

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the City Commission of the City of Auburndale held April 7, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Commission Room of City Hall, after having been properly advertised, with the following members present: Mayor Dorothea Taylor Bogert, Vice Mayor Alex Cam, Commissioners: Keith Cowie, Jordan Helms, and Bill Sterling. Also, present were: City Manager Jeffrey Tillman, City Attorney Frederick J. Murphy Jr., City Clerk Brandon Henry, and Police Chief Terry Storie.

Mayor Dorothea Taylor Bogert declared a quorum present, and the Meeting was opened with prayer by Reverend William Burns, First Presbyterian Church, and a salute to the flag.

Motion by Vice Mayor Cam, seconded by Commissioner Cowie, to approve Minutes of the City Commission Meeting of March 17, 2025. Upon vote, all ayes.

City Clerk Brandon Henry presented and recognized the City of Auburndale Citizens Academy Class of 2025.

Mayor Taylor Bogert thanked staff. Vice Mayor Cam concurred and congratulated the program participants.

Parks and Recreation Director Cody McGhee provided an update on this year's CityFest.

Fire Chief Brian Bradway provided an update on the new Opticom system.

City Manager Jeffrey Tillman reported the Auburndale Police Department received reaccreditation with Excelsior recognition. Police Chief Terry Storie gave a presentation on the accreditation process and how accreditation for the Police Department is achieved. Former City Manager Bobby Green spoke on the history of the police accreditation process in Auburndale.

Mayor Taylor Bogert presented a Proclamation recognizing Autism Awareness Month. City Attorney Frederick J. Murphy Jr. read the proclamation.

Mayor Taylor Bogert presented a Proclamation recognizing Water Conservation Month. City Attorney Frederick J. Murphy Jr. read the proclamation.

Mayor Taylor Bogert presented a Proclamation recognizing National Library Week. City Attorney Frederick J. Murphy Jr. read the proclamation.

Mayor Taylor Bogert expressed her gratitude to the Police Department, Utilities Department, and Library staff.

Mayor Taylor Bogert asked if there was public comment on any item not on the agenda. There was no public comment.

1. ORDINANCE #1818 ANNEXING PROPERTY INTO CITY LIMITS – DUKE ENERGY PROPERTY

City Manager Tillman said the City received a petition from Duke Energy Florida, LLC. of 525 S. Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC, 28202, to annex a parcel totaling +/-2.44 acres into the City limits. The property is located on West Derby Avenue, north of Chambers Road. The property is adjacent to the Duke Osprey Energy Center and City limits to the south. Duke Energy has recently constructed the Osprey Substation on the property. The annexation does not create an enclave. The proposed annexation is as a result of the owner's request for City utilities and services.

Establishing a Future Land Use and Zoning classification on the property will be considered at Public Hearings before the Planning Commission and City Commission at later dates. The action currently before the City Commission is only on the annexation of the property into the City.

The proposed Ordinance was prepared by the Community Development Department and reviewed by the City Manager and City Attorney. If approved on first reading, the proposed Ordinance will be presented for second

and final reading on April 21, 2025. Staff recommends approval of Ordinance #1818 annexing the Duke Energy Property into the City limits.

City Attorney Frederick J. Murphy Jr. read Ordinance No. 1818 entitled: **AN ORDINANCE EXTENDING THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF AUBURNDALE, FLORIDA, SO AS TO INCLUDE THEREIN ADDITIONAL TERRITORY LYING CONTIGUOUS AND ADJACENT TO THE PRESENT BOUNDARIES OF THE CITY; DESCRIBING SAID ADDITIONAL TERRITORY; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE (General Location: West Derby Avenue and Chambers Road)**, by title only.

Mayor Taylor Bogert asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Cowie, seconded by Commissioner Helms, to approve Ordinance #1818 annexing the Duke Energy Property into the City limits, as read on first reading by title only. Upon vote, all ayes.

2. PRESENTATION BY CITRUS CONNECTION

City Manager Tillman introduced Citrus Connection staff.

Erin Killebrew, Citrus Connection Director of External Affairs, presented a graphic depicting Citrus Connection service and boardings within Auburndale. She presented ridership and financial statistics.

Commissioner Cowie asked for clarification on the population statistics.

Ms. Killebrew provided clarification.

Commissioner Cowie asked for an update regarding service to Florida Polytechnic University.

Ms. Killebrew provided an update.

Commissioner Cowie said for a long time we have expressed the desire to connect to destinations beyond Lakeland.

Ms. Killebrew said Citrus Connection staff have been in discussions with City staff. She said if we ever need help with anything else, like Citizens Academy, just reach out to her.

City Manager Tillman expressed gratitude to Citrus Connection.

3. CONSIDER DEVELOPER'S AGREEMENT WITH ADVENTHEALTH POLK NORTH, INC.

Community Development Director Julie Womble said in 2022, the City initiated a comprehensive city-wide review of the Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility Service Area, completed by Chastain-Skillman, which identified certain improvements required to serve and allow development in the area. AdventHealth Polk North, Inc. is under contract for +/- 4.8 acres on US Highway 92 W, east of the Polk Parkway and west of Howard Road. The Utility Study shows that development and construction on the AdventHealth Polk North, Inc. property cannot discharge into the City's wastewater system until the Pace Road Master Lift Station Utility Improvements and Southern Force Main Re-route projects are completed, permitted, and operational, as identified in the Utility Study.

The proposed Developer's Agreement is between AdventHealth Polk North, Inc. and the City of Auburndale. The Agreement acknowledges that the City makes no representation or warranty as to when it will commence or complete the Utility Improvements.

The proposed Developer's Agreement allows the City to complete the review of all development plans and construction plan documents. The Developer intends to construct a stand-alone emergency room and medical offices. The Developer has submitted Future Land Use and Official Zoning Map amendments that will come

before the City at a later date. Community Development Director Womble explained a change since the agenda packet was distributed, for a whereas clause regarding a temporary septic tank.

The City and AdventHealth Polk North, Inc., desire to enter into the Agreement to establish the respective rights and obligations between AdventHealth Polk North, Inc., and the City, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the proposed Developer's Agreement.

City Manager Tillman said the proposed Developer's Agreement was prepared by AdventHealth Polk North, Inc., and reviewed by the Community Development Director, City Manager's Office, City Public Works Director and the City Attorney. Staff recommends approval of the proposed Developers Agreement with AdventHealth Polk North, Inc., and the City of Auburndale.

Mayor Taylor Bogert asked if City Attorney Murphy had any additional comment.

City Attorney Murphy answered no.

Mayor Taylor Bogert asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Helms, seconded by Commissioner Sterling, to approve the proposed Developers Agreement with AdventHealth Polk North, Inc., and the City of Auburndale. Upon vote, all ayes.

4. APPROVE ENTRANCE FEES FOR LAKE ARIANA PARK

City Manager Tillman provided context and history regarding the item.

Assistant City Manager Amy Palmer said in May 2023, the City Commission had a discussion on enforcement activity by the Police Department and Parks and Recreation at Lake Ariana Park, to have better control of undesirable activity that was occurring, such as unsafe boating, litter, and loud music. One of the solutions discussed was to possibly charge an entrance fee at Lake Ariana Park to offset the operational expenses of enforcement. Prior to the Municipal Beach closing in 2011, the City had charges for residents, non-residents, and vehicles with boats to enter the park. It was decided to continue enforcement efforts over the busy weekends and to consider an entrance fee after the park was redeveloped.

The contractor for Lake Ariana Park has completed installation of the new boat ramp and parking lot and it is ready to be opened to the public. City Staff has researched various City, County, and State parks with boat ramps to determine a proposed fee. The proposed entrance fees are as follows:

Entrance Fee

Resident Rate:	No Charge
Non-Resident Rate:	\$3.00 per vehicle
	\$1.00 per person not in a vehicle
	\$10.00 per vehicle and trailer
Annual Pass for Non-Residents:	\$30.00 per year for vehicles
	\$100.00 per year for vehicle and trailer

The City would issue a car tag to residents and annual pass holders. An electronic pay station, similar to what other jurisdictions use in downtown parking lots and parks will be installed in the parking lot to allow payment of the fee. Fees would be waived for City-sponsored events and events taking place at the Civic Center. The proposed rate would take effect April 8, 2025. The entrance fee will be on an honor system until pay stations can

be installed and utilized, which is anticipated to be in the Fall of 2025, when redevelopment of Lake Ariana Park and the Civic Center are complete.

Parks and Recreation Director Cody McGhee presented comparable jurisdictions that utilize entrance fees and potential payment systems.

City Manager Tillman provided the history of fees at Lake Ariana Park. There will be other items that will need to come before the Commission, such as rental rates – this item is just for entrance fees. He appreciates the staff's input and research into this. Staff recommends approval of the proposed entrance fees for Lake Ariana Park.

Mayor Taylor Bogert asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Sterling, seconded by Vice Mayor Cam, to approve the proposed entrance fees for Lake Ariana Park.

Vice Mayor Cam said specifically about the fees and how it would be waived for City sponsored events, it would be important as we have further discussions to discuss how we would organize the parking lot from park activities and Civic Center activities.

Mayor Taylor Bogert said she is very much adamant in allowing residents in at no charge. We pay ad valorem taxes, and it is a very huge investment by the City. She thinks the fees for nonresidents are a little low, especially for the annual pass. Part of the issue is that we had people coming from outside of Polk County inundating Lake Ariana Park, leading to noise, issues, enforcement, cleanup, etc. She would like to see it go up a little bit from the get-go, but she does not know how the other commissioners feel about this for nonresidents. We would have to reevaluate on an ongoing basis if it is actually covering the cost if we have a lot of people coming in. \$100 is a low fee.

Commissioner Cowie said he understands. To the Mayor's point, he does not think we are trying to charge this fee to make money.

Mayor Taylor Bogert said absolutely not.

Commissioner Cowie continued that the goal of this is more to the Mayor's point of limiting outside access. Not so much from Winter Haven, but from outside the County. It may be because other areas have cracked down on their activities. He assumes we will continue with police enforcement?

City Manager Tillman answered yes.

Commissioner Cowie continued that if you are one of those people that comes from miles around to visit Lake Ariana Park, he does not know how high we go to discourage that – if discouragement is our goal.

Mayor Taylor Bogert said she does not think it is to discourage, it is to utilize. She does think we get some pushback because a lot of people across the street do not realize they are nonresidents. A lot of Auburndale address residents are County residents, so they are considered nonresidents – so that is something we have to keep in mind. We have some that have Polk City addresses that are within Auburndale City limits – that is the mail system. She does not know what that number would be, or if we start this to initiate it and revisit it in a few months - and when we are ready to officially open the entire park, we have this conversation again. We may get a little bit of an idea regarding usage, although it will be hard since it is based on an honor system. But she does not know if it is something that we are comfortable with.

City Manager Tillman said we can start with these rates; it is up to the pleasure of the Commission. Staff proposed something based on what we were seeing out in other parks – especially where we saw a lot of those boat ramp type facilities. It is a starting place, it is comparable, and in the ballpark of what other parks are charging, so that

is why we recommended what we recommended. The thought was to make sure the park is available to the residents at the end of the day – that was the intent of charging fees. Not really to discourage use, but if nonresidents are going to come, help pay for some of the boating activity from the Police Department or the Parks staff that have to help cleanup. It helps nonresidents contribute to that, not to discourage them. If it were all City residents packing the park, we would still have to have a Police Department boat out – but residents pay for that through their ad valorem taxes. This is a way for us to help recoup some of that from nonresidents, even if they do live across the street – they do not help contribute to the maintenance of the park because they do not pay ad valorem taxes. If we see that we are having to have more enforcement or more staff at the park, it may be something we look into to increase the fee a little bit. It is something we can monitor. Our code allows for the City Commission to address fees from time to time, it just takes an action from the Commission. It is a matter of monitoring the park and bringing it back to the Commission if we see the need to.

Vice Mayor Cam asked regarding the nonresident vehicle pass – if they initially buy a \$30 pass for a vehicle, and then purchase a trailer, would they have to purchase a new pass that would permit both of those, or pay the extra \$70 to make it \$100.

Assistant City Manager Palmer said the pass would distinguish whether it is just the vehicle or vehicle and trailer. There would be a different color or distinguishing feature on the tag. They would pay an additional \$70.

Mayor Taylor Bogert said those details can be worked out. Initially, we are going to see how it works out. The purpose of the next few months, between tomorrow and opening – is to get people accustomed to the fact that it is no longer a free park, it is for our residents. She is comfortable with keeping it this way for now but would like before the opening that we revisit it with any new information.

Assistant City Manager Palmer said we will evaluate it as time goes on.

Upon vote, all ayes.

Mayor Taylor Bogert thanked Citizens Academy participants for staying for the entire meeting.

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:12:05 p.m.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Minutes are true and correct.



Brandon Henry, City Clerk