

Lakeland City Commission**Regular Session
September 2, 2025**

The Lakeland City Commission met in Regular Session in the City Commission Chambers. Mayor Bill Mutz and Commissioners Chad McLeod, Bill Read, Stephanie Madden, Sara Roberts McCarley, Mike Musick, and Guy LaLonde were present. City Manager Shawn Sherrouse, City Attorney Palmer Davis, Finance Director Mike Brossart, and Deputy City Clerk Heather Bradman were also present.

CALL TO ORDER - 9:00 A.M.**PRESENTATIONS****2025 RP Funding Center Update (Cindy Collins, Director RP Funding Center)****Beautification Awards (Stacy Smith, Horticulturalist)**

- Residential: Dennis Lewis - 1503 Newport Avenue
- Commercial: Total Package Carwash - 2820 US Hwy 98 N

REQUESTS TO APPEAR FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

All items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered routine by the City Commission and will be enacted by one motion following an opportunity for public comment. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a City Commissioner or Citizen so requests, in which event the item will be removed from the consent agenda and considered in its normal sequence. For items listed with an asterisk (*) under the Community Redevelopment Agency portion of the agenda, the City Commission shall be deemed to be acting in its capacity as the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Lakeland when approving the consent agenda.

Motion: Commissioner Mike Musick moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Guy LaLonde seconded.

Mayor Bill Mutz asked for comments from the Commission and the audience. There were no comments.

Action: Mayor Bill Mutz called for the vote and the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (with any amendments)

*City Commission Minutes 08-18-2025

Action: The Commission approved these minutes as part of the Consent Agenda.

REPORTS AND RELATED ITEMS

City Attorney/City Manager Performance Review Committee 08/28/25

Commissioner Chad McLeod presented this item to the Commission.

Motion: Commissioner Mike Musick moved to approve the report. Commissioner Chad McLeod seconded.

Mayor Bill Mutz asked for comments from the Commission and the audience. There were no comments.

Action: Mayor Bill Mutz called for the vote and the motion carried unanimously.

Municipal Boards & Committees 08/29/25

Commissioner Guy LaLonde presented this item to the Commission.

Motion: Commissioner Sara Roberts McCarley moved to approve the report. Commissioner Stephanie Madden seconded.

Mayor Bill Mutz asked for comments from the Commission and the audience. There were no comments.

Action: Mayor Bill Mutz called for the vote and the motion carried unanimously.

EQUALIZATIONS HEARINGS – None

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Ordinances (Second Reading) – None

Resolutions

Resolution 6014; Proposed 25-053; Authorizing the City Manager or Designee to Execute Construction Agreements with the FDOT for Activities on City and State Right-of-Way

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAKE LAND, FLORIDA AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER OR DESIGNEE TO EXECUTE CONSTRUCTION AGREEMENTS WITH THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES WITHIN CITY AND STATE RIGHT-OF-WAY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

City Attorney Palmer Davis read the title.

Motion: Commissioner Chad McLeod moved to approve the resolution. Commissioner Sara Roberts McCarley seconded.

Mayor Bill Mutz asked for comments from the Commission and the audience. There were no comments.

Action: Upon roll call vote Commissioners Guy LaLonde, Mike Musick, Sara Roberts McCarley, Stephanie Madden, Bill Read, Chad McLeod, and Mayor Bill Mutz voted aye. Ayes – Seven. Nays – Zero. The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 6015; Proposed 25-054; Authorizing the Execution of Grant Agreements with the Federal Aviation Administration to Receive Federal Funding for the Construction of the Taxiway A Shoulders Project at Lakeland Linder International Airport

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAKELAND, FLORIDA AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF GRANT AGREEMENTS AND ASSOCIATED GRANT APPLICATIONS WITH THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION TO RECEIVE FEDERAL FUNDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE TAXIWAY A SHOULDERS PROJECT AT LAKELAND LINDER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT; ADOPTING FINDINGS; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Palmer Davis read the title.

Motion: Commissioner Mike Musick moved to approve the resolution. Commissioner Bill Read seconded.

Mayor Bill Mutz asked for comments from the Commission and the audience. There were no comments.

Action: Upon roll call vote Commissioners Chad McLeod, Bill Read, Stephanie Madden, Sara Roberts McCarley, Mike Musick, Guy LaLonde and Mayor Bill Mutz voted aye. Ayes – Seven. Nays – Zero. The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 6016; Proposed 25-055; Authorizing the City Manager or Designee to Execute Purchase Orders related to the Lakeland Housing Division's Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAKELAND, FLORIDA AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER OR DESIGNEE TO EXECUTE PURCHASE ORDERS RELATED TO THE REHABILITATION OR RECONSTRUCTION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS WITHIN THE CITY

OF LAKELAND FUNDED BY THE LAKELAND HOUSING DIVISION;
ADOPTING FINDINGS; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Palmer Davis read the title.

Motion: Commissioner Chad McLeod moved to approve the resolution. Commissioner Mike Musick seconded.

Mayor Bill Mutz asked for comments from the Commission and the audience. There were no comments.

Action: Upon roll call vote Commissioners Guy LaLonde, Mike Musick, Sara Roberts McCarley, Stephanie Madden, Bill Read, Chad McLeod, and Mayor Bill Mutz voted aye. Ayes – Seven. Nays – Zero. The motion carried unanimously.

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY – None

CITY MANAGER

Grant Agreement with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for the Lake Mirror Inlet Basket Retrofit for Nutrient Removal Project, Approval to Negotiate a Contract with Ferguson Waterworks, and an Appropriation and Increase in Revenues in the Stormwater Utility Fund

The City of Lakeland has been awarded \$368,852 in grant funding from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) for the Lake Mirror Inlet Basket Retrofit Nutrient Removal Project under the State Water Quality Assistance Grant, (SWAG), Program. The grant will fund the retrofit of six existing stormwater inlets through the purchase and installation of custom storm basin inlet baskets. This technology will remove nutrients from stormwater flows by capturing sediment, trash and organic debris. Media filter cartridges have also been included in the project. They will provide further nutrient removal, supporting a sustainable approach to mitigate nutrient loading and improve lake health.

The City's Purchasing Division has approved Ferguson Waterworks as a sole source provider. Ferguson Waterworks is the only company that can provide the specialized equipment and technology necessary to meet the project requirements. They are the National distributor of FabCo products. FabCo products makes FabCo inlet baskets and FabPhos media cartridges which is the technology that has been approved in the grant agreement with FDEP.

City staff seeks Commission approval to negotiate a contract with Ferguson Waterworks for an amount not to exceed \$368,852. FDEP agrees to reimburse the City for this entire amount. The City will be responsible for a 1% financial match of \$3,600 through public education and outreach activities. Funding for the 1% match of \$3,600 is available in the Public Education Programs line item in the FY 2025 Stormwater Utility Fund CIP. The

project timeline begins upon execution of the agreement with an anticipated January 2027 completion date.

Staff recommended that the City Commission authorize the appropriate City officials to execute the Grant Agreement with the FDEP for the Lake Mirror Inlet Basket Retrofit for Nutrient Removal Project, approve staff to negotiate a contract with Ferguson Waterworks, and authorize an appropriation and increase in revenues in the amount of \$368,852 from the Stormwater Utility Fund.

City Manager Shawn Sherrouse presented this item to the Commission.

Motion: Commissioner Sara Roberts McCarley moved to approve the agreement. Commissioner Guy LaLonde seconded.

Mayor Bill Mutz asked for comments from the Commission and the audience. There were no comments from the audience.

City Manager Shawn Sherrouse reminded the City Commission that, due to the breadth and complexity of the lakes and stormwater projects, further information and in-depth discussion with Laurie Smith can take place during an upcoming project update workshop.

Action: Mayor Bill Mutz called for the vote and the motion carried unanimously.

Grant Agreement with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for a Nutrient Removal Innovation Technology Demonstration Project at Lake Morton, Approval to Negotiate a Contract with Sustainable Water Infrastructure Group, and an Appropriation and Increase in Revenues in the Stormwater Utility Fund

The City of Lakeland has been awarded \$994,401 in grant funding from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) for Lake Morton Nutrient Removal under the Innovative Technology Grant Program. The grant funds innovative technology to mitigate harmful algal blooms, reduce nutrient content and alleviate legacy nutrient loading in Lake Morton's surface water.

The technology that will be utilized is a Phosphorous Elimination System with Denitrification modules. It works by placing three modules along the shoreline of Lake Morton, pumping water into the modules, distributing and passing it through two layers of patented nutrient reducing media. Once treated, the water is then collected via underdrain pipes and discharged back to Lake Morton. To further improve lake health, robust vegetation and native plantings will also be planted along the perimeters of the modules.

The estimated cost of the Nutrient Removal Innovation Technology Demonstration Project is \$994,401. FDEP agrees to reimburse the City for the entire amount upon completion of the project. City staff seeks Commission approval to negotiate a contract

with SWIG in a not to exceed amount of \$994,401. SWIG is the only company that can provide the specialized equipment and technology necessary to meet the project requirements. The City's Purchasing Division has approved SWIG as a sole source provider.

The project timeline begins upon execution of the agreement with an anticipated operation through November 2028 and final report completion in May 2029.

PROJECT BUDGET: DELIVERABLE AND DESCRIPTION	TOTAL
Deliverable No. 1 – Quality Assurance Project Plan	\$15,000.00
Deliverable No. 2 – Design and Permitting	\$115,000.00
Deliverable No. 3 – Site Preparation, Module Fabrication, Installation, and System Set-up	\$240,000.00
Deliverable No. 4 – Operations and Monitoring	\$549,401.00
Deliverable No. 5 – Decommissioning and Site Restoration	\$25,000.00
Deliverable No. 7 – Final Report and Presentation	\$50,000.00
TOTAL	\$994,401.00

Staff recommended that the City Commission authorize the appropriate City officials to execute the grant agreement with the FDEP for the Lake Morton Nutrient Removal Innovative Technology Demonstration Project, approve staff to negotiate a contract with Sustainable Water Infrastructure Group and authorize an appropriation and increase in revenues in the Stormwater Utility Fund in the amount of \$994,401.

City Manager Shawn Sherrouse presented this item to the Commission.

Motion: Commissioner Bill Read moved to approve the agreement. Commissioner Chad McLeod seconded.

Mayor Bill Mutz asked for comments from the Commission and the audience. There were no comments.

Action: Mayor Bill Mutz called for the vote and the motion carried unanimously.

Task Authorization WSP-25-02 with WSP for the Lake Hollingsworth EutroSORB(r)G Sediment Treatment Project

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) identified Lake Hollingsworth as a Verified Impaired Surface Waterbody due to high nutrient levels exceeding regulatory surface water quality Numeric Nutrient Criteria (NNC). In 2018, FDEP issued a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) which requires reducing nutrients in Lake Hollingsworth. Based on previous studies completed by WSP, sediment flux represents 96% of the nutrient loads in Lake Hollingsworth. Inactivation of sediment flux using chemical amendments is the most cost-effective means of reducing nutrient loads and achieving compliance with the regulatory NNC and delisting Lake Hollingsworth from Verified Impaired Surface Waters list. A feasibility study conducted on lake bottom sediments revealed EutroSORB®G was an effective treatment product.

WSP provided a proposal for a lake wide application of EutroSORB®G aimed at improving water clarity, reducing water column nutrient concentrations, and inactivating sediment flux within Lake Hollingsworth. The treatment is intended to reduce algal growth, increase water clarity and light transmission, and stimulate the growth of beneficial aquatic plants that will further improve water quality conditions.

The scope of work for this sediment treatment project includes:

- Project management, permit pre-application meeting with FDEP, and contractor oversight
- Environmental resource permitting
- Pre-application and post-application surface water field monitoring, water sample collection and laboratory analysis
- EutroSORB®G application
- Final report summarizing the treatment operation and pre- and post-application water quality conditions

WSP is a current firm on the June 2022 Professional Lakes & Watershed Management Services CCNA. They have provided assessment and feasibility consulting services on lakes in Lakeland since 2012 and on Lake Hollingsworth since 2014. WSP has subcontracted with EutroPhix to provide the EutroSORB®G Sediment Treatment application. EutroPhix is considered a sole source in the industry.

Funding for this project in the not-to-exceed amount of \$911,230 is provided in the Fiscal Year 2025 Lake Hollingsworth TMDL line item of the Stormwater Fund Capital Improvement Plan.

Staff recommended the City Commission authorize the appropriate City officials to execute the Task Authorization WSP-25-02 with WSP for the Lake Hollingsworth EutroSORB®G Sediment Treatment Project in the not-to-exceed amount of \$911,230.

City Manager Shawn Sherrouse presented this item to the Commission.

Motion: Commissioner Bill Read moved to approve the task authorization. Commissioner Mike Musick seconded.

Mayor Bill Mutz asked for comments from the Commission and the audience. There were no comments from the audience.

The Commission discussed:

- Importance of ongoing lake and stormwater projects, noting the community's strong connection to local lakes and the natural aging of older lakes such as Lake Hollingsworth.
- High costs associated with these efforts but commended the department for actively seeking grant opportunities.

- Specific focus on lakes such as Parker, Mirror, Morton, and Hollingsworth, while recognizing that other lakes are also in need.
- The public will be informed once a date for the project update workshop is set.

Action: Mayor Bill Mutz called for the vote and the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Change Order No. 1 to Purchase Order No. 299057 with NAPA Auto Parts for Fleet Management

Each year, the City's Fleet Management Division spends approximately \$3,000,000 with NAPA Auto Parts for materials, equipment and supplies to maintain and service the City's fleet. In September 2024, Purchase Order No. 299057 was issued to NAPA Auto Parts in the amount of \$2,320,000 for costs noted above. This amount has been spent, and in order to meet operational needs through the remainder of the fiscal year, a Change Order is required authorizing the City's Fleet Management Division to spend an additional \$499,000.

Funding for this work is provided in the Fiscal Year 2025 Fleet Management Budget. All services pursuant to this Change Order will be performed in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth in Sourcwell Contract #090624-GPC with Napa Auto Parts.

Staff recommended the City Commission authorize the appropriate City officials to execute Change Order No. 1 to Purchase Order No. 299057 with NAPA Auto Parts in the amount of \$499,000.

City Manager Shawn Sherrouse presented this item to the Commission.

Motion: Commissioner Sara Roberts McCarley moved to approve the change order. Commissioner Mike Musick seconded.

Mayor Bill Mutz asked for comments from the Commission and the audience. There were no comments from the audience.

Commissioner Read inquired about NAPA's local presence and noted the long-standing relationship with the City. It was clarified that NAPA was awarded a national contract and now supplies parts from various locations. NAPA assumes all risk and manages the entire inventory.

Action: Mayor Bill Mutz called for the vote and the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of 2025-2028 Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City of Lakeland and International Association of Fire Fighters Local 4173

The City and International Association of Fire Fighters Local 4173, ("IAFF") are parties to collective bargaining agreement ("CBA"), effective November 7, 2022, and expiring September 30, 2025. The IAFF is the certified bargaining agent representing all full-time

Lakeland Fire Department employees working in the job classifications of Firefighter/EMT, Firefighter/Paramedic, Driver Engineer/EMT, Driver Engineer/Paramedic, and Lieutenant.

Negotiations for a successor agreement commenced on May 9 between the IAFF negotiation team and City representatives from the Lakeland Fire Department, Human Resources, Finance, and City Attorney's Office. On August 7, the parties reached a tentative agreement as to the proposed 2025-2028 CBA, which the IAFF membership unanimously ratified on August 13.

The CBA now awaits formal consideration by the City Commission. The proposed CBA is a 3-year agreement, starting October 1, 2025, and expiring on September 30, 2028. The following provides a summary of the major economic terms and substantive changes to the CBA that have been tentatively agreed to by the parties.

Overview of Key Changes in the 2025-2028 IAFF CBA:

Wages & Pay Structure

- One-time base pay adjustment by classification effective September 30, 2025:
 - Firefighter EMT 13.99%
 - Firefighter Paramedic 12.61%
 - Driver Engineer EMT 16.65%
 - Driver Engineer Paramedic 9.33%
 - Lieutenant EMT 16.04%
 - Lieutenant Paramedic 9.52%
- Across-the-Board increases of 1.5% annually on October 1 of FY25-26, FY26-27, and FY27-28.
- Codifies annual merit increases (step progression) until the top of range is reached.
- Adds list of 10 comparator agencies to guide future wage negotiations.
 - Polk County Fire Rescue, Hillsborough County Fire Rescue, Orange County Fire Department, Orlando Fire Department, Tampa Fire Department, Temple Terrace Fire Department, Pasco County Fire Department, Clearwater Fire Department, St. Petersburg Fire Rescue, Gainesville Fire Department
- Increases overtime cap from 40% to 50% of base salary per fiscal year.

Pension & Retirement

- Expands pension eligibility with retirement at 25 years of service (any age) or age 55 with 10 years.
- Extends maximum DROP participation from 60 to 96 months.
- Creates Supplemental Retirement Benefit (SRB) which will provide monthly benefit to retirees until they become Medicare eligible.
 - Current Share Plan benefits will be frozen, and employees will have one-time irrevocable option to election to participate in SRB

- SRB funded only from future excess premium tax funds, 0.5%-member contribution, and existing Share Plan balances from participating employees
- Initial monthly benefit amount will be determined by Fire Pension Board following opt-in deadline.
- Future monthly benefit amounts will be subject to annual actuarial adjustments and parties may negotiate adjustments to member contribution levels.
- City has no liability or funding obligation beyond transferring excess premium tax revenues.
- Fire Pension Board to prepare corresponding ordinance amending provisions of City of Lakeland Firefighters Retirement System

Other Notable Changes

- Consolidates and streamlines Hours of Work & Overtime article following successful implementation of 24-hour Kelly Day in current CBA.
- Incorporated revised overtime threshold of 144 hours per 21-day FLSA cycle (48-hour avg/week)
- Creates uniform rules and procedures for miscellaneous extra duty assignments.
- Establishes a Workplace Safety Committee in compliance with state law/regulations.
- Increased maximum cost paid by City for annual firefighter physicals through LifeScan (\$456 to \$601).
- Completion of annual LifeScan physical now automatically satisfies wellness program compliance.
- Formally adds Juneteenth as a recognized holiday in CBA.
- Deletes 60-mile residency requirement.
- Removes 6-month employment requirement for tuition reimbursement eligibility.
- Introduces post-assessment review during promotional process.
- Assorted contract clean up, nonmaterial corrections, and formatting updates.

Staff recommended that the City Commission ratify and adopt the proposed 2025-2028 Collective Bargaining Agreement with the IAFF and authorize the appropriate City officials to execute any associated documents.

City Manager Shawn Sherrouse presented this item to the Commission.

Motion: Commissioner Mike Musick moved to approve the agreement. Commissioner Guy LaLonde seconded.

Mayor Bill Mutz asked for comments from the Commission and the audience. There were no comments from the audience.

The Commission discussed:

- The vote was unanimously ratified.
- The consideration of the 60-mile residency requirement.

- Notable work done and the Commission's intent to build trust and align on shared goals moving forward.
- All parties were able to reach an agreement in the spirit of consensus, and that a unanimous vote was a significant outcome.
- The three-year contract is beneficial for everyone involved.

Action: Mayor Bill Mutz called for the vote and the motion carried unanimously.

CITY ATTORNEY

Ordinances (First Reading)

Proposed 25-029; Amending Chapter 98, Article IV "School Zone Speed Safety Enforcement" of the City Code to Update the Designated School Zone Locations for Speed Detection Systems

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LAKELAND, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 98 "TRAFFIC AND VEHICLES", ARTICLE IV, ENTITLED "SCHOOL ZONE SPEED SAFETY ENFORCEMENT" OF THE CITY CODE; UPDATING THE DESIGNATED SCHOOL ZONE LOCATIONS FOR SPEED DETECTION SYSTEMS ON SPECIFIED ROADWAYS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE CITY OF LAKELAND MAINTAINED AS SCHOOL ZONES THAT CONSTITUTE A HEIGHTENED SAFETY RISK; MAKING FINDINGS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The foregoing is the title of an ordinance read for the first time by short title only. The Commission will hold the second reading and public hearing on September 15, 2025.

Proposed 25-030; Amending Chapter 98, Article III "Red Light Infractions" of the City Code Authorizing Additional Placement, Installation and Operation of Traffic Infraction Detection Systems at Specified Intersections

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LAKELAND, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 98 "TRAFFIC AND VEHICLES", ARTICLE III, ENTITLED "RED LIGHT INFRACTIONS" OF THE CITY CODE; AUTHORIZING THE ADDITIONAL PLACEMENT, INSTALLATION AND OPERATION OF TRAFFIC INFRACTION DETECTION SYSTEMS FOR ENFORCEMENT OF RED LIGHT VIOLATIONS IN SPECIFIED INTERSECTIONS WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE CITY OF LAKELAND THAT CONSTITUTE A HEIGHTENED SAFETY RISK WARRANTING ADDITIONAL ENFORCEMENT MEASURES; MAKING FINDINGS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The foregoing is the title of an ordinance read for the first time by short title only. The Commission will hold the second reading and public hearing on September 15, 2025.

Proposed 25-031; Approving a Conditional Use to Allow a Bar on Property Located at 125 S. Kentucky Avenue

AN ORDINANCE RELATING TO ZONING; MAKING FINDINGS; APPROVING A CONDITIONAL USE TO ALLOW A BAR ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 125 S. KENTUCKY AVENUE; REPEALING ORDINANCE 5807; FINDING CONFORMITY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The foregoing is the title of an ordinance read for the first time by short title only. The Commission will hold the second reading and public hearing on September 15, 2025.

Miscellaneous**Interlocal Agreement with Polk County for the Collection of County Impact Fees**

This is a proposed Interlocal Agreement with Polk County for the collection of County impact fees. The City currently collects County impact fees for new development occurring within the City's jurisdictional limits pursuant to an existing Interlocal Agreement and remits those fees to the County after deducting the City's administrative costs. However, legislation passed in the 2024 Legislative Session requires cities and counties to adopt new interlocal agreements on or before October 1, 2025. The primary purpose of this new legislation is to require cities and counties to coordinate with one another to ensure that new development is not charged twice for the same impacts.

As a matter of practice, the City and County already coordinate with one another so that double charging does not occur. The consultants retained by the City and County to conduct their respective impact fee studies consider the impact fees charged by each jurisdiction in calculating the legally defensible fees that each may charge. However, the current Interlocal Agreement between the City and County does not explicitly address this issue as required by the new law. The Interlocal Agreement has been drafted to address this issue in compliance with the new law. The proposed Agreement also requires the City to review and update its administrative charges every two years to ensure that it is properly reimbursed for its services and to ensure that its charges do not exceed the actual costs of collection. The County is required to provide written notice to the City of any change the County makes to its impact fees.

Staff recommended that the City Commission approve the Interlocal Agreement with Polk County for the collection of County impact fees and authorize the appropriate City officials to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City.

Palmer Davis presented this item to the Commission.

Motion: Commissioner Mike Musick moved to approve the agreement. Commissioner Bill Read seconded.

Mayor Bill Mutz asked for comments from the Commission and the audience. There were no comments.

Action: Mayor Bill Mutz called for the vote and the motion carried unanimously.

FINANCE DIRECTOR

***Appropriation and Increase in Estimated Revenue - Various Funds for FY 2025**

Throughout the fiscal year, the City receives various donations from private individuals that are designated for expenditure on specific projects or operating expenses, at the donor's request. These donations are not included in the original operating budget of the City, because the dollar value cannot be anticipated.

The City also receives reimbursement for certain types of expenses - most notably the reimbursement for overtime duties performed by Lakeland Police Officers. These reimbursements and the associated expenses are not included in the original operating budget of the City, because they cannot be forecasted accurately.

The budgeting practice adopted by the City for these transactions is to present these donations and expenses reimbursements to the City Commission semi-annually, at which time the operating budgets are amended accordingly.

Staff requested that the City Commission authorize an increase in estimated revenue and matching appropriation to the various operating budgets of the City as required based on the listing of donations and expense reimbursements received for the ten-month period October 1, 2024 through July 31, 2025.

Action: The Commission approved this item as part of the Consent Agenda.

UTILITY

Ordinances - None
Resolutions - None

Miscellaneous

Power Purchase Agreement with American Independent Power, LLC

This is a proposed Power Purchase Agreement with American Independent Power, LLC (AIP) for a 5-megawatt Liquid Nitrogen Generation Pilot Project at the Socrum Substation located at 8436 US Hwy 98 N. in Lakeland. The purpose of the Pilot Project is for AIP to provide Lakeland Electric with a distributed energy resource, while enabling modeling of the technology at utility scale based on API's unique proprietary liquid nitrogen generation technology.

Pursuant to this Agreement, Lakeland Electric would purchase all power generated from AIP's facility. Specifically, AIP proposes to utilize thermal solar collectors to generate the high-temperature side of AIP's engine and cryogenic nitrogen for the low-temperature side. This thermal differential is what drives the engine and can do so with a much smaller solar footprint than traditional photovoltaic solar, which provides Lakeland Electric with the ability to use a smaller half-acre area available at Socrum Substation.

Upon approval by the City Commission, the initial term of the Agreement shall commence upon commercial operation of the facility, which is anticipated to occur on or about September 2, 2026, and continue for a period of fifteen years unless otherwise terminated in accordance with the Agreement. Upon mutual written agreement of the parties, the term of the Agreement may be extended for one additional ten-year period. The City retains the right to terminate the Agreement for any reason upon 365 days prior written notice, subject to an early termination obligation calculated from actual system performance to determine an expected remaining contract value. The City may also terminate upon 180 days prior written notice in the event City seeks to sell the facility site and relocate AIP to another similarly situated City property, if available.

In accordance with the Agreement, AIP will develop, build, operate, and maintain the facility at its sole cost and expense. Lakeland Electric will purchase all of the power generated from the facility at a rate of \$44.00/MWh. The maximum annual payment for power, based on 100% availability and generation of AIP's facility, would be \$1,927,200.00 for 43,800 MWh per year. Lakeland Electric intends to incorporate these anticipated energy purchases in each subsequent budget year, subject to yearly budget approval by the City Commission.

In accordance with the Agreement, AIP will retain all right, title and interest in any available environmental attributes and incentives. AIP will also be required to indemnify the City from any and all losses/claims relating to AIP's performance, including bodily injury, death, or damage to property except to the extent that any such losses are caused by the gross negligence, willful misconduct or fraud of the City, and maintain insurance as required by the City during the term of the Agreement.

Staff recommended that the City Commission approve this Power Purchase Agreement with AIP for the Socrum Substation Liquid Nitrogen Generation Pilot Project and authorize the appropriate City officials to execute all corresponding documents.

Deputy City Attorney Ramona Sirianni presented this item to the Commission.

Motion: Commissioner Mike Musick moved to approve the agreement. Commissioner Bill Read seconded.

Mayor Bill Mutz asked for comments from the Commission and the audience. There were no comments from the audience.

Commissioner McLeod asked for comments from LE General Manager Mike Beckham. Mr. Beckham stated this technology has been under consideration for some time and has shown favorable results in studies, particularly as a complement to renewable sources with a smaller solar footprint. He noted that while a previous block energy project did not succeed, this initiative shows high promise, has a relatively low upfront cost, and could become a significant part of Lakeland's energy portfolio as future demand increases.

The Commission discussed:

- Construction costs are approximately \$20 million.
- The project seemed “almost too good to be true,” as it generates electricity through temperature differential without fuel consumption.
- This is a low-risk partnership with AIP.
- AIP has been developing this technology for 17 years. Success would create opportunities for larger-scale projects in the future, including data centers.
- The project is protected as a trade secret, allowing unique sole-source provision and geographic flexibility.
- While Small Nuclear Reactors (SNR) may be the long-term solution, they are likely a decade away from affordability, making this project a valuable bridge technology.

Representatives from AIP in the audience expressed thanks for the partnership with the City.

Action: Mayor Bill Mutz called for the vote and the motion carried unanimously.

AUDIENCE

Public comments regarding the Lakeland Housing Authority (LHA) were made first.

Naquaisha Coward reported concerns from residents afraid to speak out due to fear of retaliation, such as losing housing or funding. She alleged a pattern of discrimination and cited favoritism dating back to 2019. She has raised concerns of nepotism and favoritism at LHA board meetings but was dismissed. Seniors at a community food drive shared similar experiences. She requested reassurance that residents' voices matter and that systematic discrimination will end.

Janet Lockett shared her personal experiences with lack of assistance with housing repairs and eviction following health issues, including toe amputation and her mother's death. Despite paying full rent each month, she and her family were displaced and received little support or sympathy.

Terreva Thomas reported being targeted with a 60-day notice after speaking up about LHA practices. She stated her lease renewal was denied after having lived there for five years (2019–2024). She claimed her unit was reassigned to a Housing Authority employee's family member. She described financial hardship relocating her three

children, including a \$2,500 upfront cost and utility bills higher than rent. She expressed concern about potential eviction and lack of support.

Mayor Mutz clarified that the City Commission's responsibility is limited to appointing LHA board members; LHA operates under state and federal oversight.

Harlem Turner expressed disappointment with the LHA leadership's treatment of residents and shared that his fraternity has collaborated with the NAACP to address civil liberties concerns. He recalled visiting the LHA several years ago to raise issues he had heard about but noted that no action was taken at the time. Mr. Turner stated that there are four individuals within the organization who, in his view, should step down. He also mentioned ongoing conversations with the media and expressed a willingness to escalate these concerns further if necessary.

Larry Mitchell has been involved with housing for 30 years and defended LHA's performance. He acknowledged past issues but stated no findings from HUD in the last five years. The LHA has received five consecutive awards from HUD, assisted 19 families moving from Section 8 to homeownership, and is recognized as one of the best authorities in the United States. He stated that while residents' concerns are valid, overall, LHA has demonstrated competence.

Marquita Burse asked what expectations residents should have, given City Commission's limited role in oversight.

Commissioner Guy LaLonde confirmed he wrote to LHA board members, their attorney, and Ben Stevenson requesting oversight, transparency, and safeguards against retaliation. The letter is meant to emphasize the board's role in setting policy and the need for integrity and transparency.

Mayor Mutz stated that the Commission is advocating for and requesting an independent review.

Michael Joseph claimed black residents are overlooked for housing assistance compared to Hispanic residents. He reported difficulties accessing LHA offices and receiving support.

Lorenzo Robinson spoke as a community representative of the Paul A. Diggs Neighborhood Association, affirming the importance of transparency while also recognizing LHA's accomplishments. He is a former board member of the LHA Board.

Commissioner Madden thanked residents for their courage in speaking out. She stated the City cannot hire or fire the executive director but can demand accountability through appointed board members. She encouraged continued dialogue.

Commissioner Sara Roberts McCarley commended residents for their bravery. She expressed anger at reports of retaliation and emphasized that even one case is too many.

Commissioner Chad McLeod asked about next steps and confirmed a formal request for an independent, third-party investigation under Chapter 421, Florida Statutes, has been made.

Commissioner Musick emphasized that constituent advocacy leads to Commission action, though ideally such action should not require public pleading.

Mayor Mutz reinforced the Commission's respect for the process, balance, and statutes. He stated no one should be denied benefits they qualify for.

Commissioner Read thanked attendees and affirmed that their concerns are heard.

Additional public comments were heard next.

Lorenzo Thompson asked about revitalization of Lake Hollingsworth compared to other lakes.

Staff confirmed Lake Bonny and Lake Bonnet have worse contamination. Staff reported a \$43 million federal grant is funding cleanup of significant sediment buildup.

Commissioner Chad McLeod explained the Commission requested an overview of all lakes and related projects citywide.

City Manager Shawn Sherrouse clarified that ongoing lake projects are continuous; the items presented today represent new initiatives.

MAYORS AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COMMISSION

Commissioner Mike Musick shared that he is one month out from completing cancer radiation treatment. He expressed deep gratitude for the many citizens who reached out to him, noting the kindness of one message from an individual in the Lake Bonny area. He thanked the City and community, stating that private outpourings of support mean a great deal.

Commissioner Chad McLeod said to Mayor Mutz that he ran into Pam Mutz (the mayor's wife) at Gandy Pool, and she said they will be traveling to Japan for a Sister City event.

Mayor Bill Mutz added that this year marks the 30th anniversary of the Sister City relationship with Imabari, Japan. Commissioner McLeod thanked him for representing Lakeland.

Harlem Turner spoke from the audience thanked Kevin Cook for visiting and speaking with Terreva Thomas, remarking that it made the day better despite ongoing struggles.

Commissioner Guy LaLonde reminded everyone that a budget meeting is scheduled for Thursday night.

CALL FOR ADJOURNMENT – 11:28 a.m.

Heather L. Bradman

Heather L. Bradman, Deputy City Clerk

