



120 North Essa Street, Lake Park, Georgia 31636
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City of Lake Park CALLED Meeting Minutes
April 10, 2025
6:00 pm

Members Present were Mayor Jena Sandlin, Council Members Michelle Lane, Oscar Griffith, Busby Courson and Carl Spano.

Appointed Staff Present: City Clerk Lisa Johnson, City Attorney Rob Plumb, Interim Maintenance Supervisor Billy Jones, Maintenance Employee Eli Johnson

Mayor Jena Sandlin called the meeting to order.

Mayor Jena Sandlin led the Invocation.

Mayor Jena Sandlin led the Pledge.

Mayor Sandlin stated that Executive Session would be the first order of business. Council Member Michelle Lane made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel and real estate. Council Member Busby Courson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0. Council entered Executive Session at 6:06 pm.

Council Member Michelle Lane made a motion to re-enter Open Session. Council Member Busby Courson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0. Council re-entered Open Session at 7:14 pm.

Council Member Carl Spano made a motion to lift Eli Johnson's probationary status and approve as a permanent employee. Council Member Oscar Griffith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Council Member Carl Spano made a motion to appoint Drew Bennett as interim City Attorney. Council Member Oscar Griffith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Mayor Sandlin introduced the agenda item for the Beautification Project. Justin Sandlin has supplied an amended budget for the Beautification Project as requested, and has asked if Maintenance personnel can assist with digging holes to plant the trees. Council Member Michelle Lane made a motion to accept the amended budget of \$4,992.50 to close out the Beautification Project. Council Member Busby Courson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

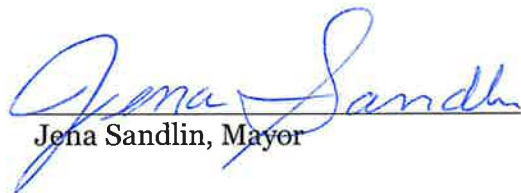
Mayor Sandlin asked City Clerk Lisa Johnson to present the Comprehensive Plan. City Clerk Lisa Johnson reported that the suggestion to have a citizen committee in charge of the Comprehensive

Plan would need a series of steps to be taken which would take at best a few months; the City would need to approve an ordinance for the creation of the committee, which would need to identify a selection process that would ensure equal representation. She suggested that the Council make the preparation for the Comprehensive Plan an addition to the work for SPLOST IX, which will deadline first. As Council Members work with the respective departments to identify the needs for the upcoming SPLOST cycle, they could also identify issues which would need to be addressed and plan for goals for the next Comprehensive Plan update. Citizens come in and ask questions and give feedback, and Department Heads will know what their needs are in the departments to meet the demands. She explained that with Council Members hearing the needs and desires of the community and coordinating with department heads for their needs, the Comprehensive Plan would be developed smoothly. She noted as an example that she and Chief Yarbrough had already been discussing the needs of the Police Department, and referenced the issues he had had with vehicles that were replaced basically when they were falling apart; he is working into his SPLOST needs to replace vehicles at regular intervals in order to prevent this from being a problem in the future, and also looking ahead to needs such as Technology. Since SPLOST is a Capital Item fund, the larger items that are needed should be considered for SPLOST and the cost therefore taken out of the Operating Budget. Mayor Sandlin noted that this is the job of the Council. Council Member Spano was concerned that the citizens would have the view that Council had asked for their input, but was now reversing and saying that they would tie it up in red tape and so their input was not really wanted. City Clerk Johnson responded that this was not the case at all; first, the Council is not creating red tape, but these are requirements under State law. Second, the citizens still have every right to input, it is just needed in a different way. She noted that the plan distributed lists suggested teams to work on needs and items for each department, but one or more citizens could be added to any of these groups. She referenced the fact that Arthur Keckley had looked for grants for the Fire Department, and could actually be added to the team for the Fire Department. Council could also opt to have Public Hearings. Council Member Lane noted that monthly first Tuesday meetings have dissolved into Public Hearings, and that there was time to have at least two Public Hearings for the Comprehensive Plan for Public input. Council discussed possibly creating a Community liaison committee that could be utilized in the future for events or other concerns, such as a steering committee, that could bring perspectives that the Council may not be hearing. Council discussed how this could be done to represent all areas of the City. The City Clerk noted that if the City knows what it needs to accomplish over the next five years, the decisions for SPLOST would be more effective, as appropriate planning for funding the projects could be accomplished. She reminded Council that SPLOST would deadline sooner, so the City couldn't wait to complete the Comp Plan update to finalize the SPLOST numbers, but by including the department heads and community to look ahead, the SPLOST could be structured in such a way that when working on the Comp Plan, the Members would know what money was available which would assist in prioritizing the goals for the Comprehensive Plan. Council Member Spano noted that expansion of buildings was something that would likely need to be discussed, referencing the packed Courtroom at the last Court date. Council Member Spano stated that he had received the email earlier that the initial kickoff meeting for SPLOST had been changed to April 23, and stated that he could go, but felt that it would be best if another member of Council could go so that multiple perspectives could be present. The City Clerk stated that this was open for any or all members of Council, and as many as wanted to attend could. She asked Council Members to reach out to Department Heads regarding meeting on SPLOST/Comp Plan Planning teams, stating that she would ask the Department Heads to reach out to them if they didn't hear from the Members.

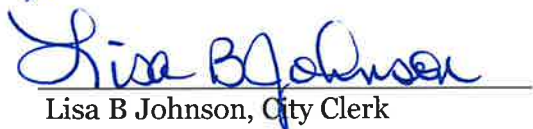
City Clerk Lisa Johnson reported that April 23 is Administrative Professionals Day, and she and the staff in the office are planning to have lunch in the office and she would like to invite Council Members to come or even drop by for the event. She stated that the staff in the office were really working very hard, and doing a great job.

Council Member Courson referenced an email he received for a webinar that indicated Public Works were also First Responders. He made a motion that the Maintenance Crew needed to be First Aid/CPR certified. Council Member Spano seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The City Clerk explained that the email Council Member Courson was talking about was an invitation to participate in a "Talk It Up Thursday" webinar which would be on Public Works, and noted that she had also noticed that Public Works personnel are recognized as First Responders.

Council Member Carl Spano made a motion to adjourn. Council Member Busby Courson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, 4-0, and the meeting was adjourned.


Jena Sandlin, Mayor

May 6, 2025
Date


Lisa B Johnson, City Clerk

May 6, 2025
Date

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