consideration. Commissioner Huffman wanted to know if the camera includes if Ridge Community High School was included for the School Zone Speed Detection.

Commissioner Downing inquired as to when the Commission voted and approved obtaining the cameras. Commissioner Downing stated there was no official vote taken to approve this contract. City Manager Elensky gave additional info regarding the speed limit specifications. Discussion regarding putting up light on roads that the city has no jurisdiction took place. The item should be pulled and set for more discussion.

Commissioner Huffman made a motion to pull item 7(A) and have a workshop seconded by Commissioner Downing. Mayor Arroyo opened the public hearing- Mr. Diaz- representing the vendor. Mr. Diaz stated that after approval of the contract the Commission would make the specifications of where and how long the detection apparatus' would be put in place. The contract will determine where the Commission wants to place the cameras. The rules are statutory driven. Sharon Garrett off of Carl Boozer Road had questions about when the cameras would be running. Alisa Romero - Davenport, asked how many bids were obtained. At this time the public hearing was closed.

Moved by Anne Huffman

Seconded by Kim Downing

Staff recommends City Commission approve the contract award to American Traffic Solutions, Inc. dba Verra Mobility (ATS) for Request for

Proposals (RFP) 24-21 Red Light and School Zone Speed Detection Cameras.

Carried Unanimously

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS - REGARDING ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Sharon Garrett- off of Carl Boozer Road, thanked the Commission for the light fixed. Ms. Garrett discussed about other lights needing repair in the city. Concerns for HWY 17/92 at Pleasant Hill Road there are deflectors in the road

9. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Elensky will speak to each of the Commissioners regarding the RCA building and possibly demolishing the building. Staff is working on getting quotes. Grant Update given. Kimley Horn & Keaton are working on grants for the City. Approximately 14 1/2 million is currently being worked on.

10. CITY CLERK'S REPORT

City Clerk Lauther acknowledged the cadets that attended the meeting. A reminder to request your vote by mail ballot by contacting the Supervisor of Elections Office. Lastly, reminding the Commissioners who will be serving as the canvassing board need to take the signature verification webinar.

11. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No report

12. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Downing-traveling to Tallahassee with other officials to oppose some House Bills (HB) and Senate Bills (SB) that are currently on the table. Commissioner Downing stated that she wanted clarification regarding the election signs placed on their own property. Attorney Reilly stated that if your active participant in a campaign, the official should recuse themselves from serving on the canvassing board.

Commissioner Smith- Commends the CM for taking ownership of the RFP regarding the Red Light and School Zone Speed Detection Cameras. Commissioner Smith will also be advocating for HB 301 as well. On February 19, 2025 the HB passed. This bill will be raising the threshold for liability.

Commissioner Huffman- welcoming back the Fire Chief and congratulations extended to recently appointed Police Chief Jay Hopwood. Commissioner Huffman has requests of

the identifying funding for the CRA budget. Commissioner Huffman stated that the City should not make the CRA fund a slush fund..

Vice-Mayor/Commissioner West- suggested that Recreation impact fees can be used to offset costs. There are also concerns about the property tax that the current governor wants to cut. Property taxes fund police and fire. There is a grid of lights out on HWY 27 near Chile. Land was purchased on the other side of the RC building that could be used for parking, this property was originally earmarked for the Sun rail parking in the future.

Mayor Arroyo- Would like to know where the sidewalks are that are connecting to Johnson. Mayor Arroyo stated that the Commission assists in obtaining funding in conjunction with our lobbyists when they travel to Tallahassee.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Without any further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:51.

Omar Arroyo, Mayor

Sharon Lauther, MMC, City Clerk