LONGWOOD CITY COMMISSION
Longwood City Commission Chambers
175 West Warren Avenue
Longwood, Florida

MINUTES
March 17, 2025
6:00 PM

Present: **Mayor Matthew McMillan**
Deputy Mayor Brian D. Sackett
Commissioner Abby Shoemaker
Commissioner Tony Boni
Commissioner Matt Morgan
Dan Langley, City Attorney
Clint Gioielli, City Manager
Michelle Longo, City Clerk
David Dowda, Police Chief
William Watts, Deputy Fire Chief

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Mayor McMillan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. **OPENING INVOCATION.** Rabbi Akiva Lazerow, with Chabad of North Orlando gave the invocation.

3. **THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** Deputy Mayor Sackett led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. **COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS.** Ms. Longo read the following announcement.

   A. **The Senior Matinee will be held on Wednesday, March 19, 2025, from 1:30 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. at the Longwood Community Building, 200 West Warren Avenue. This month's feature is *La Dolce Villa.***

5. **PROCLAMATIONS / RECOGNITIONS**

   A. **Nomination of the Beautification Award - 2nd Quarter 2025.**

   Nomination was deferred to the next meeting.

6. **BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

   A. **District #3 (At Large) Nomination to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.**

   Mayor McMillan nominated Jason Jose for appointment to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board. Nomination carried by a unanimous voice vote.

7. **PUBLIC INPUT**

   A. **Public Participation.**

Channi Sodhi, 1983 Bridgewater Drive, Lake Mary. She owns Sunshine Pharmacy, which has a location in Sanford and Casselberry, and requested that the Commission allow them to open one in Longwood. She spoke about relocating her pharmacy business to Longwood from Casselberry.

8. MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORT

A. District #2. Commissioner Boni asked Mr. Gioielli to gather information related to the request from Ms. Sodhi and provide it to the Commission so they could consider her request at the next meeting.

Mr. Gioielli addressed the matter, explaining that several years ago, there was a concern about too many marijuana smoke shops and others, and the Commission requested that there be some restrictions based on proximity or distance, and pharmacies were automatically included. Based on the location, Sunshine Pharmacy would be too close to the marijuana shop located at U.S. Highway 17-92 near Wildmere Avenue. She could only open the business if the Commission would direct the staff to bring back an agenda item, making a special exception for her pharmacy. He stated this is not a CBD or marijuana shop but a legitimate pharmacy.

It was the Commission's desire for staff to bring back an item for their consideration.

District #3. Mayor McMillan reported that he would be heading to Tallahassee for the Florida League of Cities Legislative Action Days. He commented on an email regarding the Lewis House and mentioned he got to see the extent of the engineering magnet program at Lyman High School, and one of those was woodworking. He had expected to see projects like building benches and tables, which he did, but he did not expect to see them framing buildings. He contacted the school to see if it could potentially have Lyman High School's engineering program renovate the Lewis House. It was a tentative conversation; all the details would have to be worked out, and there were no commitments, but there was enthusiasm. He felt it would be a great concept to have a school that is 100 years old to work on a house from that same time period.

For the "true," "good," and "beautiful," he sadly reported that his mother, Patricia McMillan, passed away last week. She embodied the true, good, and beautiful in everything she did. And most importantly, she was his cherished mother for almost 50 years. He will truly miss her.

District #4. Commissioner Morgan commented on Sunshine Pharmacy and said that they would make for a good community partner and have contributed to the county and city for events. He commended the Fire Department for reaching out to him to support the Autism Awareness initiative by selling shirts similar to what they do for breast cancer. The shirt purchases will contribute to Mephibo's House. If anyone would like to purchase a shirt, you can visit www.lfd2025.com. On March 4, he attended the Rescue Outreach Missions pizza party at Bronx Pizza in Lake Mary. On March 6, he attended Sharing Ramadan, IFTAR, at the American Muslim Community Center in Longwood. On March 7, he attended the end of the International Women's Day, hosted by Nancy Acevedo from Seminole County Sheriff's Office, held at the Oviedo Culture and Art Center. On March 8, he attended an Eagle Scout award presentation. On March 11, he attended a Seminole County School Board meeting to help defend David White and his son. On March 12, he attended an interfaith IFTAR, celebrating by breaking bread for Ramadan in Sanford.

On March 13, he attended a ribbon cutting for Studio 92 Salon at 965 West State Road 434. He reported that Longwood's third annual Walk for Autism, Awareness, and Inclusion will be held on April 26 from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at Reiter Park. He thanked all of the sponsors.

District #5. Deputy Mayor Sackett expressed his condolences to Mayor McMillan. He commented on the tornado that hit his friend's home. It was destroyed, and thankfully no one was hurt. He attended the ribbon cutting at Studio 92 Salon. He stated that Longwood would host the next Council of Local Governments (CALNO) meeting and needed to find a topic for the presentation. He commented that he had gotten many complaints regarding the Duke Energy bill, which applied their missed taxes to the customer's current bill. He felt that if it was their fault, they should eat the cost or break it down into increments and not charge someone all at once. He thanked Mr. Capizzi for working with Longwood Babe Ruth on their scheduling issues and working it out. He said that Congressman Corey Mills had arranged for a visit for a local family, including the White House and the House of Representatives, and the two pre-teenage boys were excited.

District #1. Commissioner Shoemaker expressed her condolences to Mayor McMillan.

9. COMMISSION AND STAFF ADDITIONS OR CHANGES

A. ADDITIONAL ITEMS RAISED DURING MAYOR'S AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Mayor McMillan discussed the pharmacy issue and noted he opposed the ordinance because he did not like the unintended consequences of trying to keep good businesses out. In this instance, the legislature requires pharmacies, CBD shops, and medical dispensaries to be treated the same. He had no objection to staff putting together an item for the commission to review.

B. ANY ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA. None.

10. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approve the Minutes of the March 3, 2025, Regular Meeting.

B. Approve the Monthly Expenditures for February 2025.

C. Approve the Monthly Financial Report for January 2025.

D. Approve the purchase of two (2) police department vehicles for patrol officers.

E. Approval of the purchase of three (3) police department vehicles for Citizens on Patrol.

F. Approve an increase in the amount of $66,000 to the Aero GroundTek Purchase Order No. 25-00227, for citywide mowing and landscaping services for the current fiscal year.

Commissioner Boni moved to approve Items 10A and 10F as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Shoemaker.

Deputy Mayor Sackett asked questions about the number of vehicles the Citizens on Patrol currently have.

Chief Dowda replied they currently have four (4).

Motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

11. PUBLIC HEARINGS. None.

12. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. City Commission discussion and approve the process for the City Manager recruitment.

Ms. Ridore presented the Item, stating it includes a timeline selection, criteria, and compensation. She provided the Commission with a job description, the International City Managers Association (ICMA) recruitment guide, and a letter from Mr. Kenneth Parker, senior advisor of ICMA. She stated she was looking for the Commission's feedback on the process. She reviewed recommendations and a proposal of how they would make the process smooth and assist through it. She noted that the current city manager's last day would be April 19, and they have to get the process going in accordance with the City Charter, Section 4.0 4. The proposed process was that the City would recruit, search, and receive applications through the City application tracking system. Human Resources would create a posting, post the position using their applicant tracking system, and accept applications internally. The position would be advertised on recruitment publication websites, social media, State, Municipal League sites, and various other job boards. She stated this would be done for thirty (30) days. The recommendation was to post from April 1 through April 30, and Human Resources would complete the initial screening process, review the minimum qualifications in accordance with the job description, and then send those to ICMA. The screening committee, consisting of Senior Advisors from the International City Managers Association (ICMA), would be established. The Screening Committee will complete the initial review of the applicants and categorize candidates for the City Commissioners based solely on objective qualifications. The City Commission will review committee recommendations and conduct one-on-one interviews of the candidates, host a reception event for the candidates to informally meet with the Commissioners, city staff, and the community, and conduct final interviews as a group in a public meeting. A recruitment firm or third party will complete an extensive background check on the finalist. The Commission will make a candidate selection, negotiate the terms of the agreement, and appoint a city manager.

Mr. Kenneth Parker, Senior Advisor with the Florida City County Management Association (FCCMA) and the International City County Management Association (ICCMA), stated that all senior advisors are volunteers and retired city managers or county managers. He served as city manager for over thirty-five (35) years, and in his last city manager’s job, he was there for twenty-eight and a half (28 1/2) years, which is typical of their senior advisor team. He said they provided the Commission with the recruitment guide that FCCMA had recently developed. He reviewed their primary responsibility, including assisting cities in transition, advising their members on ethical issues, and providing expertise in various areas. More recently, they have worked with city councils to revise their city charters and set goals. He stated they would work with the city team on their availability to meet the commission timeline. He said he tried to give a realistic timeline for the position in the memorandum he provided to the city. He said if you began advertising on April 1 and closed on April 30, that is a thirty (30) day window for advertisement. Their attorneys have advised them that since they are providing a list to the Commission, this would be a public meeting, minutes would be taken, they would do a public review of the documents, and they would provide their list of candidates. He went over how they would review and evaluate the candidates based on the job description and what is in the brochure and advertisement as the city's ideal candidate. He stated that their review is a paper review of the qualifications, and they do not verify any of the information that the candidates submit to the city. They do not do any pre-screening or pre-interviewing of candidates. They will then create their matrix and list, which will be provided to the Commission, occurring about fifteen (15) days after the closing, about mid-May. The Commission could expect to complete the interview process at approximately the beginning of June. This would be whatever the Commission decides, and they have found that a three (3) day process works best. He went over what the days would entail, including a chance for the candidates to meet with department heads, tour the city, learn about ongoing projects, and have individual meetings with the commissioners. He said that if all goes well, the Commission could have a contract at the end of June or the beginning of July. He reviewed the process of a candidate giving notice with a typical sixty (60) days that would bring a start day to around September. He also explained that the senior advisor group has at least two (2) senior advisors and as many as three (3) involved in the review process. He noted that three (3) live in the Central Florida area.

Discussion ensued on the pay range included in the recruitment advertisement.

Mayor McMillan stated that three (3) items needed approval: the process, the job description, and the marking flyer. He would take a motion individually for each item.

> Deputy Mayor Sackett moved to approve the recruitment process as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Boni and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.
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> Deputy Mayor Sackett moved to approve the job description as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Shoemaker and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.
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> Deputy Mayor Sackett moved to approve the marketing brochure as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Boni and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

B. City Commission to approve the appointment of Longwood Deputy Fire Chief William Watts as Acting City Manager and approve the Acting City Manager Agreement effective April 20, 2025.

Mr. Gioielli presented the Item, noting it would be effective starting April 20, 2025, and for 120 days per the City Charter. He said the staff suggested appointing William Watts, Deputy Fire Chief. He said he would work closely with him over the next five weeks and help with the transition if appointed. He reviewed the salary and noted it was based on the minimum salary for the pay range and follows city policy that allowed for a five percent (5%) above the minimum. In the agreement, there is also an option for him to return to his current position as the Deputy Fire Chief.

> Commissioner Morgan moved to approve Item 12B as presented. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Sackett and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

13. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Gioielli expressed his condolences to Mayor McMillan. He reported that staff knew the internet installers were back in the city and reminded the commission that they could not stop them. He said

Mr. Capizzi is proposing a program for the banners on Ronald Regan Boulevard, which would be added to a future budget. Staff resources and labor costs for the banners need to be considered. He said Duke Energy will host their neighborhood energy-saving program on March 25 at 6:00 p.m. at the Longwood Community Building. An email would be sent to the commissioners asking if they would be interested in speaking at the event. He reported that the new faces for the Clock Tower have been delivered. He also reported that Mr. Capizzi has found an improvement in the system for the transitions that are going on in the softball field during the games. There was a misunderstanding with the softball group about how they were changing out the rubbers at the mound.

14. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mr. Langley said he would work on a proposed contract where Mr. Gioielli would remain a consultant for a period of time to assist in the transition for the city manager.

15. CITY CLERK'S REPORT

Ms. Longo reported that the Mayors and Managers meeting would be at the Lake Mary Events Center tomorrow. She said Longwood would host the April Mayors and Managers and CALNO meetings. She said there is a Tri-County League of Cities membership meeting on Thursday, March 20 from 12:00 to 1:30 p.m. in the City of Kissimmee for those that may be attending. They will approve the slate of officers and by-laws and have legislative updates.

16. ADJOURN. Mayor McMillan adjourned the meeting at 7:19 p.m.

Minutes approved by City Commission: 04-07-2025.

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Matthew McMillan, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Michelle Longo, MMC, FCRM
City Clerk