



City of Oak Hill, Florida

City Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: August 25th, 2025

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: 234 S. U.S. Hwy 1, Oak Hill, FL 32759

A. Call to Order

- Mayor Ricky Taylor called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

B. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

- Moment of silence was observed.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Taylor.

C. Roll Call

Commission Members Present:

- Mayor Ricky Taylor
- Vice Mayor Joe Catigano
- Commissioner Carrie Werning
- Commissioner Mark Drollinger
- Commissioner Linda Hyatt

Staff Present:

- City Attorney Mike Kelly (Absent)
 - City Manager John Barkley
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D. Agenda Modifications

- None at this time.
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E. Presentations / Announcements

- Mayor Taylor introduced District 8 Senator Tom Wright. Mayor Taylor noted that Senator Wright, along with other representatives, worked diligently to help the City of Oak Hill secure funding for the Canal Avenue flooding project. Mayor Taylor expressed it was his honor to welcome and introduce Senator Wright.
- **Remarks by Senator Tom Wright**
Senator Wright shared his appreciation for the City of Oak Hill and recalled his first visit to the community, noting the importance of the septic-to-sewer conversion project and the support the city had received for that initiative. He emphasized the unique challenges faced by coastal communities, particularly in stormwater management, infrastructure resiliency, and flood protection.
- Senator Wright stated that the funding secured for Oak Hill represents a meaningful investment to address these challenges, protect homes and businesses, and safeguard the community's quality of life.
- He then presented the city with a ceremonial check in the amount of **\$186,888** from the State Legislature to support the Canal Avenue flooding project.
- Senator Wright further noted that this year the Legislature brought **\$500 million** back to District 8. He emphasized the importance of reinvesting state dollars into the communities that contribute significantly.
- He provided informational materials highlighting legislation passed during the recent session, including the *Dangerous Dog Bill*, which strengthens penalties for owners in cases where dogs cause serious injury or death. He referenced the tragic case of an 8-year-old boy who was killed and explained that current penalties are at the felony level, with efforts underway to further increase accountability.
- Senator Wright concluded by reaffirming his support for the City of Oak Hill and encouraged officials to reach out if they needed assistance.
- Mayor Taylor introduced the next presentation, the **Volusia County Sheriff's Office Quarterly Report**.

Volusia County Sheriff's Office – Quarterly Report

A representative from the Volusia County Sheriff's Office presented the monthly statistics. He reported that the beginning of the school year at Burns had gone smoothly, with additional deputy support brought in to assist the city deputy. Concerns on Gaines street have been addressed with targeted resources, and no significant complaints have been received.

For the reporting period, the following crimes were noted:

- **Aggravated Assault** – 1 case, cleared by arrest
- **Simple Assault** – 1 case, cleared by arrest
- **Motor Vehicle Theft** – 1 case (electric bicycle, no leads currently)
- **Shoplifting** – 1 case, cleared by arrest

Three out of four reported crimes were cleared by arrest.

Deputies continued regular self-initiated activities, including property checks, extra patrols, traffic enforcement, radar, and directed patrol requests. The representative concluded by noting that overall crime remains low in the City of Oak Hill.

F. Public Participation (Non-Agenda Items)

Lisa Bender – 576 North U.S. Highway 1, Oak Hill

Ms. Bender expressed concerns regarding wetlands and the rezoning of property previously designated A-3 Low Density. She stated that in 2021 the Planning Board recommended approval of a rezoning request by Storch, which was later approved by the City Commission through annexation and amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use.

Ms. Bender voiced concerns that developing on active wetlands could create future flooding risks and potential liability for the City. She referenced similar issues in Edgewater and stated that raising land elevations could cause surrounding wetlands to rise, impacting adjacent properties, including her own. She stressed her opposition to the ARPUD designation and urged the City to reconsider its impact.

David Lee – 130 North Putnam

Mr. Lee continued on the subject of flooding, stating that restricting natural drainage patterns through development increases the risk of flooding in older neighborhoods. He suggested requiring developers to set aside drainage easements around their property lines to allow water to continue flowing naturally. Mr. Lee warned that without such measures, Oak Hill could face the same issues as Edgewater.

He also raised concerns regarding the moratorium on new septic tank permits in the watershed overlay area, which he stated could halt development in Oak Hill. He requested clarification on how the restrictions applied.

Additionally, Mr. Lee expressed concerns about drug activity in the community, referencing observed incidents at local businesses. He objected to a Narcan dispenser being installed at a local restaurant and voiced frustration over drug-related issues impacting the quality of life.

Finally, Mr. Lee invited City Commissioners to tour local ditches and drainage areas with him on a Saturday to view current water flow conditions firsthand, reiterating his willingness to guide them through problem areas so they could see the challenges directly.

Mr. Lee reiterated that larger pipes are needed to handle increasing water flow and again offered to guide Commissioners on a tour of local drainage areas so they could see flooding concerns firsthand. He suggested splitting Commissioners into small groups if necessary to avoid quorum issues.

He commented that, following severe thunderstorms, he has only observed one Commissioner out inspecting conditions and encouraged all elected officials to be more present after major weather events.

Mr. Lee stressed that residents expect their votes to be honored with representation and action. He cautioned that if citizens do not feel their concerns are being addressed, they may choose different leadership in future elections.

He expressed doubt that the recently awarded state funding of \$186,888 would be sufficient once permitting and regulatory requirements are accounted for. He questioned how necessary permits would be obtained from state or federal agencies for drainage projects leading into the river, and raised concerns about restrictions on new canals.

Finally, he warned that subdivision development contributes to flooding by elevating land, sloping green space to storm drains, and relying on retention ponds that overflow during major storms. He stated that continued large-scale development will only worsen flooding issues for existing residents.

G. Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda

Mayor Taylor introduced the consent agenda, which included approval of the minutes from the **August 11, 2025 Budget Workshop** and the **August 11, 2025 Commission Meeting**.

- Motion to approve: Commissioner Hyatt
- Second: Commissioner Werning
- Discussion: None from the Council; none from the public

Roll Call Vote

- Commissioner Hyatt – Yes
- Vice Mayor Catigano – Yes
- Commissioner Drollinger – Yes
- Mayor Taylor – Yes
- Commissioner Werning – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

H. City Manager's Report

City Manager's Report

City Manager John Barkley provided updates on several ongoing and emerging matters:

- **Project Prioritization** – Staff continues to work through a running list of issues, prioritizing Commission goals while also addressing new matters as they arise.

- **Traffic Calming** – Staff is researching styles and pricing for speed bumps, with Gaines Street and Canal Avenue identified as initial priority areas. Considerations include slope, design, signage, and markings. Three quotes will be obtained for review by the Commission.
- **Park Use Policy** – A draft policy has been prepared regarding the use of city parks, particularly for private businesses seeking to operate on city property. The policy will be modeled after the Mary DeWees Park rental application but will be broader in scope.
- **Stormwater and Utilities** – The City is working with Volusia County officials on stormwater projects and the future provision of water and sewer infrastructure along U.S. 1, including potential system extensions to the south side of the city. Five stormwater priority areas have been identified. Canal Avenue remains a key project, and the County has also expressed interest in assisting with drainage improvements at Halifax and Northeast.
- **Infrastructure Coordination** – Staff is working to coordinate drainage improvements with the ongoing sewer project on Halifax Avenue down to River Road.
- **Contracts Review** – Existing independent contracts are under review. Each will be advertised individually as an RFP to ensure updated provisions and competitive bidding.
- **FDOT Median Improvement Program** – The City is exploring participation in FDOT's program, which could allow storm related enhancements to the median along U.S. 1, including landscaping and aesthetic improvements. Discussions with FDOT District 5 representatives are planned.
- **Charter Revision Survey** – Staff is finalizing boundary details required by the recent charter revision. Annexations from the past three years have been provided to the surveyor to complete the legal description of city limits.
- **Upcoming Event** – Oak Hill will host the **Volusia County League of Cities meeting** in January 2026. Staff is exploring venue options and welcomes Commission input on how best to showcase the city.
- **Preparing** an RFP for trash service.

(other discussion)

- **Vice Mayor Catigano** referenced an email from resident Brenda Dewees regarding the speed bumps currently installed in the city. The email included attachments and analysis indicating that the existing speed bumps are not appropriate for roadway use, as they are designed for parking lots or very low-speed areas. Vice Mayor Catigano expressed concern that the City may face liability issues as a result and asked that the matter be considered carefully when selecting replacements. He noted the email had been forwarded to Public Works Supervisor Travis Allen as well.

Commissioner Werning inquired about the timing of the FDOT meeting. City Manager Barkley responded that the City is awaiting FDOT to schedule and that he would notify the Commission once a date is set. **Commission Discussion (continued)**

- Commissioner Werning inquired about the timing of the sewer project on Halifax Avenue. City Manager Barkley responded that the design phase is already underway,

with work visible at various points along the project area. He stated the project is expected to begin in October, though no exact start date has been provided.

- Commissioner Hyatt expressed appreciation to Georgia, the City's lobbyist, for her hard work and dedication, noting it was important to thank her before she departed the meeting. Georgia responded that it was a pleasure and an honor to represent Oak Hill, and the Commission expressed their gratitude.

I. Old Business

- **None at this time.**

J. New Business

Equipment Purchase – Public Works Maintenance

City Manager Barkley introduced Public Works Director Travis Allen to present an overview of equipment purchase quotes provided in the Commission packet.

Before Mr. Allen's presentation, Commissioner Werning inquired about the Florida Senate grant information also included in the packet, asking if it pertained to the Canal Avenue project. City Manager Barkley confirmed that it did, explaining that the documents were originals from the state. Commissioner Werning noted that the listed contact person, Don Schreiner, should be updated to reflect the City Manager's information, and that Linda had identified a September 2026 estimated start date on the form. Commissioner Hyatt clarified that the date was part of the state's documentation, not the City's response. City Manager Barkley confirmed that the City is responsible for completing approximately nine or ten forms by September and would ensure corrections were addressed.

Public Works Director Allen then presented his equipment recommendations. He explained that:

- The City's existing John Deere 5100E tractor could be converted to include a loader bucket with controls.
- Through Sourcewell government contracts, the City is guaranteed the lowest available pricing; therefore, no additional quotes were sought.
- Additional recommended attachments include a root grapple for brush handling, a pallet fork for shop deliveries (noting that the City currently does not have a forklift), and necessary control valves for the tractor conversion.
- An instructional seat was also recommended to allow for on-the-job training for employees with no prior tractor experience.
- **Trailer Quotes**
 - Down to Earth 16 ft, 7 ft wide trailer:
 - Wheel-A-Way (local dealer): \$3,903 (no tax), with option for tag work at \$4,378.

Down to Earth direct (Baxley, GA): verbal quote of \$3,300 (shipping likely additional).

- All American Trailer: \$4,195.
- Tractor Supply (7x16 utility trailer): \$4,999.
- Wheel-A-Way (with tag work): \$4,413.

Director Allen noted the existing trailer was no longer safe due to weld breaks, fatigue, and deck issues, and that the proposed replacement size would meet current needs for hauling mowers and other equipment.

Additional Discussion

- Commissioner Werning asked about the possibility of pricing an enclosed trailer and a large water pump for flood response. Director Allen agreed to research those options.
- Vice Mayor Catigano raised the question of whether a backhoe would serve the City more effectively than limited-use items like a man lift or pump. Director Allen noted he had considered a tractor conversion for flexibility but agreed to research backhoe options with sufficient reach for Canal Avenue.
- Commissioners discussed excavator options and trailer sizing for heavier equipment.
- A resident, Mr. Lee, shared insight on equipment purchasing and suggested the City explore surplus sales via *GovDeals.com*. He noted potential opportunities for cost savings on heavy equipment and vehicles.

Equipment Purchase – Public Works Maintenance (cont'd)

Public Works Director Travis Allen reviewed additional details of the proposed equipment purchases:

- The following packet pages provided a breakdown of total costs for the tractor conversion and attachments.
- When asked by Mayor Taylor about installation timelines, Director Allen estimated approximately one week for the tractor conversion once scheduled. He noted that installation could ideally be coordinated during the winter downtime, but Commissioners Werning and Drollinger expressed that the grapple attachment could be highly beneficial after storms and questioned whether waiting was necessary. Director Allen agreed to consult with the representative and provide a more definitive timeline.

Discussion of Attachments

- Mayor Taylor inquired about the current use of the tractor. Director Allen responded that it is used primarily for bush hogging along highways and grading the City's three dirt roads.
- Vice Mayor Catigano raised the issue of ditch maintenance equipment. Director Allen recommended renting rather than purchasing a specialized attachment at this time, citing limited demand and more economical use of resources.

Additional Equipment Needs

Director Allen presented two additional needs not included in the original packet:

1. **Towable Man Lift** – For overhead trimming along roadways and changing out banners on Halifax Avenue.
 - Quote: \$35,590 through Sourcewell (JLG ET 350, MSRP \$44,195).
 - Director Allen noted that used units were priced the same as new, so purchase of a new unit would be more cost-effective.
 - Commissioners expressed agreement that this equipment is necessary given the City's ongoing overhead maintenance needs.
2. **Utility Trailer** – Replacement of the City's existing trailer, which is no longer serviceable due to multiple broken welds, deck issues, and metal fatigue.
 - Proposed model: Down to Earth 7616 TA (16 ft).
 - Quote: \$3,903 (no tax) from Wheel-A-Way, with an option to include tag work at \$4,378.
 - Director Allen confirmed the trailer size matched the current unit and was sufficient for hauling mowers and field equipment.
 - He noted the existing trailer had served a previous life in the County parks system before being transferred to the City, explaining its current poor condition.

Equipment Purchase

Public Works Director Travis Allen continued discussion on equipment needs, presenting additional quotes for replacement of the City's utility trailer:

Action Taken

City Manager Barkley requested Commission approval for the purchase of equipment included in the meeting packet.

- **Motion:** Commissioner Werning moved to approve equipment purchases as presented in the packet, totaling **\$20,677.53**.
- **Second:** Commissioner Drollinger.
- **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Follow-Up

Mayor Taylor and the Commission directed that formal quotes for the towable man lift and the utility trailer be brought back for Commission consideration at the next meeting.

K. City Attorney Report

- No report at this time.
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L. Boards & Committees

Department Safety – Tractor Training

Mike Arman highlighted the need for tractor safety training, emphasizing the risks associated with tractor operation due to limited safety features. Parks and Recreation Director Travis confirmed that equipment vendors provide training when new tractors are purchased and stated the City will ensure all operators complete formal training before using the equipment.

Commissioner Werning confirmed the budget allocation of \$800 for the training seat. Mr. Arman requested to attend the training, and the Commission agreed to include all operators in the training program.

Planning and Development – PLDRC Updates

Mike Arman provided an update on the recent PLDRC meeting:

- The proposed unit count for the development project was reduced from 374 to 263 units to comply with St. John's River Water Management regulations.
- Adjustments included sound buffering from the railroad and installation of a T-fitting under US-1 to accommodate potential future development.
- Discussions with Edgewater regarding drainage issues highlighted long-standing concerns; Edgewater is working on reconditioning drainage canals, though no completion date is available.
- Commissioner Werning noted that cleaning the railroad drainage ditches, particularly on the west side, could improve water flow and help prevent flooding.

Community Health Update

- Advent Health is planning to open a Quick Care facility in the Publix Plaza or a nearby location formerly occupied by Island Doctors.
 - Tentative opening is projected for the first quarter of 2026, pending final approval.
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M. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Werning provided details on upcoming veterans-related events:

- **Veterans Day Ceremony:** Commissioner Werning wishes to lead arrangements, with volunteers welcomed.

- **Patriot Guard Event (Vietnam and Terrorism Traveling Wall):** Scheduled for October 17–19, 2025.
 - Friday, October 17: Staging at Stuckies in Scotsmore at 1:15 p.m.; kickstands up at 2:00 p.m.; procession escorted to Legion Post 285.
 - Saturday, October 18: Veterans Expo at Post 285.
 - Sunday, October 19: Wall departure (direction TBD).
 - City flags will be displayed along the main route, with support from local organizations and fire department.
 - **September 11 Remembrance Ceremony:** Scheduled at Oak Hill Fire Station at 11:00 a.m. to honor those lost on 9/11.
 - Mayor Taylor thanked Georgia for advocacy efforts in Tallahassee.
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N. Adjournment

- **Motion to Adjourn:** Commissioner Werning
 - **Second:** Commissioner Hyatt
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Note: In accordance with Resolution 2006-17, a three-minute time limit per speaker is enforced. If any individual decides to appeal a decision made during this meeting, a verbatim record of the proceedings will be required as per Florida Statute 166.041(3)(A).

Attest:

X

City Manager
John Barkley

X

Ricky Taylor
Mayor