



TOWN OF WHITE SPRINGS
“On the Banks of the Suwannee River”

MINUTES

WHITE SPRINGS TOWN COUNCIL

Regular Council Meeting

Town Hall Council Chambers

Tuesday, November 14, 2023

6:30 p.m.

- 1. Call to Order, Invocation, and Pledge Allegiance to Flag** - Mayor River called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. TC Ruise led the invocation and the council led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

- 2. Roll Call - Members present:** Mayor Rivers, VM Williams, Councilors: Mary Berry, Linnie Pope, and Kizzy Burch. All members present (5-0)

- 3. Additions, Deletions, and/or Amendments to the Agenda** - Mayor Rivers stated to add Item 7.a. Old Business - Cancel the previously scheduled meeting with NFPS/Balch on November 28, 2023. Motion was made by VM Williams and seconded by Councilor Burch. Motion passed 5-0.

- 4. Citizens from the floor:** (Request form needed - 5min. limit)
 1. Sharon Shae/Julie Williams - Mrs. Shae thanked the town for assisting in the application process of being named a “Florida Trails Town. The State approved the application and in December the state will make the final declaration. Mrs. Shae asked the council and the town to write a letter of support to the state. She also stated that they are working with the WS Historical Society. TC Ruise asked if they would draft a letter and she would edit for the town.

2. Robert Gamsby - Mr. Gamsby announced that the Planning and Zoning Board would meet on November 20th and 21st at 6:00pm in Town Hall Chambers. The public was invited to attend and the notice was posted on the town website, Town hall, library, and other properties throughout the town.

3. Scott Gay - Mr. Gay had 4 issues to report. **1)** CDBG Grant - citizens are asking about the application process. TC Ruise stated that the state has not sent any information nor has Jordan & Associates sent us that information. **2)** Ordinance 15-01 - he is requesting that the town manager and utility director look over the ordinance and connect sewer/water to 16502 Spring Street. **3)** Inter-local Agreement with the county. He asked had the agreement been signed. TC Ruise stated that Atty. Decker sent the agreement to Atty. Foreman and he sent it to TM George; she in turn has sent the agreement back to the county and that Mr. Quintana with the county code enforcement had come by to give us some information on the process. **4)** Local Option Six Cents Sales Tax - Hamilton County and TOWS has an agreement that was signed on 04/12/22. He is requesting a revenue report on what the town received and the expenditures. TC Ruise asked Mr. Gay were the requests in the documentation he was giving her and if not could he put the requests in writing. He stated that he would put it in writing.

5. Presentation - None

6. Approval of Minutes:

October 10, 2023 and October 17, 2023 (Special Meeting) - VM Williams made the motion to accept the subject dated minutes as written and Councilor Burch seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

7. Old Business - (7a. added from Item 3.)

a) Cancellation of previous November 28, 2023 scheduled meeting with NFPS/Balch. Mayor Rivers stated to cancel the meeting. VM Williams motioned to cancel the meeting and Councilor Burch seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

8. New Business -

a) **Corey King and Joseph Williams - Re-naming a town street to “Florida King Street” in honor of the town’s oldest community member.** - Mr.

King was unable to attend the meeting in person. He and his brother called in to state the purpose of requesting the town to re-name “Colonial Street” to “Florida L. King Street”. Mr. King reiterated the contributions of Mrs. King to the community and family. The family has scheduled a community event on January 19, 2024 and would love for the signage to be erected by then. Mayor Rivers asked for a motion to rename Colonial Street to Florida L. King Street. VM Williams made the motion and Councilor Burch seconded.

Motion passed 5-0.

b) Hiring an Attorney for upcoming Litigation - TM Vanessa George - TM George asked the council for consideration in hiring a lawyer for the upcoming litigation from NFPS/Balch on the “rezoning”. The amount of retaining the lawyer is \$10K. The town would need to pay \$2500 up front and the remaining \$7500 the following week. A citizen asked was the bid out for an attorney. Mayor Rivers answered, yes. Mayor Rivers asked for a motion to retain a lawyer. VM Williams made the motion and Councilor Berry seconded. Motion passed 5-0. (Scott Gay asked for the name of the firm)

9. Departmental/Administrative Comments

a) **Public:** Thomas Brazil, once again asked for the resignation aof Fire Chief Stith. Mayor Rivers stated that the former WSFD’s employees did not have the proper credentials and the department was inoperable. She also mentioned that he was asked by TM George to become the Chief of Fire and you turned it down; stating you were too old. Mr. Brazil went back to his seat.

b) **Departments:**

Fire Department - Chief Stith stated that all trucks were certified and operable. Some of the firefighters attended the Sugar Cane Festival with Don Wilson. There were 2K plus in attendance. It was a great success!

- c) **Council:** Mayor Rivers asked that the community keep Ranger Manny Rodriquez in their thoughts and prayers as his wife passed this last week. She also stated that the town's Christmas Parade was Friday, December 8th at 6:00pm along with the Festival of Lights and Christmas on Bridge Street from 2pm to 10pm, would be on the same evening at the hardware store. The annual Veterans Day program was scheduled for December 10th at 10:00am at the Tourism Center on 441.

Mayor Rivers stated that the town received a lawsuit from Balch and is not clear on specifics. Citizens can call town hall for more information.

Thomas Brazil stated that the FD is not doing their job. Mayor Rivers stated that our FD is not full-time and that our former FD was not credentialed and were fired. Because of the liability associated. We were in debt when this staff took over and the town was already behind in it's audits. We hired Powell Consulting last month and we are already in a good place financially. (inaudible words from Thomas)

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Adjourn: 7:19p

IF A PERSON DECIDES TO APPEAL ANY DECISION MADE BY THE TOWN COUNCIL, WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT THIS MEETING, THAT PERSON WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS, AND FOR PURPOSE THAT PERSON MAY NEED TO ENSURE THAT A VERBATIM RECORD INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) PERSONS NEEDING SPECIAL ACCOMODATIONS TO PARTICPATE IN THE COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS SHOULD CONTACT THE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE NOT LATER THAN THREE DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING.

Town Manager,

Town Clerk, or Designee

Vanessa George, Town Manager/ Audre' J. Ruise, Town Clerk

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