

# Town Of Havana

## Regular Council Meeting

### October 29, 2024 – 6:00pm

## Meeting minutes

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Bass at 6:00pm. Invocation was led by Pastor Hakim Smith, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Roll Call

A roll call confirmed the presence of the following council members including Landon Seymour, Matt Wesolowski, Tabatha Nelson, Mayor Pro Tem Lawrence Reed, Penny Key, Howard McKinnon, and Mayor Bass, ensuring a quorum for the meeting.

### Recognition of Visitors

Amanada Heath – TNVR (Trap Neuter Vaccinate & Return)

Ms. Heath shared that she has been with TNVR for about 1 ½ years. She said the organization educates, traps, neuters, vaccinates, and returns cats to the community. These steps help to reduce the population and diseases. Since she has been with the organization, she has personally provided services to one hundred cats.

She requested to speak to the council and ask for assistance in locating a place to host an hour-long workshop to educate and provide information including vouchers for neutering/spaying. No funding requested only a location. Funding is not needed due to Feline Advocates of Leon County receiving a rural grant to educate, offer resources and recruit volunteers. The organization will provide all advertisements including flyers, social media, and personal contacts.

Several of the council inquired about the specifics of the organization and shared that it was a worthy cause, and they did not have a problem with the Town Staff assisting with location possibilities. Ms. Heath inquired about the council chambers but Ms. Wilkerson, Town Manager mentioned that Hazel Baker Community Center may be a more suitable location.

### Request to Approve Minutes

Mayor Bass requested a motion to approve the minutes of the following meetings:

- 8/27/2024 Regular Council Meeting
- 9/17/2024 First Public Hearing – FY25 Millage & Budget
- 9/24/2024 Regular Council Meeting
- 9/30/2024 Final Public Hearing – FY25 Millage & Budget
- 10/8/2024 Regular Council Meeting & Public Hearing
- 10/15/2024 Emergency Council Meeting

Councilman Wesolowski made motion to approve all minutes. Councilwoman Key seconded and motion carried.



## Old Business

### Old Elementary School Resolution 2024-14R-10

Ms. Wilkerson, Town Manager, requests approval of Resolution 2024-14R-10 which updates the fines owed by the owners through October 29, 2024, to \$340,015.00. As mentioned in the August meeting, the Town Council requested the Manager send written notice to the property owner with the updated lien amount and request a plan, including a deadline, to correct all deficiencies. The certified notice was sent but the owner has not signed for it, and it has not been returned unclaimed. The owner has also not responded to email correspondences.

Ms. Wilkerson provided the estimated cost for safety measures and/or remediation. The Town Manager is also requesting council and attorney guidance as to the next steps.

Councilwoman Key brought up the idea of foreclosure, but Mayor Bass reminded that if the Town forecloses, then liability falls on the Town. Councilman Seymour inquired as to the cost of \$700 to level the property. Ms. Wilkerson shared that this cost is to completely level and repair all storm drains. However, this does not include remediation of the gas tanks underground. Councilman Seymour shared that he agrees the space is unusable. He suggested reducing fines for owners to bring into code. Ms. Wilkerson shared that the goal for the Town was for the owners to bring into code and ensure safety for all. Unfortunately, the owners will not communicate with anyone, including the realtor.

Councilwoman Nelson inquired if there was any DEP funding and if the Town acquired could the DEP funding be used for this property. Ms. Wilkerson will investigate this.

Mayor Bass asked Jody Finklea, Town Attorney, what was the period for foreclosure. Mr. Finklea stated contested can proceed for years and uncontested 6-9 months. Councilman Seymour shared from an insurance perspective this matter is large for the Town to take on. Mayor Bass reiterated that the Town does not have the finances to take it on. Councilwoman Nelson asked the attorney for confirmation that foreclosure would be at market value. Mr. Finklea stated that currently the property appraiser's office has a tax value of \$1.2 million. If foreclosure should be contested by the owner, often it will be contested for the highest value and this would be to get money from the foreclosing entity, which in this case would be the Town.

Councilman McKinnon asked if the staff had reached out to the Florida League of Cities for assistance. Mr. Finklea shared that this is a problem across the state (cities and counties). Mayor Bass asked the attorney for confirmation that if the owner sells the property, they will be required to satisfy the Town's lien. Mr. Finklea confirmed that the lien would need to be satisfied.

Councilwoman Key asked if the windows were boarded what kind of watch would be needed to ensure safety. Chief Lewis stated that US HWY 27 is in front and 4<sup>th</sup> ST SW is the side street, but the other side is woods. Councilman McKinnon asked would the Town have liability if we board up windows or any other safety measures. Mr. Finklea assured the council that the Town can take measures to ensure safety and add costs to the lien and no liability would fall on the Town. Mayor Pro Tem Reed asked if the Town needed permission to go on the property. Mr. Finklea stated the Town would need to notify the owner and to inform them of the costs being added to the lien.

Councilwoman Nelson made motion to update the fines on Resolution 2024-14R-10. Mayor Pro Tem Reed seconded, and motion carried.

## New Business

### Resolution 2024-03R-3 for WastePro CPI Increase

Ms. Wilkerson shared that WastePro has provided written notice on 9/18/2024 that the CPI increase for the coming 2025 calendar year will be 2.53%. The Manager shared that the Town currently has a contract with WastePro to provide garbage collection services to the residents of the Town. Page 5 of the current contract notes an annual rate increased based on CPI, effective on the anniversary of the agreement (December). She shared the current rate for residential and commercial is \$22.61 and with the CPI increase the rate will be \$23.18 for both. Recycling rate currently is \$7.27 and with the increase the new rate will be \$7.45.

Ms. Wilkerson did share that this contract is taxing on the administrative staff due to complaints from residents and lack of response. Councilman McKinnon inquired if contact with management had been made. Ms. Wilkerson shared that contact in person, email and via phone have been made with no long-term improvement. Services will improve temporarily but then reverts. Councilman McKinnon inquired as to who the current management team are. Ms. Wilkerson shared names and Mr. McKinnon stated they are all new. The idea to



manage in-house was mentioned but the Town does not have the equipment or the funds. Councilman Wesolowski shared that there are not enough customers to make money which creates minimal opportunities for companies.

Councilwoman Key made the motion to approve Resolution 2024-03R-3 for the WastePro CPI increase. Councilman Seymour seconded, and motion carried.

### WastePro Contract – renews 12/2025

Ms. Wilkerson shared that the Town of Havana has a contract with WastePro to provide garbage collection services to the residents of this town. The contract was initiated January 2007 through December 2013, with an automatic renewal for consecutive 3-year periods unless Havana gives WastePro notice of intent not to renew at least 120 days prior to the end of the initial term or renewal term. If Council wishes to put this out to bid, that process needs to start early 2025.

Ms. Wilkerson did share that this contract is taxing on the administrative staff due to complaints from residents and lack of response. She shared that the City of Tallahassee has put their garbage collection services out to bid recently, with no luck due to limited number of companies offering these services. Councilman McKinnon inquired if contact with management had been made. Ms. Wilkerson shared that contact in person, email and via phone have been made. Services will improve temporarily but then reverts. Councilman McKinnon inquired as to who the current management team are. Ms. Wilkerson shared names and Mr. McKinnon stated they are all new. Councilman Wesolowski shared that if enough complaints were reported to WastePro that the drivers' can be docked and can result in their bonuses changed. Councilman Reed asked would it do any good to shift the calls to WastePro? Councilman McKinnon shared that Havana was the first entity in Gadsden County to use WastePro. Ms. Wilkerson said reporting to management via emails has resulted in no lasting improvement. Councilman Wesolowski inquired if the Council puts the services out to bid, would WastePro be able to bid and if so what if their bid is higher than current rates. Councilwoman Nelson asked what other municipalities pay? Ms. Wilkerson stated she will need to investigate this. Councilwoman Nelson shared that yard waste is not currently in the contract, but they pick it up. Ms. Wilkerson shared that staff email the addresses for bulk and they pick up the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of the month and it is not in the contract. Councilman Wesolowski stated that the current rates may be worth it to let it renew, and Councilman Seymour agreed. Councilman Wesolowski also shared that he just has a conversation with the drivers, and it has always worked out. Ms. Wilkerson also shared that we were currently logging complaints and imposing fees as credits on our payable invoice to WastePro.

Councilman Wesolowski made the motion to approve renewal of contract. Councilwoman Nelson seconded and motion carried.

### Cancellation of Work Order 502385045-004 – Mott McDonald

Ms. Wilkerson is requesting cancellation of Work Order #502385045-004 for Construction Engineering Services, dated October 5, 2022, issued by Mott McDonald and approved by the Town Council December 2022. No work has been done on this project and the scope has changed where the work order is no longer appropriate. Once the project funding and new scope have been established, the Manager will bring forward a new work order from one of the engineering firms already approved to do work for Havana.

Councilwoman Nelson approved to cancel work order # 502385045-004 at this time. Councilman Wesolowski seconded, and motion carried.

### Awarding of Contract – 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Resurfacing (FDOT – SCOP Grant)

Ms. Wilkerson is requesting approval to award the contract for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Resurfacing to Extreme Land Restoration. This contractor was the only bidder on this project and submitted a bid that came under the project budget. The grant provides \$160,007.00 for construction and the bid submitted was for \$156,732.75.

Councilman McKinnon inquired if anyone had any knowledge of their work. Ms. Wilkerson shared that Dewberry Engineering is familiar with this contractor and approves of their work.

Councilman Seymour made motion to approve the awarding of contract for 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Resurfacing project to Extreme Land Restoration. Councilman Wesolowski seconded, and motion carried.



## Contract Renewal – Apalachee Regional Planning Council

The Town Manager, Ms. Wilkerson, reported that included in their packet is the contract renewal for Apalachee Regional Planning Council. The primary planner pay rate has increased from \$75 to \$78/hour and ARPC has added a planning analyst at \$40.07/hour that can be utilized to help lower expenses to small municipalities. She is asking for approval of this contract with the hopes that the addition of staff at a lower hourly rate will allow our dollars to go further in terms of planning needs. This contract will be retroactive to October 1, 2024.

Councilwoman Nelson made motion to approve contract renewal for Apalachee Regional Planning Council retroactive to October 1, 2024. Second made by Councilman Seymour and motion carried.

## Town Manager Report

Ms. Wilkerson, Town Manager gave the following updates:

- Physician Search – currently 2 resumes, Dr. Newberry is currently reviewing resumes to ensure that candidate can meet requirements. Councilman Wesolowski shared that he would have thought it would be of interest to a Family Practice. Ms. Wilkerson will continue to work on the process and have the council review at the next meeting.
- Generator installation at Town Hall – it is a turnkey project and currently Lawson & Lawson have not come back out or called to follow up.
- Sealed Bid Auction – Public auction bid opening will be November 7, 2024. Will provide an itemization at the next meeting.
- Trunk or Treat at the Walking Park – will start at 5:30 and a great event and expecting over 1000 children.

### Sewer Update

- Looking into alternate funding opportunities for the two most critical lift stations: Dogwood Ave. & 5<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- FRWA is conducting a flow analysis to confirm if 5<sup>th</sup> Street Lift Station pumps are sufficient.
- Staff moved the military surplus generator to 5<sup>th</sup> Street Lift Station permanently.
- Staff with Dewberry Engineering are assisting with FDEP discussions to confirm the completion of items on existing consent order.

### Havana Police Update

- Healthy Havana continues every week on Friday at 7:30 am in the park.
- HPD will host a Haunted House on Halloween Night.
- Calls for service are included in the council packet as well as on the table for anyone in attendance.

### Havana Volunteer Fire Department Update

- Total Calls for 10/1-10/24 = 1 Town & 13 County
- Chief Don Harrison gave an ISO update to the Council.
  - Wade Nelson & John Donohue were officially certified on 10/1/2024.
  - 3 already certified and at 99% of fires.
  - Michael Morash was promoted to Vice President.
  - Emails sent to Kyle Boles.
  - June – October = total 69 calls and 23 of those calls there were 4 or more certified.
  - Joseph (Tampa) – the first thing they will look at in an inspection is certified firefighters on scene. Ratings every 5 years and if it is bad, you can request another one but that is all that will be allowed. He suggests getting everything together and request an inspection.

Michael Morash stated not to wait until structure.  
Mr. John & Tabatha are taking a course so that they may be able to check off for skill sheets which will allow fire fighters to go through the certification process quicker.  
Concord & Havana have a great team and work well together.  
The Chief reported that 99% of all needed equipment and gear have been purchased.  
Councilwoman Nelson reported that at the last few calls HVFD hit the # of certified at the calls.  
3 people on CVFD will join HVFD and John & Wade from HVFD will join CVFD.  
Chief Harrison reported that everything is going in the right direction.  
Car Show sponsored by Lashley Automotive raised \$4,510.00 and Lashley's have agreed to host annually.  
Training for firefighters only count for certified firemen with regards to ISO.

### Recognition of Each Council Member

Councilman McKinnon shared he is honored to be on the Council.


### Motion to Pay the Bills

Councilman Seymour made motion to pay Town bills. Councilman Wesolowski seconded, and motion carried.

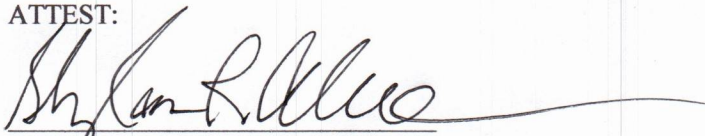
### Motion to Adjourn

Councilman Seymour made motion to adjourn the October 29, 2024, council meeting. Councilman Wesolowski seconded, and motion carried.

Mayor Bass adjourned the meeting at 7:17pm.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
EDWARD N BASS, JR.

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Shrylan R. Alexander, Town Clerk

