

A Public Hearing and Special Meeting of the City Commission of the City of Apalachicola was held on Tuesday, September 23, 2025 at 6:00 PM at the Commission Meeting Room located at 74 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Apalachicola, Florida.

Present: Mayor Brenda Ash, Commissioner Anita Grove, Commissioner Despina George, Commissioner Donna Duncan, Commissioner Adriane Elliott, Interim City Manager Chris Holley, Finance Director Lee Mathes, Chief of Police Bobby Varnes, Officer Chase Richards, Attorney Dan Hartman

Mayor Ash called meeting to order.

#### **AGENDA ADOPTION**

Mayor Ash requests to amend agenda to add Home Depot HCA ADA Restroom Project under Unfinished Business Item 4.

Motion to adopt amended agenda made by Commissioner Grove, seconded by Commissioner Elliott. Motion carried 3 to 1. Commissioner George opposed. Commissioner Duncan not present at this time.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING: FY 2025-2026 BUDGET FINAL PUBLIC HEARING**

Mayor Ash opened public hearing.

Mayor Ash announced the following statement:

The City of Apalachicola total budget for FY 25/26 is \$9,023,768. The millage rate to be levied is 8.3457. The percentage by which this millage rate to be levied is a 6.93% increase of the rolled back rate of 7.8048. This is the final public hearing to adopt FTY 25/26 millage rate and budget.

Mayor Ash read Resolution 2025-06 in its entirety.

Mayor Ash read Ordinance 2025-03 in its entirety.

No public comment.

No City Commission or Staff comment.

Public hearing closed.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. Commissioner Elect Donna Knutson – Commissioner Elect Knutson discussed the process in which the City Manager takes direction from the City Commission, City Manager 90 Day Evaluation, and recommendation to appoint either Clayton Mathis or Tami Ray-Hutchinson to the Franklin County Economic Development Board.

Commissioner Duncan joined meeting at this time.

**FINAL ADOPTION FY 25/26 MILLAGE RATE – RESOLUTION 2025-06**

Mayor Ash read Resolution 2025-06 in its entirety.

Motion to approve Resolution 2025-06 adopting FY 25/26 millage rate made by Commissioner George, seconded by Commissioner Grove. Motion carried 5 to 0.

**FINAL ADOPTION FY 25/26 BUDGET – ORDINANCE 2025-03**

Mayor Ash read Ordinance 2025-03 in its entirety.

Motion to approve Ordinance 2025-03 adopting FY 25/26 budget made by Commissioner Grove, seconded by Commissioner Elliott. Motion carried 5 to 0.

**MANAGER EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT**

Attorney Hartman outlined proposed manager employment agreement for Charles Anderson.

Discussion held regarding City Manager expectations, 90-day evaluation to be completed by each Commissioner, and process in which City Manager takes direction from the City Commission.

Motion to approve City Manager employment agreement for Charles Anderson made by Commissioner Grove, seconded by Commissioner George with discussion.

Commissioner George stated because the approved salary is now \$116,000, the retirement and social security expenses will also increase, but the insurance will decrease because manager has declined City coverage.

Motion carried 5 to 0.

**FRANKLIN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOARD APPOINTMENT**

Mayor Ash stated the following individuals have been recommended for appointment: Cutler Edwards, Clayton Mathis, Tami Ray-Hutchinson, and Tom Morgan.

Motion to appoint Tami Ray-Hutchinson as first choice and Clayton Mathis as second choice to the Franklin County Economic Development Board made by Commissioner George, seconded by Commissioner Duncan. Motion carried 4 to 1. Commissioner Grove opposed.

**HOME DEPOT HCA BUILDING ADA RESTROOM**

Interim Manager Holley outlined the nationwide Home Depot/ Omnia Partners collaboration that works with cities and counties on completing various projects.

Attorney Hartman stated he has reviewed the proposal, and it is a good project for the City to pursue.

Motion to approve Home Depot/Omnia Partners proposal to construct ADA compliant restroom in the HCA building for \$17,819.20 made by Commissioner Grove, seconded by Commissioner Elliott. Motion carried 5 to 0.

**CITY MANAGER COMMUNICATIONS**

Interim Manager Holley gave Commission update on ongoing projects. Manager Holley expressed his appreciation to the Commission and stated he will help with the new Manager transition as much as is needed in October.

Discussion held concerning a transition agreement for Interim Manager Holley.

Motion to direct Attorney Hartman to draft transition agreement for Interim Manager Holley to be ratified on October 7<sup>th</sup> regular meeting made by Commissioner Elliott, seconded by Commissioner Duncan. Motion carried 5 to 0.

**MAYOR & COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner George questioned Interim Manager Holley's actions regarding Riverfront Park fountain.

Commissioner Elliott stated the fixed asset inventory needs to be completed by September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Duncan discussed items at Johnson Complex that could be sold as surplus property, tree trimming locations for school buses, and invited everyone to her business relocation grand opening on October 3rd.

Commissioner Grove thanked everyone for their support over the past eight years and appreciated everyone for all the hard work over her tenure as City Commissioner.

Mayor Ash thanked Interim Manager Holley for stepping in when needed and it has been a pleasure working with him.

Mayor Ash thanked Commissioner Grove for her passion and dedication over the past eight years.

Franklin County Commission Chair Ricky Jones provided information for the purpose and goal of the Franklin County Economic Development Board. Commissioner Jones thanked the Commission for their appointment to the board.

Motion to adjourn made by Commission Grove, seconded by Commissioner George. Motion carried 5 to 0.

---

Brenda Ash, Mayor

---

Lee Mathes, Finance Director  
Sheneidra Cummings, City Clerk (absent)