DeFuniak Springs City Council
Meeting Minutes
Council Chambers
February 10, 2025

1. Call to Order

Mayor Bob Campbell called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

Present: Mayor Bob Campbell; Mayor Pro-Tempore Todd Bierbaum (Seat 1); Councilmember Josh Sconiers (Seat 2); Councilmember Glen Harrison (Seat 4); Councilmember Anthony Vallée (Seat 5).

Absent: Councilmember Amy Heavilin (Seat 3).

Also, present were City Manager Koby Townsend, City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Finance Director Steven Rausch, and City Clerk Rafael Ali.

2. PRESENTATION AND/OR PROCLAMATION

A. Mayor Bob Campbell

1. Proclamation for Arbor Day

Mayor Campbell read the proclamation for Arbor Day.

B. City Manager K. Townsend

1. Employee of the Quarter - Denise Kania

Mr. Townsend presented the employee of the quarter.

3. CONSENT AGENDA
A. Additions/Deletions to the Consent Agenda
B. Approval of the Consent Agenda

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda by Councilmember Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember Vallee; the motion passed without objection.

4. REGULAR AGENDA

A. Additions/Deletions to the Regular Agenda

Mr. Townsend stated that he would like to add 4C3 Triumph Gulf Coast Request.

B. Approval of the Regular Agenda

A motion was made to approve the regular agenda with the addition by Councilmember Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember Vallee; the motion passed without objection.

C. City Manager K. Townsend

1. Approval of Grant Management and Compliance services for USDOT Award

Mr. Townsend presented on the approval of Grant Management and Compliance services for the USDOT Award.

Mr. Townsend stated that Liberty Partners manages this grant.

He explained that this is the first time Liberty Partners has asked for any of these fees to be instituted.

Mr. Townsend mentioned that we are asking for the 5% fee, which would be $37,050 based on 5% of the grant.

He stated that this will be over a 12-month period.

Mr. Townsend added that this was not budgeted for, but we did budget for the full match for this grant, and we will pay it out of that.

Mr. Townsend requested approval of the memo and the 5% grant management fee for the USDOT Reconnecting Communities grant.

A motion was made to approve the Grant Management and Compliance services for USDOT Award by Councilmember Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember Sconiers the motion passed without objection.

Mr. Vallee stated that he has concerns about not using the full grant allotment.

Mr. Parson stated that he didn't think there would be a scenario where the city wouldn't maximize these grants.

Mr. Parson added that he hasn't had any experience where the municipality hasn't used the full award.

Mr. Vallee clarified that he is just asking from a procedural perspective.

Mr. Parson said that he would certainly try to align with what the council wants.

Mr. Bierbaum stated that Liberty Partners has done an amazing job securing well over $120 million for us.

Mr. Bierbaum mentioned that he wants some forecasting on Liberty's part to properly budget for these situations.

Mr. Harrison asked if there would be any other billings for other grants Liberty Partners manages for us.

Mr. Parson answered, "No."

Mr. Parson emphasized that this is all about securing additional funding.

Mr. Harrison stated that we are grateful for Liberty Partners and the work they do.

2. Requesting approval to purchase LMR Radios

Mr. Townsend presented on the LMR radio purchase.

Mr. Townsend said that the cost of the radios is $9,200 each.

He stated that the city attorney can weigh in on using impact fees to cover the purchase.

Mr. Townsend also mentioned that the Chief has an equipment line item that can cover the purchase.

Mr. Adkison asked Chief Ross if these radios are necessary to serve the additional growth the city has seen.

Chief Ross answered, "Yes."

Mr. Adkison stated that, based on that, it would be appropriate to use the impact fee ordinance that has been adopted.

A motion was made to purchase the LMR Radios by Councilmember Sconiers and seconded by councilmember Bierbaum; the motion passed without objection.

Mr. Bierbaum wanted to clarify that we are only purchasing two.

Mr. Townsend answered, "Yes."

Mr. Adkison stated that we will have to address the other three in next year's budget cycle.

3. Triumph Grant Application

Mr. Townsend stated that Triumph Gulf Coast is meeting, and he requested approval to transmit a letter from the city for the request of $4,229,000.

A motion was made to transmit a letter from the City to Triumph Gulf Coast for the request of $4,229,000 by Councilmember Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember Sconiers; the motion passed without objection.

D. Planning Director C. Wallace

1. 2024-SP-10, The Arbours at Emerald Springs Final Plan

Mr. Adkinson presented on 2024-SP-10, The Arbours at Emerald Springs Final Plan.

A motion was made to approve the 2024-SP-10, The Arbours at Emerald Springs Final Plan with the deletion of Laurel Oaks from the landscape plan by Councilmember Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember Sconiers; the motion passed without objection.

Mr. Vallee asked how many bedrooms there are in the units.

Cole Ranger from Seaside Engineering stated that he did not know the specific number.

Mr. Vallee asked if there are 3 bedroom units.

Mr. Ranger answered that he is not sure.

Mr. Ranger stated that he did not come prepared to speak.

Mr. Townsend stated that there are 84 units in total.

Mr. Vallee mentioned that there are 165 parking spots.

He also stated that if there are 3 bedroom units, we will have a problem.

Mr. Vallee noted that this community has sidewalks and other features, but we need to address the parking.

Mr. Harrison stated that on the landscape plans, the city recently decided to remove laurel oaks from one of the trees in the plan.

Mr. Harrison asked if this can be done on the plan.

He explained that laurel oaks have been known to cause damage to property.

Mr. Adkison asked if this is something they would agree to do.

Mr. Ranger responded that he does not see this as an issue at this point.

Mayor Campbell asked if we add this to the motion, could you get with us on the decision?

Mr. Harrison stated that this is a wonderful landscape development.

Mr. Bierbaum stated that he agrees with Mr. Vallee's concern about the LDC.

He mentioned that this would be a sister facility to the one built on Shoemaker, and he has not heard any issues with the other Arbours off Shoemaker.

Mayor Campbell stated to let us know once your team is good with this deletion.

5. PUBLIC HEARING/ORDINANCES

A. Planning Director C. Wallace

1. 1st Reading - (2024-LDC-01) as it relates to creating a new Downtown Business district

Mr. Adkinson son presented on 1st Reading - (2024-LDC-01) as it relates to creating a new Downtown Business district.

A motion was made to approve the 1st Reading - (2024-LDC-01) as it relates to creating a new Downtown Business district by Councilmember Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember Vallee; the motion passed without objection.

Mr. Adkinson conducted the first reading.

6. REQUEST TO BE ON THE AGENDA

7. CITIZEN COMMENTS

JB Hillard, a citizen of DeFuniak Springs, stated that the Senior Center was a very exciting place today.

Mr. Hillard mentioned that there were 100 people in attendance. He also stated that the Senior Center serves people from all over the area.

Mark Hamley, a citizen of DeFuniak Springs, Florida, asked for an update on the status of the RFP for the library.

Mr. Townsend stated that he has sent it over to Mr. Adkison for review, and once he approves it, they will send it out.

Mr. Adkison stated that he should have it by the end of the week.

Mr. Townsend clarified that it would need to be advertised in the local paper and the Northwest Florida Daily News for 30 days.

Anna Codell, a citizen of DeFuniak Springs, Florida, asked how the locations of the cameras were decided.

Ms. Codell also asked about signage with regard to single lanes and turn lanes.

Mayor Campbell stated that they have reached out to FDOT, and they were told it cannot be done locally.

Mayor Campbell added that they will get in contact with FDOT again tomorrow.

Mrs. Codell asked about the policy for cleaning up downtown.

She also inquired whether it is the city's responsibility.

Mr. Hurley asked where the cameras Mrs. Codell mentioned are located.

Mrs. Codell clarified that the cameras are in communities, not at traffic lights.

Mr. Hurley explained that these cameras capture vehicles with expired tags or individuals who are wanted or missing. He added that they also help locate people with arrest warrants.

Mr. Hurley stated that there are 12 cameras within the city limits. He noted that the cameras are primarily for crime prevention.

Mr. Sconiers asked if the cameras are leased.

Mr. Hurley confirmed that they are on two-year contracts. He also mentioned that private businesses purchase these cameras.

Mr. Townsend stated that in the special event application, the applicant is responsible for the cleanup after the event concludes.

8. CITY ATTORNEY

9. LEGISLATIVE REQUESTS
A. Councilmember A. Vallee
1. Linear Park

Mr. Vallee presented the Linear Park project.

Mr. Vallee invited Lee Moore, Executive Director of Scenic Walton, to present on the Linear Park project.

Mrs. Moore stated that for a decade, they have been focusing on safety and beautification enhancements.

Mrs. Moore stated that they have been wanting to work with local government organizations and entities to get projects done and identify them.

Mrs. Moore explained that they have been pursuing projects through the initiative called Walton Safe and Beautiful.

She also mentioned that they work with local governments to identify potential projects.

Mrs. Moore stated that she has been working with Councilmember Vallee, and she told him that she really wants to do a project in DeFuniak Springs.

She mentioned that Councilmember Vallee has been working on this project, and the design you see today is a result of that collaboration.

Mr. Moore added that what he likes about this project is that it can be used as a match to leverage other funding.

Mrs. Moore explained that she has used similar projects to leverage additional funds.

She stated that their goal is to secure further funding.

Mrs. Moore mentioned that they know the county is interested in developing the back entrance of the golf course.

Mr. Vallee clarified that what we are seeing is the intersection on 16th Street, just across from City Hall.

Mr. Vallee explained that we are discussing the multi-modal path, which we are working on with DOT. This will be a portion of the project, coming from the Sun Trail initiative.

Mr. Vallee stated that this path will become a linear park that stretches along the entire length of West DeFuniak.

He emphasized that this project would connect the entire city.

Mr. Vallee mentioned that bike paths are very popular.

He stated that this project allows us to start implementing some of the ideas we've worked on in the past.

Mr. Vallee expressed that what could elevate this project to the next level is creating a memorial trail.

He then explained how we could establish memorials from start to finish along the path. Mr. Vallee stated that he believes this is a wonderful opportunity, and his hope is that we adopt it and allow for future public input and modifications. He also mentioned that we should provide feedback to Scenic Walton so they can fully execute the project and present it to DOT as a concept-based design, and to reconnecting communities as part of the program.

A motion was made to adopt the Linear Park Project by Councilmember Vallee and seconded by Councilmember Bierbaum; the motion passed without objection.

Robert Raymond, a citizen of DeFuniak Springs, asked if this is part of the Reconnecting Communities grant.

Mr. Vallee answered, "Correct."

Mr. Vallee stated that the Sun Trail is an FDOT project, and it cycles, but we need to provide active input.

Mr. Vallee also explained the path of the Sun Trail project.

10. EXECUTIVE COMMENTS

Mr. Townsend stated that he went through the process with Mr. Rauch, and he voluntarily resigned the previous week.

Mr. Townsend also mentioned that the Senior Center is on the county agenda for discussion, and he will be there to represent the city.

11. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Sconiers thanked the people serving on the city committees.

Mr. Harrison expressed condolences to Mrs. Henderson, who recently lost her husband.

Mr. Vallee agreed.

Mr. Vallee stated that the Senior Center is busy, and it is great. He appreciates the work being done there.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting Adjourned 6:04 PM.

Approved:

Bob Campbell, Mayor

ATTEST:

THE CITY OF DEFUNIAK SPRINGS CORPORATE SEAL 1901

Minutes taken by Rafael Ali
City Clerk
Proper notice having been duly given