LONGWOOD CITY COMMISSION

Longwood City Commission Chambers
175 West Warren Avenue
Longwood, Florida

MINUTES
May 19, 2025
6:00 PM

Present: **Mayor Brian D. Sackett**
Deputy Mayor Abby Shoemaker
Commissioner Tony Boni
Commissioner Matthew McMillan
Commissioner Matt Morgan
Dan Langley, City Attorney
William Watts, Acting City Manager
Michelle Longo, City Clerk
David Dowda, Police Chief
Troy Feist, Fire Chief
Chris Kintner, Community Development Director
Judith Rosado, Financial Services Director
Shad Smith, Public Works Director
Magdala Ridore, Human Resources Director

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

2. **OPENING INVOCATION.** Pastor Tony Talavera, with VUE Church gave the invocation.

3. **THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** Commissioner Morgan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

   A. **The City of Longwood will host the Florida SMaSH Beer Festival on Saturday, May 31, 2025, from 1:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. at Reiter Park, 311 West Warren Avenue. This is a ticketed event and tickets are available for $40 on Eventbrite.com.**

5. **PROCLAMATIONS / RECOGNITIONS**

   A. **Proclaiming May 11 through May 17, 2025, as “National Police Week”; and “Peace Officers Memorial Day” in the City of Longwood.**

   Commissioner Boni read the Proclamation and presented it to Police Department staff. Photographs were then taken.

   B. **Proclaiming May 18 through May 24, 2025, as “National Public Works Week” in the City of Longwood.**

Deputy Mayor Shoemaker read the Proclamation and presented it to Public Works staff. Photographs were then taken.

C. Proclaiming May 18 through May 24, 2025, as "Emergency Medical Services Week" in the City of Longwood.

Commissioner McMillan read the Proclamation and presented it to Fire Department staff. Photographs were then taken.

6. BOARD APPOINTMENTS. None.

7. PUBLIC INPUT

A. Public Participation.

Kate Wallace, 2251 Lucien Way, Maitland. She spoke on behalf of Charter Communications regarding Item 12B and emailed all comments to the City Commission and the City Manager. She explained that her company has many concerns and believes the requirement for a cash escrow is not aligned with state law. They thought cities and counties that issued permits should accept a bond, letter of credit, or liability insurance policy as the tools to back their permits. She added that a cash and escrow requirement takes out operating funds from their business that they would otherwise use on repairing and maintaining their infrastructure and doing a footprint-wide upgrade to multi-gigabyte speeds, which costs much money, like billions of dollars. She said Charter Communications has had similar dealings with other companies and contractors in the right-of-way, causing disruptions to customers who think it is their fault for the problem. She stated that her company has concerns with the indemnity language in the ordinance and the way the ordinance is written; the City can hold the permit holder liable for any reason. She provided an example of being given bad information, and that is not something they would consider themselves liable for. She requested a delay in the first reading of the ordinance and to hold a workshop with Mr. Langley, the City Manager, and the Commission.

> Deputy Mayor Shoemaker moved to have Item 12B under Regular Business moved up on the agenda and handled now. Seconded by Commissioner Boni and carried by a unanimous voice vote.

B. Read by title only, set June 2, 2025, as the public hearing date and approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 25-2269, amending Chapter 78, Article II, Communications Facilities in Public Rights-of-Way concerning requirements to obtain a right-of-way permit for the installation of communication services facilities.

Mr. Langley read Ordinance No. 25-2269 by title only.

Mr. Langley presented the Item and explained the ordinance, and how state law governs what cities are allowed and not allowed to do concerning regulating telecommunication facilities with their rights-of-way. Cities get communication taxes for communication facilities being able to use their rights-of-way, but they are not allowed to charge on top of what they collect in taxes. He said state law and current city code allow that when a communications facility comes in for a right-of-way permit, they are required to post a construction bond to ensure that items damaged during the installation are corrected. He pointed out that the City already has an ordinance for this situation, but it does not define the amount, terms, or conditions. The proposed ordinance does, in part, define the construction bond, stating that a company is required to post a cash escrow with the City as a condition of getting a permit, and it would be held for two hundred (200) days but less than seven (7) months past construction. In addition, a company would sign an agreement saying that if something is damaged during construction, they would fix it. According to state statutes, providers are responsible for the damage that they cause. He said the cash escrow, as required by the proposed ordinance, is not the City's money but will sit in a bank account and will only be used if a company does not fix damages that they are legally obligated to repair. The company gets the money back after seven (7) months or after the completion of the project. The ordinance also states that if something gets damaged during a project and it does not get fixed, the City can stop work until it does get fixed. He pointed out that the ordinance does not require a cash escrow in every work circumstance. In addition, the City will allow a letter of credit in lieu of a cash escrow for small projects. The ordinance is also less restrictive than other cities, setting a minimum and maximum amount, unlike if the project goes up in value, so does the deposit amount. He clarified that the proposed ordinance focuses only on installing new facilities and not on repairing existing facilities. He said the ordinance is not intended to be punitive and is another layer of protection to ensure damages are corrected timely. It makes clear that when someone applies for a right-of-way permit, they need to have the owner of the utility or telecommunications company with them, not a subcontractor getting a permit. After passing similar ordinances, Mr. Langley said other cities have seen a drastic reduction in the number of incidents. He felt that once there was money involved, a company would pay more attention to what they were doing.

Mr. Smith agreed that there have been instances where multiple companies represent the same master company. He said the City's lines have been hit thirty (30) or forty (40) times, and it has taken a lot of the City's time and resources to repair them.

Discussion ensued on the ordinance, including, if damage exceeds a quarter of a million dollars, a company is still responsible for the balance; the ordinance is not targeting a particular corporation but only corporations that do work in the City; no need to postpone the second reading of the ordinance since the city attorney has done due diligence; a letter was sent to the State regarding the ordinance and date of the first reading; neighborhoods reported numerous issues with telecommunication companies resulting in calls, emails and texts to the Commission.

> Commissioner Boni moved to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 25-2269 and set June 2, 2025, as the public hearing date. Seconded by Commissioner Morgan and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

8. MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORT

A. District #3. Commissioner McMillan mentioned he had sharp criticism in his report. He recalled six (6) years ago, meeting a previous city manager at a coffee bar, and by the time he walked out, the city manager was lying face down in the parking lot. He ultimately required a heart transplant. He said that situation created a vacancy and a series of acting city managers. He understood that during COVID, the City could not search nationwide for a city manager because everyone was dealing with an unprecedented crisis. He said he was very disappointed last Tuesday when the Commission stopped short of executing the whole process of hiring a city manager. The

Commission received over eighty (80) resumes, with consultants determining that nine (9) closely met their criteria, eighteen (18) met some of their criteria, and no specific opinion was given on the acting city manager because he was an internal candidate. He stated that minimum standards were met and no further evaluation after that. With a close vote of 3-2, the Commission decided to stop the process. He felt that members of the Commission needed to involve the people they represent in making their decisions; otherwise, they would be like any other state agency or board reporting to Tallahassee rather than to their citizens. While the vote was legally sufficient, the hiring process should be open, allowing people an opportunity to participate. He said that at this time, the Commission is preparing to hire a city manager who has not been interviewed in a public meeting. He recalled he did give high compliments to the acting city manager but did not consider that an interview. He commented that selecting a city manager is the most important decision the Commission can make because of the amount of power held by that position. He said they have a six (6) month professional services agreement with the retired city manager, which can be extended, and he believed the Commission, with no crisis situation, can take their time in the selection of the next city manager. He asked commission members to reconsider their votes. He noted that night's agenda for the Commission meeting originally did not have a discussion of a contract for the acting city manager, and on Friday, the item was added.

District #4. Commissioner Morgan said he appreciated Commissioner McMillan's passion in his report. However, he has been through the interview process of a city manager and experienced people who did not understand what separates this community from other cities. He felt the acting city manager was well qualified and had proven himself in just two (2) months on the job. In addition, Clint Gioielli, a previous city manager whom the Commission highly regarded, selected Mr. Watts as the best candidate for the position. He added that Mr. Watts did an outstanding job as the emergency manager for the City of Maitland during the COVID crisis. He said he would continue supporting Mr. Watts's appointment as City Manager.

District #5. Mayor Sackett said that, as a previous elementary school teacher, a principal, and managing the largest craft store in New York, he knows when he talks to someone about their compassion, level of understanding, thinking, and where they could go with something. He was satisfied with how the vote turned out last week and supported the appointment of Mr. Watts as City Manager. He attended a ribbon cutting for Southern Fowl and a MetroPlan Orlando meeting, which reviewed the 2050 plan for roads in the area. The 2050 plan is available on the MetroPlan website. He went out of town to attend his son-in-law's graduation in Minnesota and missed some events. He commended Commissioner Boni for his work with Mercy Road, a non-profit organization, and enjoyed their presentation on support for single parents. He attended a luncheon for the Tri-County League of Cities and witnessed the installation of new officers. He mentioned there was confusion over ball fields for a tournament last weekend at Candyland Sports Complex, but Mr. Watts helped resolve the matter. Mayor Sackett visited the City's pickleball courts and saw Level 3 and 4 people playing. He asked Mr. Watts to look into the repair of cracks at the pickleball courts. He said the cracks were addressed last year, but they returned. He suggested shutting down the courts later in the year, like in November. He attended a Mayors & Managers meeting and recalled first attending twenty-three (23) years ago, and commented that the meeting is still a good place for mayors to gather and discuss common concerns. He planned to attend a Memorial Day Event hosted by Longwood VFW Post 8207 at Longwood Memorial Gardens Cemetery, with lunch to follow at the VFW post. He also looked forward to the Smash Beer Festival at the end of the month. He mentioned upcoming graduations and celebrations, including Longwood Elementary School and Woodlands Elementary School.

District #1. Deputy Mayor Shoemaker attended a ribbon cutting for Southern Fowl and the Council of Local Governments (CALNO) meeting. She said there was a Seminole Soil & Water Conservation District presentation and commented that the organization is available to speak to schools, groups, and individuals. She suggested that the organization speak before the Commission. The City of Oviedo also did a slideshow showing the redo of Riverside Park and their Senior Center after damages by Hurricane Ian. She attended the Leadership Seminole graduation for Commissioner McMillan and congratulated him for completing the program. She attended a ribbon cutting for Black Belt Property Protection and Black Belt Fire Protection and mentioned that the business originally came from Oviedo, finding a new location in Longwood. She congratulated the new officers appointed at the Tri-County League of Cities meeting and may attend a general membership event at SeaWorld. Deputy Mayor Shoemaker said she concurred with comments made by Commissioner McMillan regarding the city manager's hiring process. She was disappointed with the outcome of the special meeting because she read all twenty-eight (28) resumes, creating spreadsheets listing their strengths and weaknesses, and people who lived in Florida. She said that Mr. Watts, Acting City Manager, and her other four (4) picks would have been interviewed. She said she realized the majority of the Commission had chosen a different path and would go along with that path. However, she shares Commissioner McMillan's sentiments about the hiring process.

District #2. Commissioner Boni said the Mercy Road tour was phenomenal and happy that Mayor Sackett enjoyed it. He congratulated Commissioner McMillan on the completion of the Leadership Seminole program. Regarding the special meeting last week, he said he came prepared with three (3) candidates for city manager, with Mr. Watts as the number one candidate. He said he has worked with Mr. Watts and has seen his integrity and way of managing the city. He commented that he understands what Commissioner McMillan and Deputy Mayor Shoemaker are saying regarding the hiring process, and he would have liked to have discussed everyone's candidates and then go from there. But he is convinced the decision made last Tuesday to appoint Mr. Watts as City Manager would be the same decision made so many weeks from now. He thanked Commissioner McMillan for expressing his opinion.

9. COMMISSION AND STAFF ADDITIONS OR CHANGES

A. ADDITIONAL ITEMS RAISED DURING MAYOR'S AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS. None.

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

10. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approve the Minutes of the May 5, 2025, Regular Meeting.

B. Approve the Monthly Expenditures for April 2025.

C. Approve the Monthly Financial Report for March 2025.

Commissioner Morgan moved to approve Items 10A through 10C as presented. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Shoemaker and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

11. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Read by title only, set June 2, 2025, as the second public hearing and approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 25-2268, a non-codified Longwood Development Code Amendment to allow a standalone pharmacy at 876 South U.S. Highway 17-92.

Mr. Langley read Ordinance No. 25-2268 by title only.

Mr. Kintner presented the Item.

Mayor Sackett opened the public hearing. No one spoke in favor or opposition to Ordinance No. 25-2268.

> Commissioner Morgan moved to close the public hearing. Seconded by Commissioner McMillan and carried by a unanimous voice vote.

> Commissioner Morgan moved to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 25-2268 and set June 2, 2025 as the second public hearing date. Seconded by Commissioner McMillan and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

12. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Read by title only, set June 2, 2025, as the public hearing date and approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 25-2267, a Small-Scale Comprehensive Plan intended to change the Future Land Use and Zoning at 919 Orange Avenue to allow for the existing use of a daycare center to be permitted outright.

Mr. Langley read Ordinance No. 25-2267 by title only.

Mr. Kintner presented the Item.

> Commissioner Morgan moved to approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 25-2267 and set June 2, 2025, as the public hearing date. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Shoemaker and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

B. Read by title only, set June 2, 2025, as the public hearing date and approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 25-2269, amending Chapter 78, Article II, Communications Facilities in Public Rights-of-Way concerning requirements to obtain a right-of-way permit for the installation of communication services facilities.

Item addressed after Public Participation.

C. Read by title only and adopt Resolution No. 25-1690, amending the adopted budget 2024-2025, and authorize the Finance Director to record changes in anticipated revenues and appropriations for expenditures as provided in the 2025 Mid-Year Budget Adjustments.

Mr. Langley read Resolution No. 25-1690 by title only.

Ms. Rosado presented the Item.

> Commissioner Morgan moved to adopt Resolution No. 25-1690 as presented 12C. Seconded by Commissioner McMillan and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

D. Read by title only and adopt Resolution No. 25-1691, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) State Highway Lighting, Maintenance and Compensation Agreement Work Order for Fiscal Year 2025/2026.

Mr. Langley read Resolution No. 25-1691 by title only.

Mr. Smith presented the Item.

> Deputy Mayor Shoemaker moved to adopt Resolution No. 25-1691 as presented 12D. Seconded by Commissioner McMillan and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

E. Read by title only and adopt Resolution No. 25-1692, which approves an Interlocal Agreement between Seminole County and the City of Longwood for the Urban County Partnership Program.

Mr. Langley read Resolution No. 25-1689 by title only.

Mr. Smith presented the Item.

> Commissioner McMillan moved to adopt Resolution No. 25-1692 as presented 12E. Seconded by Commissioner Boni and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

F. Approval to award a Construction Agreement for the Bennett Drive Stormwater Project - Phase II (IFB #ED24ATL0G0123) and issuance of a purchase order in the amount of $1,206,389.90 to Central Florida Environmental Corporation (CFE) as the lowest and most responsive bidder.

Mr. Smith presented the Item.

> Commissioner Boni moved to approve Item 12F as presented. Seconded by Commissioner McMillan and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

G. Discussion and consider the appointment of William Watts as City Manager and approval of an Employment Agreement for City Manager.

Mr. Langley presented the Item and explained that after the special meeting, he was directed to work with Mr. Watts on an employment agreement for the city manager. He reviewed the employment agreement and noted it meets the legal review, but the business terms are between the Commission and Mr. Watts. Changes to the contract, if desired, can be made once agreed upon by the Commission and Mr. Watts. He said the new contract would become effective the next day if approved that night, and simultaneously, the existing agreement would terminate. There were some differences in the new contract in regard to car usage with input from Risk Management. Mr. Watts will need to obtain insurance requirements from his personal insurance carrier if he is using the car in a personal capacity and someone were to sue for something that happened outside the scope of employment. The change provides added protection for the City.

Discussion ensued on the employment agreement, including the work schedule, vacation time, salary, and extended non-owned auto (ENOA) coverage under his personal automobile insurance policy.

> Deputy Mayor Shoemaker made a motion to increase vacation hours to 160 hours a year. Motion died for the lack of a second.

Mr. Watts stated that he respects all processes and comes from a line of work that deals with processes. He addressed a few items in his contract: 1) Vacation Accrual: He agreed upon fifteen (15) vacation days a year out of respect for those individuals and their tenure. 2) Car Insurance Requirements: He drops off his child at school in the morning. In the previous city where he worked, they held insurance on their own personal auto insurance policy to protect the City. He already has provided copies of his insurance policy to the City. 3) Salary: He conducted research along with Human Resources and compared salaries of city managers within Seminole County and city of Maitland. He made a 14% adjustment from his current salary as acting city manager to the salary he is proposing for the permanent position. His adjustment is 1% below the top range of his research, and he thought it was a fair salary proposal. 4) Written Report Once A Month: He will exceed the minimum report requirement. 5) Retirement: His retirement contribution will be different from that of the previous city manager.

> Commissioner Morgan moved to appoint William Watts as City Manager effective May 20, 2025, and approve the employment agreement as presented. Seconded by Mayor Sackett and carried by a three-to-two (3-2) roll call vote with Commissioner McMillan and Deputy Mayor Shoemaker voting nay.

13. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Watts thanked the Commission for his appointment as City Manager. He reported that Duke Energy will apply herbicide to the transmission lines that run through the City, from Altamonte Springs through the City into Sanford, and from the City into Winter Springs. The herbicide spraying will follow the rules and regulations of state law.

Mayor Sackett asked who would inform citizens about the herbicide spraying.

Mr. Watts responded that he had just received the information today and would take responsibility on behalf of the City.

Mayor Sackett requested Duke Energy to take responsibility, go door-to-door, and post information about the herbicide spraying.

Mr. Watts said he would contact Duke Energy to take care of that responsibility.

Mr. Watts stated regarding Public Works that the landscaping on State Road 434 is going out for bid. In addition, the City is close to completing the sidewalk improvement project around the historic downtown area, which includes the intersections of Milwee Street and Warren Avenue. City Hall also will get its parking lot resurfaced and restriped. He said Leisure Services concluded hosting two (2) out of three (3) baseball tournaments over the past two (2) weekends. The third tournament will begin this week, and he gave special thanks to the Leisure Services staff who have worked a tremendous amount of time on the fields. He received a complaint about the paint on the fence along Ronald Reagan Boulevard. He plans to work with the artist and figure out the best option for the fence, which has gone through a lot of weather and sun. He planned to attend the Memorial Day Event hosted by Longwood VFW Post 8207 at Longwood Memorial Gardens Cemetery on Monday, May 26.

14. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT.
Mr. Langley reiterated he and Mr. Watts are willing to meet with the Charter Communications representative who spoke earlier to get their input on the pending ordinance, and see if they can address their concerns. He congratulated Mr. Watts on his appointment as City Manager and looked forward to working with him in the future.

15. CITY CLERK'S REPORT
Ms. Longo reported that City offices will be closed on Monday, May 26, in observance of Memorial Day. The Longwood VFW Post 8207 will have its Memorial Day Event on Monday, May 26, at 11:00 a.m. at the Longwood Memorial Gardens. Following the ceremony, they will have a free lunch and showing the movie "Taking Chance" back at their VFW Post for those who wish to attend. The Mayors and Managers Group meeting will be held tomorrow, Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 11:30 a.m. The City of Oviedo is hosting the meeting. She asked if the Commissioners were all available on Thursday, July 10 at 3:00 p.m. for the budget workshop. She congratulated Mr. Watts on his appointment.

16. ADJOURN. Mayor Sackett adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Minutes approved by City Commission: 06-02-2025.

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Brian D. Sackett, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Michelle Longo, MMC, FCRM, City Clerk

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