



TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2024 – 6:30 PM
PIERSON TOWN HALL**

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1. Call meeting to order

Mayor Samuel G.S. Bennett called the meeting to order at 6:39 PM and asked Town Clerk Yvonne Braddock to take the roll call.

2. Roll call

PRESENT:

- Mayor Samuel G.S. Bennett
- Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund
- Councilmember Sergia Cardenas
- Councilmember Linnie Richardson
- Councilmember Brandy Peterson

Also present were Town Attorney Christian Waugh, Deputy Clerk Ryan Smith, Utility Clerk Marci Nichols, as well as representatives from the Volusia County Sheriff's office. Town Planner Mark Karet was absent.

3. Invocation and pledge of allegiance

Mayor Bennett invited Pastor Max Tyus to give the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval of Minutes – Mayor Samuel G.S. Bennett

- a. Regular Meeting February 13, 2024

Mayor Bennett read the title and asked if there were any additions and/or deletions, if not he would entertain a motion for approval.

Councilmember Linnie Richardson made the motion to approve the above listed minutes as written; seconded by Councilmember Brandy Peterson. All agreed; motion carries.

5. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Volusia League of Cities – Ponce Inlet Mayor Lois A. Paritsky

Ponce Inlet Mayor Lois A. Paritsky spoke to the Council as the President of Volusia League of Cities about the role and mission of the League. Mayor Paritsky explained that the League is meant

47 to be a resource to help Public Officials be the most effective advocates for their constituents. The
48 League's goals include elevating advocacy and providing tools and resources. Mayor Paritsky
49 encouraged the Council members to attend dinners hosted by the League and recognized
50 Councilmember Sergia Cardenas's role as a Volusia League of Cities board member.

51

52 b. Volusia County Sheriff 2023 Crime Review – Volusia Sheriff's Office

53

54 Captain George Maddox gave a brief introduction to the Council and welcomed Lt. Roy
55 Galarza to present the 2023 Crime Review. Lt. Galarza stated that Volusia Sheriff's Office
56 has two deputies assigned to Pierson for 12-hour shifts. In 2023, the Sheriff's Office received
57 3,917 calls from Pierson. A breakdown was given regarding the type of calls, the number of
58 traffic citations issued, the number of weapons and noise complaints, and the number of
59 arrests.

60

61 Councilmember Brandy Peterson asked how the Volusia Sheriff's Office handles habitual and
62 repeat offenders for issues such as noise complaints. Lt. Galarza stated that there is not much
63 that can be done as long as those offenders continue to reside in Town.

64

65 Sheriff Mike Chitwood was in attendance. He gave brief remarks thanking the Town of
66 Pierson for their continued support and cooperation. Sheriff Chitwood said he had talked to
67 Mayor Bennett about some initiatives they had planned for 2024.

68

69 c. Volusia County Sheriff's Office Room 31 Move-in and Plumbing Repair –
70 Linnie Richardson - Councilwoman

71

72 Councilmember Richardson received a quote from Dixon Plumbing to upgrade the toilet in
73 Room 31 for \$1,216.00. The original toilet was a small children-sized toilet which requires
74 the plumbing to be re-configured for a standard-sized toilet.

75

76 Mayor Bennett suggested giving Volusia Sheriffs the old cafeteria building on the east side
77 of Town Hall instead of Room 31, noting that it would give the Sheriffs a more visible
78 presence on campus.

79

80 Councilmember Brandy Peterson reminded Council that Lt. Roy Galarza as a representative
81 for Volusia Sheriff's Office had selected Room 31 as their preferred location. It was also
82 highlighted by Utility Clerk Marci Nichols that there was no bathroom in the old cafeteria
83 building, which was a need for the Sheriff's Office.

84

85 **Councilmember Linnie Richardson made the motion to table this item for later**
86 **discussion; seconded by Councilmember Brandy Peterson. All agreed; motion carries.**

87

88 d. Four Seasons Display 4th of July Fireworks Contract – Mayor Samuel G.S.
89 Bennett

90

91 The contract for Pierson's annual 4th of July fireworks display by Four Seasons Display is up
92 for renewal. The new contract is for a five-year term at \$7,500.00 per year. This is the same
93 rate as the previous contract. Brad Mann, the owner of Four Seasons Display, was in

94 attendance to answer questions regarding the contract. Town Attorney Christian Waugh asked
95 when the deposit amounts were due; Mr. Mann clarified that it was 90 days prior to the event.
96 Mr. Mann also clarified for Mr. Waugh that there is a clause in the contract that allows the
97 Town to cancel the contract in writing should the need arise.

98

99 **Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund made the motion to approve the Four Seasons Display**
100 **contract; seconded by Councilmember Linnie Richardson. All agreed; motion carries.**

101

102 e. Community Yard Sale – Mary Kay Hansen

103

104 Resident Mary Kay Hansen asked the Council if there were any requirements from the Town
105 to have a community yard sale in Pierson on April 20, 2024 from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The
106 yard sale would be hosted at multiple sites around Pierson including some of the local
107 churches. She was informed by Council that no permits or permission were required because
108 she is not requesting to host the yard sale on Town property.

109

110 f. Volusia County School Board water leak forgiveness request – Mayor Samuel
111 G.S. Bennett

112

113 Volusia County School Board requested forgiveness on a utility bill that was abnormally high
114 due to an irrigation leak on their property. The School Board paid the bill but would like a
115 credit if possible. Mayor Bennett reminded the Council that the Town is currently using the
116 sewer system belonging to Volusia County School Board and that we should allow the
117 forgiveness.

118

119 **Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund made the motion to subtract a 12-month average for the**
120 **water bill and credit the difference; seconded by Councilmember Linnie Richardson.**
121 **All agreed; motion carries.**

122

123 g. Robotics Team from Taylor Middle-High School – Twila Guzman

124

125 Resident Twila Guzman spoke on behalf of Taylor Middle-High School’s robotics team. She
126 highlighted the team’s recent win of the league championship and explained that they would
127 attend the state finals. The team is comprised of students from 8th through 12th grade. She
128 noted that the team is an academic team, not an athletic one, and therefore does not receive
129 the same attention and funding as athletic teams. She asked if the Town would consider
130 supporting the team financially to prepare for the trip to the state finals.

131

132 **Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund made the motion to donate \$500.00 to the robotics team;**
133 **seconded by Councilmember Brandy Peterson. All agreed; motion carries**

134

135 h. Grime Stoppers quote to clean Room 31 – Brandy Peterson – Councilwoman

136

137 **Councilmember Brandy Peterson made the motion to table this item until Room 31 (item**
138 **5c) is discussed; seconded by Councilmember Linnie Richardson. All agreed; motion**
139 **carries.**

140

141 i. Tractor Repair Quote from Peterson Diesel – Linnie Richardson –
142 Councilwoman

143
144 A quote was received from Peterson Diesel to repair the Town’s tractor for \$3,175.02.

145
146 **Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund made the motion to approve the Peterson Diesel quote;**
147 **seconded by Councilmember Linnie Richardson. All agreed; motion carries.**

148
149 j. Form 6 Compliance and Discussion – Linnie Richardson – Councilwoman

150
151 The newly required Form 6 for Elected Officials must be completed and filed by July 2024.
152 Councilwoman Linnie Richardson discussed the broad scope of financial information being
153 requested by the form and stated that it seemed invasive. Mayor Bennett explained that a
154 group of municipalities had joined a lawsuit alleging the form violated the Florida
155 Constitution. Town Attorney Christian Waugh stated that he did not see a benefit in the Town
156 of Pierson joining such a lawsuit because of the cost to the Town; he explained that the
157 resulting decision in the lawsuit would be the same regardless of the Town’s participation in
158 the suit. His thought is that the Florida Legislature will have to re-examine the Form 6 law
159 due to officials resigning or refusing to seek office because of the requirement. The Council
160 agreed to add this item to the agenda for the next regular Council Meeting where they will
161 discuss adopting a Resolution in opposition of the requirement.

162
163 k. Resolution 2024-10 – Mayor Samuel G.S. Bennett

164
165 Mayor Bennett addressed the four-laning of US Highway 17 through Pierson, stating that the
166 highway has become too busy for a two-lane road which is a safety concern. Town Attorney
167 Christian Waugh read Resolution 2021-10, signed in 2021, which asks the State to consider
168 four-laning US Highway 17 through the entirety of Pierson from Barberville to Seville.
169 Councilmember Linnie Richardson objected to the four-laning through the center of town due
170 to the impact it would have on businesses there.

171
172 **Councilmember Linnie Richardson made the motion to approve Resolution 2024-10**
173 **with the change that US Highway 17 would remain two-lane through the center of**
174 **Pierson; seconded by Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund. Motion carries on a roll call vote**
175 **5-0.**

176
177 l. Workshop Rates and Lease Agreements – Mayor Samuel G.S. Bennett

178
179 The Council agreed to schedule a Workshop for Monday, March 4, 2024 at 4:00 PM regarding
180 rentals at the Town Center for discussion on rental rates and lease agreements. Mayor Bennett
181 suggested adding the 4th of July celebration to the same Workshop.

182
183 Mayor Bennett forwent the agenda order as written and discussed Item 6a, Old Business –
184 Beth Harper Rental at New Town Center because it was relevant to 5l.

185
186 Resident Beth Harper spoke with Council about renting a space at the Town Center to tutor
187 students. She acknowledged that tutoring is available at the schools but that it is not

188 specialized. She proposed a hands-on, device-free learning environment with one tutor per
189 one or two students. Ms. Harper is hoping to get participation from other teachers and wants
190 to look into grants to help fund the program. The Council discussed Building 2 as a potential
191 location for the tutoring. This will be discussed further in the aforementioned Workshop.

192

193 m. Resurface Parking Lot at New Town Center – Mayor Samuel G.S. Bennett

194

195 Mayor Samuel G.S. Bennett spoke on the aesthetics and condition of the existing parking lot
196 and stated that he would like to get pricing to renovate it. Vice Mayor Greenlund said he knew
197 of a company who could price it and mentioned needing two or three additional quotes.
198 Councilwoman Linnie Richardson voiced her concern that there were more pressing priorities
199 that required the Town’s attention and funds.

200

201 n. Updates by Mayor Samuel G.S. Bennett

202

203 Mayor Bennett commended the Council on their vote at the previous meeting to remove the
204 fence, stating that the campus looked very nice without it. He acknowledged the need for
205 improvements on Hagstrom Road. The Mayor met with Duke Energy and Zev Cohen at the
206 new well sites at Chipper Jones Park and gave a brief update on the project which is near
207 completion. He also spoke with Hough Electric regarding the request for lighting
208 improvements in the Town Center auditorium, and stated that Hough Electric had ordered
209 parts to fix the lighting. The Mayor also spoke to Volusia County Parks and Recreation
210 regarding the condition of the ball fields. The County informed the Mayor that clay had been
211 ordered. A meeting was requested with the County to discuss the issue of the fields being
212 maintained.

213

214 o. Updates on Town Projects from Town Attorney Christian Waugh

215

216 Mr. Waugh received a call from Volusia Sheriff’s Office Lt. Roy Galarza regarding a Town
217 ordinance on trespassing. Mr. Waugh stated that while a model trespass warning for public
218 properties was not necessary, it was recommended by the Sheriff’s Office. Mr. Waugh asked
219 for this item to be added to the agenda for the next regular Council Meeting.

220

221 j. Updates on Town Projects from Town Planner Mark Karet

222

223 Mr. Karet was absent from the meeting.

224

225 **6. OLD BUSINESS**

226

227 a. Beth Harper Rental at New Town Center – Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund

228

229 This item was discussed earlier in the meeting as part of 5l.

230

231 **7. OTHER BUSINESS (Council and Staff Reports)**

232

233 Councilmember Linnie Richardson had two items of discussion:

- 234 • Councilmember Richardson stated that she spoke with Surety Bank and they still have
235 not heard from the Town in regards to the plans for the building at 106 N. Center St.
236 Mayor Bennett said that he had spoken with CEO Ryan James of Surety Bank and that
237 a meeting had been scheduled between Mr. James and the Mayor on Thursday,
238 February 29, 2024.
- 239 • There were multiple bags of trash collected at Dixon Park which included many empty
240 beer cans and bottles. The Councilwoman asks if there is a Town Ordinance on
241 drinking in the public parks. Town Attorney Christian Waugh confirms that an
242 ordinance was passed two years ago barring alcohol in the public parks. The
243 Councilwoman requested No Drinking signs for the parks.

244 Councilmember Brandy Peterson had two items of discussion:

- 245 • The Councilwoman reminded the Council that the Volusia County School Board
246 sewer system is only to be used by Town Hall until September 2024 per the agreement
247 when purchasing the property, unless a deal can be reached with the School Board.
- 248 • Councilmember Brandy Peterson is concerned with the street parking at 2nd Avenue
249 and Fountain Drive. She stated that an accident is likely with the current parking
250 arrangements and that it could potentially lead to a lawsuit against the Town in the
251 event of an accident. Mayor Bennett stated that this type of parking is done on other
252 streets and does not think it is an issue if drivers are patient and cautious.

253 Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund reminded the Council that its annual Ethics training would be
254 held at Daytona State College on Friday, March 8, 2024 beginning at 8:00 AM.

255
256 **8. GOOD AND WELFARE (Public Participation)**

257
258 Citizen Kristine Wake of Save Our Boating Rights spoke to the Council regarding Silver Glen
259 Spring and the State's efforts to designate it as a Spring Protection Zone which would prohibit
260 the anchoring, mooring, beaching, and grounding of vessels. Ms. Wake encouraged the public
261 to be involved and asked the Town for any assistance with researching and supporting the
262 initiative to protect boaters' rights in our area.

263
264 **9. ADJOURNED**

265
266 **Hearing no further business, meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.**

267
268 Minutes prepared by:

Minutes approved by:

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270
271 _____
272 Ryan Smith, Deputy Town Clerk

Samuel G.S. Bennett, Mayor