



Regular City Commission Meeting Minutes
August 25, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Mayor Walter Welch
Vice Mayor Shirley Green Brown
Commissioner Jacob Fletcher
Commissioner Jennifer Ringersen
Commissioner Dayna Williams

City Manager Rodolfo Valladares
City Attorney Marian Rush

Meeting Location: James A. Lewis City Commission Chambers
15100 NW 142 Terrace
Alachua, FL 32615

CITIZENS PRESENT: Mandy Bucci, Jim Curington, Connie Meyer, Virgil L. Pafek, Brenda Phillips, Debra Sermons, Kristin Rubin, Sarah Younger, Melody Jackes, Travis King, Elliott Welker, Rudy Rothseiden, Soorya Lindberg, Teddy Sanchez, Michele Lee, Lakeesha Jenkins, Glen Anderson, Jami Machintosh, Natron Curtis.

STAFF ATTENDING: Robert Bonetti, Michael Carrillo, Carson Crockett, Heather Carter, Kenyata Curtis, Bernadette Fisher, Lisa Freeman, Jack Hansen, Stephanie Herlong, Janet Knapp, Brent Lanier, Tara Malone, Damon Messina, Jesse Sandusky, Donna Smith, Ashley Spencer, Bryan Thomas, LeAnne Williams, Tyler Williams, Cap Wilson, David Wisener

City Commission Meeting

Notice given pursuant to Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes. In order to appeal any decision made at this meeting, you will need a verbatim record of the proceedings. It will be your responsibility to ensure such a record is made.

CALL TO ORDER

Led by Mayor Walter Welch.

INVOCATION

Led by Pastor Debra Sermons, Paradise Community Outreach Ministry.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

Led by Mayor Welch.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Jacob Fletcher moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Commissioner Dayna Williams.

Mayor Welch opened the floor for public comment.

Tamara Robbins stated that an item wasn't on the agenda as advertised.

Passed by unanimous consent.

APPROVE READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS BY TITLE ONLY

Vice Mayor Shirley Green Brown moved to approve the reading of proposed ordinances and resolutions by title only; seconded by Commissioner Williams.

Passed by unanimous consent.

I. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

A) FISCAL ANALYSIS REPORT FOR FY 2024-2025 THROUGH JULY 31, 2025

Senior Accountant Tyler Williams provided the Fiscal Analysis Report for FY 2024-2025 through July 31, 2025.

II. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS ON SUBJECTS NOT ON THE AGENDA

(Please Limit to 3 Minutes. Any citizen who is unable to speak at this time will have an opportunity to speak at the end of the meeting)

Mayor Welch opened the floor for public comment.

Soorya Lindberg announced that a drive-through coffee shop was opening.

Lakeesha Jenkins recounted an incident involving the Alachua Police Department and a car that occurred in front of her home. She stated that this incident resulted in her vehicle being struck by the car. She shared her situation and requested assistance.

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS/COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS/CITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

A) CLEATHER H. HATHCOCK, SR. COMMUNITY CENTER PROJECT REPORT

City Manager Rodolfo Valladares presented the Cleather H. Hathcock, SR. Community Center Project Report.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ORDINANCES

(Presentations, other than the applicant, please limit to 3 Minutes)

A) ORDINANCE 25-05 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALACHUA, FLORIDA, RELATING TO THE AMENDMENT OF THE CITY'S LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS ("LDRS"); AMENDING SUBPART B OF THE CITY OF ALACHUA CODE OF ORDINANCES, LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS; AMENDING ARTICLE 2 RELATING TO THE POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD; AMENDING ARTICLE 3 RELATING TO THE PERMITTED DENSITY AND INTENSITY AND PURPOSES OF THE BUSINESS DISTRICTS; AMENDING ARTICLE 4 RELATING TO USE SPECIFIC STANDARDS AND THE CREATION OF MIXED-USE SPECIFIC STANDARDS; AMENDING ARTICLE 5 RELATING TO THE PERMITTED DENSITY AND INTENSITY OF THE BUSINESS DISTRICTS AND ESTABLISHING DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS FOR MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT; AMENDING ARTICLE 6 RELATING TO OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING STANDARDS AND TREE PROTECTION AND LANDSCAPING STANDARDS FOR MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT; AMENDING ARTICLE 10 RELATING TO THE DEFINITIONS OF DEVELOPMENT AREA AND MIXED-USE; PROVIDING A REPEALING CLAUSE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE (FIRST READING, LEGISLATIVE HEARING). RESIDENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

City Attorney Marian Rush read Ordinance 25-05 by title only.

Principal Planner Carson Crockett introduced Ordinance 25-05 and presented the staff report.

Mayor Welch invited the commissioners to ask questions or offer comments.

Commissioner Fletcher asked clarifying questions.

Planner Carson Crockett provided the information.

Vice Mayor Brown moved that, based upon the competent substantial evidence presented at this hearing, the presentation before this Commission, and Staff's

recommendation, this Commission finds the proposed text amendment to the City of Alachua Land Development Regulations to be consistent with the City of Alachua Comprehensive Plan and in compliance with the City's Land Development Regulations and (1) approve Ordinance 25-05 upon first reading and (2) schedule second and final reading of Ordinance 25-05 for the September 8, 2025; seconded by Commissioner Fletcher.

Mayor Welch opened the floor for comments.

Citizens spoke in opposition to the motion:

Sarah Younger
Soorya Lindberg
Tamara Robbins
Bryan Beuscher
Rudy Rothseiden

Economic Development Manager David Wisener spoke about the importance of this ordinance.

Passed 3-1 by roll call, with Commissioner Fletcher dissenting.

**B) ORDINANCE 25-11, SECOND READING; AMENDING CODE 38 - UTILITY RATES
STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY SERVICE**

City Attorney Rush read Ordinance 25-11 by title only.

Public Services Director Michael Carrillo presented Ordinance 25-11, Second Reading: Amending Code 38 - Utility Rates, staff report, and made recommendations.

Commissioner Williams thanked Public Services Director Carrillo for a thorough presentation.

Commissioner Williams moved to approve Ordinance 25-11 on Second Reading, to become effective October 1, 2025; seconded by Vice Mayor Brown.

Mayor Welch opened the floor for public comment.

Mr. Rothseiden thanked Public Services Director Carrillo for the presentation and for keeping rates low. He expressed concern about water loss during a water main break.

Jim Curington voiced his concern about potential rate increases for senior citizens.

Commissioner Williams mentioned Alachua Cares, a program for citizens in need.

Ms. Robbins inquired whether a BIE had been filed, as this has implications for

businesses.

Passed 4-0 by roll call.

V. AGENDA ITEMS

- A) RESOLUTION 25-16: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ALACHUA, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING PARTICIPATION IN A LAWSUIT SEEKING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, TO DECLARE THAT SENATE BILL 180'S IMPOSITION OF A BLANKET STATEWIDE PROHIBITION ON THE EXERCISE OF HOME RULE AUTHORITY REGULATIONS OVER LAND USE AND ZONING IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL AND SHOULD BE ENJOINED, AND RETAINING WEISS SEROTA HELFMAN COLE + BIERMAN, PL TO PROSECUTE THE LAWSUIT; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

City Attorney Rush read Resolution 25-11 by title only.

City Manager Valladares introduced the item and presented the staff report.

Mayor Welch invited the commissioners to ask questions or offer comments.

Commissioner Fletcher asked a hypothetical question.

City Attorney Rush provided an answer. She spoke about the statute in question and encouraged the Commission to move forward with the item.

Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Fletcher moved to approve Resolution No. 25-16; seconded by Commissioner Williams.

Ms. Younger spoke in favor of the item.

Commissioner Williams expressed her disappointment with the lack of communication from the legislators.

Passed 4-0 by roll call.

- B) CONSIDERATION OF ENGAGEMENT LETTER FROM ATTORNEY MARK BARNEBEY FOR PLANNING DEPARTMENT RESIGNATION INVESTIGATION**

Commissioner Fletcher presented the Consideration of Engagement Letter from Attorney Mark Barnebey for the Planning Department Resignation Investigation item.

Mayor Welch invited the commissioners to ask questions or offer comments.

There were no questions or comments.

Commissioner Fletcher moved to engage Attorney Barnebey and authorize the Mayor to sign the Proposal/Engagement letter on behalf of the City.

Mayor Welch announced the motion died on the floor for lack of a second.

VI. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS ON SUBJECTS NOT ON THE AGENDA

(Please Limit to 3 Minutes. Any citizen who did not speak during the Citizen Comments period at the beginning of the meeting may do so at this time.)

Lindsay Rizzo announced that the Good Life Station would host an open house on August 26, 2025, featuring the Junior Entrepreneur Think Tank Boot Camp, a cave museum pop-out, and a Thrive workshop scheduled for September 15, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

Mandy Bucci shared that the Alachua Business League was launching a farmers' market on Main Street. She reminded citizens that they are just two weeks away from voting on the concert series.

Kristen Rubin expressed her disappointment regarding the decision not to investigate the resignation of the planners.

Kim Vermillion from the Alachua Chamber of Commerce announced several upcoming events:

- A ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled at Fundora Jewelers on September 4, 2025,
- A ribbon-cutting ceremony at Firestone
- Scarecrow Row would begin on September 1, 2025.
- Trick or Treat on Main will be held on October 31, 2025.
- The City of Alachua's Tree Lighting and Christmas on Main celebrations will take place in December.

Mr. Rothseiden expressed his appreciation for the new disc golf course at Legacy Park. He noted that TK Basin had not been mowed for some time, which allowed for natural filtration into the basin. He also conveyed his gratitude to City Attorney Rush for her service to the City. He stated that the decision to terminate the Rush firm was handled inappropriately. Additionally, he expressed his disappointment over the loss of the Theriaque & Spain firm. However, he mentioned feeling encouraged by the positive developments on Main Street, including Theater Park, the Farmers Market, and the upcoming festivals. Finally, he expressed his dissatisfaction with the decision regarding

the investigation involving the planners.

Mr. Welker, President of the Alachua Chamber of Commerce, announced the Disc Golf Chain Hawks Annual Disc Golf Tournament would be held at Legacy Park in December.

Ms. Younger stated there was a petition regarding the planners' resignations.

Mitch Glaeser reminded the public that this comment time was for items not on the agenda. He updated the Commission on San Felasco Tech City.

Ms. Robbins read an Attorney General's Opinion regarding public comment. She went on to state her opinion concerning the termination of the Rush firm.

Bryan Buescher expressed his dissatisfaction with the termination of the Rush firm. He mentioned a letter regarding the Tara projects and alluded to a lawsuit in progress.

VII. COMMENTS FROM CITY MANAGER AND CITY ATTORNEY

City Manager Valladares announced on August 30, 2025, at 3:00 p.m., Mat For Youth would be at Legacy Park. He updated the Commission on the progress of the search for a city attorney.

VIII. COMMISSION COMMENTS/DISCUSSION

Commissioner Fletcher mentioned the staff members who had left since February. He questioned if City Manager Valladares might be next to go. He read a Facebook post from the Alachua Police Department on the passing of K-9 Thor.

Vice Mayor Brown thanked Pastor Sermons for the invocation. She thanked the citizens for the emails and comments. She stated she appreciated those who were respectful during their remarks. She reminded the citizens that communication was a reciprocal act. She said that she attended the Alachua Branch Library Back-to-School Bash. She noted that the 20 Pearls Foundation donated supplies to several schools.

She stated she attended the Florida League of Cities conference. She thanked City Manager Valladres for facilitating the community meeting at the Hal Brady Center.

Mayor Welch thanked the citizens for sharing their concerns. He reminded everyone that all decisions require a vote, and if the outcome is not favorable, we must continue to move forward.

Commissioner Williams stated Vice Mayor Brown wanted to let the citizens know about a Dementia Caregiver Workshop at the Alachua Library on Wednesday, August 27, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., and a Dementia Caregiver Support Group, which meets on the second Tuesday of each month from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Alachua Library.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Williams moved to adjourn; seconded by Commissioner Vice Mayor Brown.

Passed by unanimous consent.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda items represent routine City operations and business. These items are approved at the beginning of the Regular City Commission meeting upon approval of the meeting agenda.

- A) RFB 2025-04 POWERLINE TREE AND VEGETATION MAINTENANCE**
- B) FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 WRITE-OFFS**

ATTEST:

**CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF
ALACHUA, FLORIDA:**

Rodolfo Valladares, City Manager/Clerk

Walter Welch, Mayor