

A Regular Meeting of the City Commission of the City of Apalachicola was held on Tuesday, January 6, 2026 at 6:00PM at the Commission Meeting Room, 74 6th Street, Apalachicola, Florida.

Present: Mayor Brenda Ash, Commissioner Despina George, Commissioner Donna Knutson, Commissioner Donna Duncan, Commissioner Adriane Elliott, City Manager Charles Anderson, City Attorney Dan Hartman, Finance Director Lee Mathes, Grants Coordinator Leslie Glaze, Police Officer Timmy Davis

Regular Meeting opened by Mayor Ash followed by Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ADOPTION

Motion to adopt agenda made by Commissioner George, seconded by Commissioner Elliott.
Motion carried 5 to 0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Anita Grove updated Commission on the oyster harvesting and status of Apalachicola Bay.
2. Elinor Mount Simmons briefed Commission on the activities of the upcoming annual African American Festival to be held February 21st and 22nd at Franklin Square and invited everyone to attend.
3. Lynn Wilder commented on local bill and creation of special district.
4. Judith Rice request a lump sum refund for sewer charges associated with irrigation problems at her residence.

City Manager Anderson will research Ms. Rice's utility charges.

5. Rob Zingarelli thanked the Commission for their continued actions regarding the local bill.

ARBOR DAY PROCLAMATION

Motion to approve Arbor Day Proclamation made by Commissioner Elliott, seconded by Commissioner Knutson. Motion carried 5 to 0.

1ST READING ORDINANCE 2026-01 – REPEALING ORDINANCE 2024-01 (BUSINESS LICENSE)

Attorney Hartman stated that Florida League of Cities has pointed out discrepancies with Ordinance 2024-01 and recommends reverting back to Ordinance 2025-11.

Attorney Hartman read Ordinance 2026-01 by title as follows:

AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE REPEAL OF ORDINANCE 2024-01 AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR NEW CATEGORIES FOR OCCUPATIONAL LICENSE TAX, FIXING AMOUNTS AND REVERTING TO PRIOR STATUS (ORDINANCE 2005-11); PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; REPEAL AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Motion to approve 1st reading of Ordinance 2026-01 and proceed with adoption process made by Commissioner Elliott, seconded by Commissioner George. Motion carried 5 to 0.

APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY FOR ISSUANCE OF FINAL PLAT APPROVAL

Attorney Hartman stated in 2025 the Florida Legislature passed an amendment to Section 177.071, F.S. removing the governing body of a City or County from the plat approval process in favor of an administrative plat (including replat) approval process. A local government's development standards must still be met, but a designated administrative authority provides the approval.

Discussion held concerning plat approval process.

Motion to designate City Manager as the Administrative Officer tasked with approving plats consistent with Section 177.071, F.S. made by Commissioner George, seconded by Commissioner Elliott. Motion carried 5 to 0.

PROCUREMENT APPROVAL CONTRACTOR FOR HILL COMMUNITY PROJECT M0033

Motion to approve Hydra Engineering as the winning bid for the Hill Community Project M0033 made by Commissioner Duncan, seconded by Commissioner George. Motion carried 5 to 0.

Grants Coordinator Leslie Glaze stated that Hydra Engineering's bid was strictly for buildings, and she is working with Florida Commerce to obtain funding for the sidewalk portion of the project.

MAYOR & COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

1. Commissioner Knutson discussed the local bill.
2. Commissioner Elliott informed the Commission that Team Franklin Community Stakeholder Workshops will be held on January 16th at Carrabelle City Hall from 5:30 – 7:30PM and on January 23rd at Holy Family from 5:30 – 7:30PM.

CITY MANAGER COMMUNICATIONS

City Manager Anderson briefed the Commission on the following topics:

1. PIO Ashley Webb has the City’s “Stay Informed” email notification system operational and in use.
2. Florida Rural Water will attend January 20th Commission Meeting to discuss recent water/wastewater rate study.
3. Inconsistencies regarding facility rental security deposit have been resolved.
4. The utility billing section of City Hall will only be open from 8AM – 12 Noon on January 20th – January 23rd as staff training will be taking place from 12:01 – 5:00PM.
5. Interviews have been scheduled for the Public Works Director, Community Development Coordinator, and Code Enforcement positions.
6. State Auditor General’s Office is requesting to set up a meeting in January to discuss the JLAC directed operational audit, and to request that either the Mayor or a Commissioner be a part of this meeting.

Motion to appoint Commissioner George to attend audit meeting made by Commissioner Knutson, seconded by Commissioner Duncan. Motion carried 5 to 0.

Discussion held concerning Popham Building, and Hill Community M0033 Project sidewalk and lighting.

ATTORNEY’S COMMUNICATIONS

Attorney Hartman stated he will research special election costs and survey options that will allow public input on local bill. Matter will be discussed further at the January 20th meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to approve consent agenda made by Commissioner Elliott, seconded by Commissioner Duncan. Motion carried 5 to 0.

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

Brenda Ash, Mayor

Lee Mathes, Finance Director