

**City Commission**

**Meeting Minutes**

**December 16, 2025**

**(APPROVED)**

12/16/2025 - Minutes

1. INVOCATION

Rev Walter Nelson

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hilligoss called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. after the invocation and the pledge.

4. ROLL CALL

**Commissioners Members Present:** Deputy Mayor Robin Gibson, Keith Thompson, Carol Gillespie, Mayor Jack Hilligoss,

**Commission Members Absent:** Daniel Williams

**Staff Present:** James Slaton, City Manager; Jennifer Nanek, City Clerk; Albert C. Galloway, Jr., City Attorney

5. PROCLAMATIONS AND AWARDS

Mayor Hilligoss recognized Beverly Pennington, Streets Division Manager, for the good job with the holiday decorations.

6. COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

Becky Wynkoop, resident, recommended incentives to developers to follow the Envisioned plan.

Charlene Bennett, resident, discussed diversity in invocations and shared a humanist invocation.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Thompson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Deputy Mayor Gibson seconded the motion.

by voice vote:

Commissioner Thompson "YES"

Deputy Mayor Gibson "YES"

Commissioner Gillespie "YES"

Mayor Hilligoss "YES"

Motion approved 4-0.

7.I. Minutes - December 2 & 10, 2025

7.II. Project Management Services – Kiwanis Park  
[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** The City Commission will consider an agreement with Colliers Project Leaders for Project Management Services for the Kiwanis Park Loop Trail.

**RECOMMENDATION** It is recommended that the City Commission take the following action(s):

1. Approve the Agreement for Project Management Services with Colliers Project Leaders.
2. Authorize the City Manager to execute the contract on behalf of the City.

**BACKGROUND** The City applied for and received a grant through the Recreational Trail Program (RTP) for a 12' by 2,400 LF hard service loop trail in Kiwanis Park. This trail will connect the Rails to Trail trail and the Lake Wales Park trail through Kiwanis Park. The agreement with Colliers Project Leaders is for providing project management services for the design, contractor selection, bidding, construction, and closeout phases of the project. The project includes walking trail engineering and construction, new playground, pavilions, and restroom facility.

Colliers Project Leaders currently has a continuing services agreement with the City for Project Management Services.

City Staff recommends the approval of the Project Management Services Agreement with Colliers Project Leaders.

**OTHER OPTIONS** The City Commission may choose not to approve this agreement.

**FISCAL IMPACT** The costs for these services is \$87,462 to be paid at a lump sum rate of \$8,746/month for 10 months.

[End Agenda Memo]

7.III. Contractual Services – MW Financial Advisory Services LLC  
[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** The Commissioners will consider approving MW Financial Advisory Services LLC relating to the debt issuance for public safety facility, expansion of Fire Station #2, construction of Fire Station #3, and other municipal purposes.

**RECOMMENDATION** Staff recommends approval of the financial advisory services of MW Financial Advisory Services LLC.

**BACKGROUND** MW Financial Advisory Services LLC (MWFAS) will act as the City's financial advisor providing municipal advisory services related to the potential financings for the City of Lake Wales, FL's

(1) The acquisition of real property and the renovation of the existing building thereon for use as a public safety facility and/or other municipal purpose.

(2) The expansion of one Fire Station.

(3) The construction of an additional Fire Station.

(4) And for other financing of capital projects the City wishes to engage MW Financial Advisory Services LLC. MWFAS is a registered municipal advisor with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") and the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board (the "MSRB"), pursuant to the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 Rule 15Ba1-2SEC under the Dodd-Frank Act of 2010 (Registration #: 867- 02195-00).

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Transaction Consulting MWFAS's professional fees will be paid as provided in Exhibit B. In addition to fees for services, MWFAS will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses incurred, including travel, meals, lodging, telephone, mail, and other ordinary cost and any actual extraordinary cost for graphics, printing, data processing, and computer time, which are incurred by MWFAS. For each completed bond, loan, note (direct purchase) transaction below \$30 million MWFAS would propose a flat fee of not to exceed \$30,500 and with minimum financing fee of \$22,500 plus any out-of-pocket expenses not to exceed \$2,500 for each financing.

Non-Transaction Consulting An hourly fee of \$250 will apply with a not to exceed cap of \$18,000 annually unless instructed by the City for special projects. This hourly rate will apply to any special projects outside of the scope of services in Exhibit A of the City.

[End Agenda Memo]

7.IV. Event Permit Application: Christmas Cinema With Santa On December 20, 2025.

[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS** This is a request from the City of Lake Wales Recreation, to host an event at Oakley Park called Christmas Cinema with Santa on Friday December 20, 2025. This event will involve closure of Cypress Garden Lane and portions of Crystal Avenue and Park Avenue and 3rd Street from 2:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

**RECOMMENDATION** Staff recommends

1. That the City Commission approve the permit request to sponsor a Christmas Cinema with Santa event on Saturday December 20th from 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
2. That the City Commission approve the closure of Cypress Garden Lane and E Crystal Avenue between Scenic HWY and 3rd Street.

**BACKGROUND** The City of Lake Wales is proposing to host a Christmas Cinema with Santa event on Friday December 20th from 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. in Oakley Park. The event will feature closing 3rd St., (Sessoms to Crystal Ave.), Cypress Gardens Ln., Crystal Ave. (3rd St. to Scenic hwy.), Park Ave. (Scenic Hwy to 3rd St.) The Cypress Garden Lane West parking lot will also be closed.

**OTHER OPTIONS** Do not approve the Special Event Permit.

**FISCAL IMPACT** Unknown.

[End Agenda Memo]

- 7.V. Special Event Permit Application - 2026 Lake Wales Mardi Gras Celebration, Parade, Fireworks And 5K Run. Temporary Street Closings And Alcohol Use

[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** Approval of the Special Event Permit Application for the Lake Wales Mardi Gras Celebration, Parade, Fireworks and 5K Run on Friday and Saturday, February 13- February 14, 2026.

**RECOMMENDATION** It is recommended that the City Commission take the following action:

- Approve the Special Event Permit application for the 2026 Lake Wales Mardi Gras Celebration to take place on Friday evening, February 13, 2026 from 5:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. and on Saturday, February 14, 2026 from 11:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m. in Lake Wailes Park with set-up beginning 8:00 a.m. on Thursday February 12, 2026. • Approve the serving of alcohol in Lake Wailes Park during the Mardi Gras Event.
- Approve the Mardi Gras 5K Run to be held on Friday evening, February 13, 2026 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. which will only be on Lake Wailes Trail.
- Approve the temporary street closings on Saturday, February 14, 2026 between the hours of 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. for the Mardi Gras parade. Lineup will be on First Street north of Park Avenue. Parade will start on Park Avenue and go to Scenic HWY then South to Stuart Avenue. Stuart Avenue to First Street, First Street to Central Avenue, Central Avenue east to Lake Shore Blvd. then to Lake Wailes Park where parade will end.
- Approve the temporary closing of North First Street at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday February for parade line-up.

**BACKGROUND** Joshua Curchy, President of the Lake Wales Mardi Gras, has submitted a

Special Event Permit Application for the 2026 Lake Wales Mardi Gras Celebration, Parade and 5K Run to be held Friday, February 13, 2026 and Saturday, February 14, 2026 in Lake Wailes Park. This application includes a request to hold a 5K Run on Friday night from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and for the temporary closing of several streets in the downtown area for the parade. The events of Mardi Gras such as the food, vendors, children's activities and alcohol will take place in Lake Wailes Park this year. The parade will go through downtown streets.

Activities for the 2026 Lake Wales Mardi Gras are proposed as follows:

1. Friday evening, February 13, 2026, 5:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. - food and craft vendors, alcohol and musical entertainment will be in Lake Wailes Park. Set up would begin on Thursday, February 12, 2026 at 8:00 a.m.
2. Friday evening, February 13, 2026, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. – 5K Run beginning at the Basketball Court in Lake Wailes Park. The route goes along Lake Wailes Trail
3. Saturday, February 14, 2026 - the activities will continue in Lake Wailes Park beginning at 11:00 a.m. with craft and food vendors. Kids' activities, musical entertainment and alcohol sales will take place in Lake Wailes Park. These activities will conclude at 11:00 p.m.
4. Fireworks will be Saturday February 14, 2026 at 8:30 p.m.
5. Saturday, February 14, 2026 - the Mardi Gras Parade will begin at 3:00 p.m. which will line up and start on First Street, North on Orange Avenue and make its way through the downtown area concluding at Lake Wailes Park at approximately 5:00 p.m.

The parade route involves the following streets: First Street to Orange Avenue, Orange Avenue to Scenic Highway, Scenic HWY to Stuart Avenue, Stuart Avenue to First Street, First Street to Central Avenue, Central Avenue east to Lake Shore Blvd. then to Lake Wailes Park where parade will end.

The Police Department and the Streets Department will coordinate control of vehicular and pedestrian traffic for the parade. The Streets Department will handle all street closings. Trash barrels with bags will be placed along the parade route and in the areas of the pre-parade and after parade activities in Lake Wailes Park. Sanitary facilities, dumpsters, site set up, tent permits, certificates of liability insurance, FDOT road closing permits and the alcohol beverage permit from the Department of Alcohol Beverage & Tobacco will be the responsibility of the Lake Wales Mardi Gras Executive Committee. Off duty officers will be scheduled for the street crossings for the 5K Run and these costs will be paid by the Lake Wales Mardi Gras.

The 2026 event will end at 11:00 p.m. on both nights.

**OTHER OPTIONS** Do not approve the two-day event, 5K Run, Fireworks or street closings.

**FISCAL IMPACT** In-Kind services from the City were budgeted in the FY2025/2026 budget in the amount of \$8,722. The Lake Wales Mardi Gras Committee is responsible for 25% or \$2180. Any off-duty officers requested will be paid at 100% by the sponsor.

[End Agenda Memo]

8. OLD BUSINESS

8.1. ORDINANCE 2025-34 Fire Station 3 Future Land Use Map - 2nd Reading And Public Hearing  
[Begin Agenda Item]

**SYNOPSIS:** City Planning Staff, on behalf of the City of Lake Wales, requests of approval to City Commission to amend the Future Land Use and Zoning Maps, and to allow a Public Facility within the Industrial Zoning District, on 5 acres of land south of Hunt Brothers Road and west of Nest Egg Road for the future construction of Lake Wales Fire Station 3.

**RECOMMENDATION** Staff recommends approval of City Commission to allow approval of a public facility within an I-1 zoning district, and to assign the following land use and zoning designations, as recommended by the Planning and Zoning Board on October 28, 2025.

Current Land Use: County RS

Proposed Land Use: City IND

Current Zoning: County RS

Proposed Zoning: City I-1

Assignment of Land Use and Zoning designations shall be contingent upon adoption of an annexation Ordinance by City Commission. A recommendation of approval by the Planning and zoning Board is not required for annexation.

These Ordinances were approved by City Commission at first reading on November 18, 2025.

**BACKGROUND** The 19+/- acre property located west of Nest Egg Road is currently under one parcel identification number; however, the 5 acres at the northeast corner have been purchased by the City for the future construction of Fire Station 3. Upon the adoption of the Hunt Brothers Industrial annexation ordinance by City Commission on November 4th, the future fire station site became contiguous to the city limits and eligible for annexation. Second reading of the annexation is schedule for November 18, 2025.

The additional 14 acres still owned by the McKenna family will also be annexed in the future, along with a request for Industrial future land use and zoning designations.

Although a fire station is not an industrial use, Public Facilities are permitted in all districts with approval by the City Commission and a courtesy review and recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Board (Table 23-421 \*\*). Assignment of I-1 zoning will allow for dimensional and area development standards to be applied pursuant to Table 23-422B.

Staff Findings

1. The proposed Future Land Use and Zoning designations are consistent with those assigned within the surrounding area.
2. Public Facilities are permitted within all city zoning districts, following a courtesy recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Board and the approval of City Commission.
3. This site is located within the City's utility service area and future development will connect to municipal water, sewer, and reuse, maximizing the utilization of the City's utility system.

**CODE REFERENCES AND REVIEW CRITERIA** The City Commission assigns future Land Use and Zoning designations by ordinances upon a recommendation from the Planning & Zoning Board. The adopted land use amendment ordinance is transmitted to the state's Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) for review. The DEO reviews the land use designations as appropriate with reference to the City's Comprehensive Plan.

**FISCAL IMPACT** None

[End Agenda Memo]

Jennifer Nanek, City Clerk, read **ORDINANCE 2025-34** by title only.

**ORDINANCE 2025-34**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LAKE WALES, AMENDING THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO CHANGE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS ON APPROXIMATELY 5+/- ACRES OF LAND SOUTH OF HUNT BROTHERS ROAD, FROM COUNTY DESIGNATIONS RS RESIDENTIAL SUBURBAN TO CITY OF LAKE WALES DESIGNATION IND INDUSTRIAL; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

OPENED PUBLIC HEARING

CLOSED PUBLIC HEARING

Deputy Mayor Gibson made a motion to adopt **ORDINANCE 2025-34** after 2nd reading and public hearing. Commissioner Gillespie seconded the motion.

by roll call vote

Deputy Mayor Gibson "YES"

Commissioner Gillespie "YES"

Commissioner Thompson "YES"

Mayor Hilligoss "YES"

Motion approved 4-0.

8.II. ORDINANCE 2025-35 Fire Station 3 Zoning Map - 2nd Reading And Public Hearing  
[Begin Agenda Item]

**SYNOPSIS:** City Planning Staff, on behalf of the City of Lake Wales, requests of approval to City Commission to amend the Future Land Use and Zoning Maps, and to allow a Public Facility within the Industrial Zoning District, on 5 acres of land south of Hunt Brothers Road and west of Nest Egg Road for the future construction of Lake Wales Fire Station 3.

**RECOMMENDATION** Staff recommends approval of City Commission to allow approval of a public facility within an I-1 zoning district, and to assign the following land use and zoning designations, as recommended by the Planning and Zoning Board on October 28, 2025.

Current Land Use: County RS

Proposed Land Use: City IND

Current Zoning: County RS

Proposed Zoning: City I-1

Assignment of Land Use and Zoning designations shall be contingent upon adoption of an annexation Ordinance by City Commission. A recommendation of approval by the Planning and zoning Board is not required for annexation.

These Ordinances were approved by City Commission at first reading on November 18, 2025.

**BACKGROUND** The 19+/- acre property located west of Nest Egg Road is currently under one parcel identification number; however, the 5 acres at the northeast corner have been purchased by the City for the future construction of Fire Station 3. Upon the adoption of the Hunt Brothers Industrial annexation ordinance by City Commission on November 4th, the future fire station site became contiguous to the city limits and eligible for annexation. Second reading of the annexation is schedule for November 18, 2025.

The additional 14 acres still owned by the McKenna family will also be annexed in the future, along with a request for Industrial future land use and zoning designations.

Although a fire station is not an industrial use, Public Facilities are permitted in all districts with approval by the City Commission and a courtesy review and recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Board (Table 23-421 \*\*). Assignment of I-1 zoning will allow for dimensional and area development standards to be applied pursuant to Table 23-422B.

**Staff Findings**

1. The proposed Future Land Use and Zoning designations are consistent with those assigned within the surrounding area.

2. Public Facilities are permitted within all city zoning districts, following a courtesy recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Board and the approval of City Commission.

3. This site is located within the City's utility service area and future development will connect to municipal water, sewer, and reuse, maximizing the utilization of the City's utility system.

**CODE REFERENCES AND REVIEW CRITERIA** The City Commission assigns future Land Use and Zoning designations by ordinances upon a recommendation from the Planning & Zoning Board. The adopted land use amendment ordinance is transmitted to the state's Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) for review. The DEO reviews the land use designations as appropriate with reference to the City's Comprehensive Plan.

**FISCAL IMPACT** None

[End Agenda Memo]

Jennifer Nanek, City Clerk, read **ORDINANCE 2025-35** by title only.

**ORDINANCE 2025-35**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LAKE WALES, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE ZONING MAP TO ASSIGN ZONING DESIGNATIONS ON APPROXIMATELY 5+/- ACRES OF LAND SOUTH OF HUNT BROTHERS ROAD, FROM COUNTY DESIGNATIONS RS RESIDENTIAL SUBURBAN TO CITY OF LAKE WALES DESIGNATION I-1 INDUSTRIAL PARK; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

OPENED PUBLIC HEARING

CLOSED PUBLIC HEARING

Deputy Mayor Gibson made a motion to adopt **ORDINANCE 2025-35** after 2nd reading and public hearing. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion.

by roll call vote

Deputy Mayor Gibson "YES"

Commissioner Thompson "YES"

Commissioner Gillespie "YES"

Mayor Hilligoss "YES"

Motion approved 4-0.

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.I. RESOLUTION 2025-28 Headworks Supplemental Facility Plan - Public Hearing  
[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** The document outlines the proposed modifications to the City of Lake Wales Headworks structure, located at the Sam P Robinson WWTP, addressing current issues and presenting alternatives for improvements

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION** It is recommended that the Commission take the following action:

1. Adopt Resolution 2025-28 Headworks Supplemental Facilities Plan
2. Authorize the Mayor to execute the appropriate documents, on the City's behalf.

**BACKGROUND** The purpose of developing the headworks supplemental facilities plan was to outline the proposed modifications to the City of Lake Wales Headworks facility located at the Sam P Robinson Wastewater Plant, addressing current issues and presenting alternatives for improvements.

The headworks facility is experiencing inadequate capacity for peak flows, especially during high rain and hurricane events and insufficient screening and grit removal. The engineer has recommended that a new concrete headworks structure with mechanical screening is needed. The current structure is original to the construction of the wastewater plant built in 1985. To prepare for the next phase of the treatment plant expansion, the headworks needs be modified and upgraded.

Three alternatives were evaluated and presented to staff and commission. Alternative 1 an elevated structure. Alternative 2 an at-grade structure. Alternative 3 a partially elevated structure. Each alternative had its own specific effects on the up-stream system components. Costs ranged from \$8.2 M to 11.8 M. Alternative 3 is being recommended for lowest capital cost and most operational efficiency. The adoption of Resolution 2025-29 meets the funding requirement as set forth by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) for the grant funds already awarded to the City.

Staff recommends the Commission take the following action, adopt Resolution 2025-28 Headworks Supplemental Facilities Plan, and authorize the Mayor to execute the appropriate documents, on the City's behalf.

**OPTIONS** Without the adoption of Resolution 2025-28, the City would not be eligible to utilize grant funds already awarded from the State Revolving Loan Fund Supplemental Appropriation for Hurricanes Fiona and Ian (SAHFI) in the amount of over \$7 Million.

**FISCAL IMPACT** None currently. As this project is being developed, because of recommendations from the plan, expenditures will be brought back to the commission for approval.

[End Agenda Memo]

Jennifer Nanek, City Clerk, read **RESOLUTION 2025-28** by title only.

**RESOLUTION 2025-28**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAKE WALES APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE HEADWORKS SUPPLEMENTAL FACILITIES PLAN PROJECT WW5303E**

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING

CLOSED PUBLIC HEARING

Commissioner Thompson made a motion to adopt **RESOLUTION 2025-28**. Deputy Mayor Gibson seconded the motion.

by roll call vote:

Commissioner Thompson "YES"

Deputy Mayor Gibson "YES"

Commissioner Gillespie "YES"

Mayor Hilligoss "YES"

Motion approved 4-0.

9.II. RESOLUTION 2025-29 Sewer Shed 1, 2, & 3 Infrastructure Improvements Utilities Plan - Public Hearing  
[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** The document evaluated the sewer lining needs for sewer sheds 1, 2, & 3, focusing on deficiencies, rehabilitation options, and cost analysis.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION** It is recommended that the Commission take the following action:

1. Adopt Resolution 2025-29 Sewer Shed 1, 2, & 3 Infrastructure Improvements Utilities Plan
2. Authorize the Mayor to execute the appropriate documents, on the City's behalf.

**BACKGROUND** The purpose of developing the sewer shed 1, 2, & 3 facilities plan was to evaluate sewer lining needs with a focus on deficiencies, rehabilitation options, and cost analysis. The engineer assisted with data collection through cleaning and inspection services. A total of 450 manholes and 124,327 liner feet of gravity sewer main were inspected through the means of closed-circuit television camera (CCTV). Once the CCTV was complete, the engineer assisted in rating the operational and structural defects in the system. Once rating was complete, three alternatives were presented to staff and commission for recommendation

on how to best proceed with repairs.

Alternative 1 was for no action. The system would continue to function as is and would be dealt with upon failure. Alternative 2 is to proceed with a phased approach to working on all three sheds, not including low priority mains, with sewer shed 3 being first. Alternative 3 was to proceed with a plan to work on all three sewer sheds at once.

The adoption of Resolution 2025-29 would enable staff to have a road map for the systematic repairs and opinion of probable cost of the 3 sewer sheds in the plan and to meet specific funding requirements should the City chose to apply to the State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) for funding of any portion of project.

Staff recommends the Commission take the following action, adopt Resolution 2025-29 Sewer Shed 1, 2, & 3 Infrastructure Improvements Utilities Plan, and authorize the Mayor to execute the appropriate documents, on the City's behalf.

**OPTIONS** Without the adoption of Resolution 2025-29, the City would not be eligible to apply or receive SRF funds for the construction of any portion of the project.

**FISCAL IMPACT** None at this time. As projects are being developed, because of recommendations from the plan, they will be brought back to the commission for approval.

[End Agenda Memo]

Jennifer Nanek, City Clerk, read **RESOLUTION 2025-29** by title only.

#### **RESOLUTION 2025-29**

#### **A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAKE WALES APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE SEWER SHED 1,2, AND 3 INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS FACILITIES UTILITIES PLAN FOR PROJECT WW5303C**

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING

CLOSED PUBLIC HEARING

Commissioner Gillespie made a motion to adopt **RESOLUTION 2025-29**. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion.

by roll call vote:

Commissioner Gillespie "YES"

Commissioner Thompson "YES"

Deputy Mayor Gibson "YES"

Mayor Hilligoss "YES"

Motion approved 4-0.

- 9.III. RESOLUTION 2025 – 30 Transfer Of Waverly Water & Wastewater Utility Systems And Crooked Lake Park Wastewater Utility System From Polk County To Lake Wales – PUBLIC HEARING  
[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** The City Commission will conduct a public hearing and consider adopting RESOLUTION 2025-30 which approves two agreements with Polk County for the transfer to the City of the Waverly and Crooked Lake Park water & wastewater systems (the “Utility Systems”).

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended that the City Commission take the following actions:

1. Conduct a public hearing under § 180.301, Florida Statutes to consider the transfer of the Utility Systems,
2. Adopt Resolution 2025-30 approving the transfer of the Utility Systems
3. Approve the Agreement for Purchase and Sale of Water System and Wastewater System Assets By & Between the City of Lake Wales, Florida, & Polk County, Florida (the “Waverly Agreement”),
4. Approve the Interlocal Utility Asset Transfer Agreement between Lake Wales, Florida, and Polk County, Florida (the “Crooked Lake Agreement”), contingent on the closing of the sale of the Waverly Water & Wastewater Systems to the City,
5. Authorize the Mayor to execute the Waverly Agreement and the Crooked Lake Agreement, and,
6. Authorize the Mayor, City Manager, staff, and consultants to take all actions necessary (including signing necessary documents on behalf of the City) to close the purchase and sale of the Waverly Utility Systems and to simultaneously make effective the Crooked Lake Agreement.

**BACKGROUND:** The City and the County have negotiated a two-part, unified utility transaction which provides for the (1) repair and improve the CLP Wastewater System so it complies with Florida Department of Environmental Protection requirements, installation of a wastewater force main from the Crooked Lake Park subdivision to an agreed connection point with the Lake Wales Wastewater System located near the intersection of U. S. Highway 27 and County Road 640 and transfer the Crooked Lake #64376474 v1 Wastewater System assets and new wastewater force main to Lake Wales for inclusion into the Lake Wales Wastewater System, and (2) the purchase and sale from the County to the City of the Waverly Water and Wastewater Utility Systems. The transfer of the Crooked Lake Park Wastewater Utility System is at no cost to the City, while the conveyance of the Waverly Water and Wastewater Utility Systems is for \$5,300,000.00. The transfer of all three utility systems are specifically linked by the two agreements.

The public hearing is held in accordance with Section 180.301, Florida Statutes, which requires the City to consider the following issues:

- (1) The most recent available income and expense statement for the utility;
- (2) The most recent available balance sheet for the utility, listing assets and liabilities and clearly showing the amount of contributions-in-aid-of-construction and the accumulated depreciation thereon;
- (3) A statement of the existing rate base of the utility for regulatory purposes;
- (4) The physical condition of the utility facilities being purchased or sold;
- (5) The reasonableness of the purchase or sales price and terms;
- (6) The impacts of the purchase or sale on utility customers, both positive and negative;
- (7) Any additional investment required and the ability and willingness of the purchaser to make that investment, whether the purchaser is the county or the entity purchasing the utility from the county;
- (8) The alternatives to the purchase or sale and the potential impact on utility customers if the purchase or sale is not made; and,
- (9) The ability of the purchaser to provide and maintain high-quality and cost effective utility service, whether the purchaser is the county or the entity purchasing the utility from the county.

Following the considerations of the above and other items (i.e., the Agreements, and Exhibits, Valuation Report and Appendices, input from Public Utilities, City staff, customers of the systems, the public at large, attorneys, consultants, or other information), it is City staff's recommendation that the City shall determine the transfer of these systems are in the public interest.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** There is not expected to be a negative fiscal impact upon the City's water and sewer utility operations.

[End Agenda Memo]

Jennifer Nanek, City Clerk, read **RESOLUTION 2025-30** by title only.

### **RESOLUTION 2025-30**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAKE WALES, FLORIDA;  
PROVIDING FOR CERTAIN DETERMINATIONS, FINDINGS, & STATEMENTS AS REQUIRED  
BY SECTION 180.301, FLORIDA STATUTES; APPROVING THE REPORT FOR THE**

**PURCHASE OF THE WAVERLY WATER & WASTEWATER SYSTEMS BY THE CITY OF LAKE WALES, FLORIDA; APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY COMMISSION'S RIGHT TO PURCHASE THE WATER & WASTEWATER CUSTOMERS & ASSOCIATED WATER & WASTEWATER FACILITIES KNOWN AS THE WAVERLY WATER & WASTEWATER SYSTEM AND THE CROOKED LAKE PARK WASTEWATER SYSTEM FROM POLK COUNTY; APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF THE AGREEMENT FOR PURCHASE AND SALE OF WATER SYSTEM AND WASTEWATER SYSTEM ASSETS BY & BETWEEN THE CITY OF LAKE WALES, FLORIDA, & POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA; APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF INTERLOCAL UTILITY ASSET TRANSFER AGREEMENT BETWEEN LAKE WALES, FLORIDA, AND POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA (CROOKED LAKE PARK WASTEWATER SYSTEM) CONTINGENT UPON CLOSING THE SALE OF THE WAVERLY UTILITY SYSTEMS; AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR, CITY STAFF, AND SPECIAL COUNSEL TO TAKE ALL STEPS NECESSARY INCLUDING PREPARATION AND EXECUTION OF NECESSARY DOCUMENTS TO CLOSE THE TRANSACTIONS; REPEALING RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT HERewith; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY AND APPLICABILITY AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING

CLOSED PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Hilligoss said this is an exciting development for our City.

Commissioner Thompson characterized the utility transfer as an enormous step and a master stroke for the city's planning and management. He expressed strong support, noting that the move is exceptionally beneficial for the future of water resources in Lake Wales and commended staff for their initiative in making it happen.

Deputy Mayor Gibson praised the initiative as one of the most creative and effective actions taken by the city during his tenure. He described the agreements as a brilliant piece of work and acknowledged the significant time and effort required to bring the unified transaction to fruition.

Commissioner Gillespie highlighted the win-win nature of the deal for the city, referencing data from the previous work session. She asked about further negotiation and additional work on the contract. James Slaton, City Manager, clarified the timeline, noting that while the County Commissioners approved the items earlier that morning, a formal closing is slated for March. He also confirmed that necessary amendments regarding the closing date and other adverse changes identified during the work session have been resolved, and he expressed his readiness to move the item forward.

Commissioner Thompson made a motion to adopt **RESOLUTION 2025-30** Deputy Mayor Gibson seconded the motion.

by roll call vote:

Commissioner Thompson "YES"

Deputy Mayor Gibson "YES"

Commissioner Gillespie "YES"

Mayor Hilligoss "YES"

Motion approved 4-0.

9.IV. RESOLUTION 2025-31 – Adopt Updated Policy Manual For Federal Awards – Community Development Block Grants

[Begin Agenda Memo]

**SYNOPSIS:** The city has been awarded CDBG-DR federal funding which requires certain policies and procedures.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends the City Commission adopt the Resolution.

**BACKGROUND:** Feedback from Florida Commerce on the previously adopted policies and city ordinances revealed that the city ordinance was out of date with state and federal statutes and rules. City staff determined it was beneficial to remove CDBG procurement from the city code and update it with polices being adopted by resolution when needed. The code was updated at the last city commission meeting, and the resolution will repeal the previously adopted policy.

**OTHER OPTIONS:** Do not adopt the resolution

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The receipt of \$43,791.75 for the FDEM city hall generator

[End Agenda Memo]

Jennifer Nanek, City Clerk, read **RESOLUTION 2025-31** by title only.

**RESOLUTION 2025-31**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF LAKE WALES, POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA AUTHORIZING THE ADOPTION OF THE ATTACHED POLICY MANUAL IN CONNECTION WITH THE CITY OF LAKE WALES PARTICIPATION IN FEDERAL AWARDS RELATED TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS; REPEALING RESOLUTION 2025-20; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

Deputy Mayor Gibson made a motion to adopt **RESOLUTION 2025-31**. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion.

by roll call vote:

Deputy Mayor Gibson "YES"

Commissioner Thompson "YES"

Commissioner Gillespie "YES"

Mayor Hilligoss "YES"

Motion approved 4-0.

10. CITY ATTORNEY

Albert Galloway Jr., City Attorney, reported that the speed enforcement program at Hillcrest Elementary is scheduled to go live on January 7th. This will initiate a 30-day warning period (consisting of 30 school days) to educate the community before formal citations are issued. Additionally, the city is currently awaiting County approval for speed and light enforcement on Burns Avenue, as it is a County-managed roadway. Other related approvals are currently in progress.

11. CITY MANAGER

James Slaton, City Manager, recognized the Finance Department and Dorothy Abbott for their achievement in winning GFOA awards for both audit and budget presentation.

Regarding upcoming holiday schedules, Mr. Slaton requested that the city remain closed on the Fridays following Christmas and New Year's Day to provide staff with extended holiday breaks. The Commission consented to this.

Finally, he commended everyone involved in the "Make It Magical" event, noting the surprisingly high attendance and the overall excellence of the celebration.

11.I. Commission Meeting Calendar

12. CITY COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Gillespie praised the "Make It Magical" event for its festive atmosphere, noting the impressive participation from local clubs and vendors. She reported that she participated in the Christmas Parade and expressed deep appreciation for the hard work that went into the parade, comparing the quality of the floats and the Santa Claus appearance to the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. She specifically thanked Eric Marshall for his leadership and noted how much the residents enjoyed the festivities, stating that she is already looking forward to next year's event.

Commissioner Thompson addressed concerns regarding the Envisioned Plan and the challenges of incentivizing traditional neighborhood design. He emphasized that while the city provides ordinances and incentives for higher-quality building, the local government cannot legally compel private landowners to build in a specific way due to property rights. He also discussed the need to create a diverse economy with living-wage jobs to reduce the need for residents to commute out of town. Finally, he commended city staff for their creative thinking and expressed pride in the positive momentum currently seen throughout Lake Wales.

Deputy Mayor Gibson viewed the "Make It Magical" event as the ultimate culmination of years of planning and CRA investment, specifically citing the success of the \$12.8 million bond issue. He argued that the event showcased the "best of Lake Wales" and proved the effectiveness of the CRA statute in revitalizing the community. On the topic of growth, he noted that the city has successfully used its regulatory authority to discourage "cookie-cutter" subdivisions and urban sprawl, though he cautioned that the commission must carefully balance regulation with private property rights to avoid legal issues.

13. MAYOR COMMENTS

Mayor Hillgoss reflected on the growth of the holiday festivities, recalling the early days when the event only covered three city blocks and utilized a single snow machine. He noted how far the city has come in turning the month of December into a major community celebration. He concluded by thanking Main Street for their leadership in coordinating the event and wished the entire community a Merry Christmas.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

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Mayor

ATTEST:

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City Clerk