



**City Commission Special Meeting  
MINUTES**

**September 28, 2023, 1:00 p.m.  
City Hall Auditorium  
200 East University Avenue  
Gainesville, FL 32601**

Members Present: Mayor Ward, Commissioner Book,  
Commissioner Chestnut, Mayor Pro  
Tempore Duncan-Walker, Commissioner  
Eastman, Commissioner Saco,  
Commissioner Willits

---

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order at 1:00 p.m.

**B. ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AND REGULAR AGENDA**

**Moved by** Commissioner Chestnut

**Seconded by** Commissioner Eastman

**Motion: The City Commission adopt the regular and consent agenda.**

Aye (6): Mayor Ward, Commissioner Book, Commissioner Chestnut, Mayor Pro  
Tempore Duncan-Walker, Commissioner Eastman, and Commissioner Willits

Absent (1): Commissioner Saco

Approved (6 to 0)

**C. CONSENT AGENDA**

**Moved by** Commissioner Chestnut

**Seconded by** Commissioner Eastman

Approved On Consent

1. **2023-921 First Amendment to Interlocal Agreement between Alachua County and the City of Gainesville for the Acquisition of the Trunked Radio System (B)**

**Moved by** Commissioner Chestnut  
**Seconded by** Commissioner Eastman

**Recommendation:** The City Commission approve and the Mayor sign the “*First Amendment to Interlocal Agreement between Alachua County and The City of Gainesville for the Acquisition of the Trunked Radio System.*”

Approved On Consent

**D. ORDINANCES: SECOND READING - (Roll Call Required)**

1. **2023-754 Deleting Residential Rental Unit Permit Program (B)**

**Moved by** Commissioner Chestnut  
**Seconded by** Commissioner Eastman

**Recommendation:** The City Commission adopt the proposed ordinance.

**Motion: Approve as Recommended.**

Aye (6): Mayor Ward, Commissioner Book, Commissioner Chestnut, Mayor Pro Tempore Duncan-Walker, Commissioner Eastman, and Commissioner Willits

Absent (1): Commissioner Saco

Approved (6 to 0)

**E. BUSINESS DISCUSSION ITEMS**

1. **2023-922 Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area Housing Programs Update and Recommendations (B)**

Cynthia Curry, City Manager, introduced the item.

Leslee Highsmith Rogers, Community Reinvestment Area Project Manager III, gave a presentation on the Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area Housing Programs Update and Recommendations.

Commissioner Saco joined the meeting at 1:05 p.m.

Corey Harris, Housing and Community Development Director, spoke to the item on the partnership between the Housing Department and the Gainesville Reinvestment Area Department.

Zeriah Folsten, Office of Equal Opportunity Director, spoke to the item on how these programs are moved through an equity lens.

**Moved by** Commissioner Saco

**Seconded by** Mayor Pro Tempore Duncan-Walker

**Recommendation:** The City Commission hear the presentation and provide direction on staff's recommendations.

**Motion: 1) Direct staff to obtain a quarterly report of all vendors used in the Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area (GCRA) program; 2) Research how long Heirs Properties have been used by each participant; 3) Allow retroactive payment of back taxes for prior GCRA applicants; 4) Allow My Neighborhood funds to be used for Heirs Property buyouts; and 5) Produce a report in March 2024 with an update on how much funding has been used for GCRA and Heirs Property upgrades.**

Aye (7): Mayor Ward, Commissioner Book, Commissioner Chestnut, Mayor Pro Tempore Duncan-Walker, Commissioner Eastman, Commissioner Saco, and Commissioner Willits

Approved (7 to 0)

**2. 2023-830 Commission Rules of Procedure (B)**

Morgan Spicer, Policy Research Administrator, introduced the item.

Nicole La Roque, Policy Research Fellow, gave a presentation on Commission Rules of Procedure.

Public Comment: Jim Konish

**Moved by** Commissioner Willits

**Seconded by** Commissioner Book

**Recommendation:** The City Commission hear a presentation from staff and discuss.

**Motion: Direct staff to provide a procedural clarification for voting on advisory board appointees.**

Aye (7): Mayor Ward, Commissioner Book, Commissioner Chestnut, Mayor Pro Tempore Duncan-Walker, Commissioner Eastman, Commissioner Saco, and Commissioner Willits

Approved (7 to 0)

**3. 2023-932 Presentation by Parks, Recreation & Cultural Affairs on the City Hall Plaza Ponds (B)**

Betsy Waite, Wild Spaces Public Places Director, gave a presentation on the City Hall ponds on a proposed demolition and update.

John Weber, Park Operations Manager, spoke to the item regarding maintenance concerns of the ponds.

Cynthia Curry, City Manager, spoke to the item giving thanks to staff for bringing the plan forward.

Public Comment: Penny Weber, Jim Konish

**Moved by** Commissioner Book  
**Seconded by** Commissioner Chestnut

**Recommendation:** The City Commission hear a staff presentation on a proposed demolition and rebuild of the City Hall Plaza Ponds and provide direction as necessary.

**Motion 1: Approve as Recommended.**

Aye (7): Mayor Ward, Commissioner Book, Commissioner Chestnut, Mayor Pro Tempore Duncan-Walker, Commissioner Eastman, Commissioner Saco, and Commissioner Willits

Approved (7 to 0)

**Moved by** Mayor Pro Tempore Duncan-Walker  
**Seconded by** Commissioner Chestnut

**Motion 2: Direct staff to bring back information on adding programmable covered space to Wild Spaces, Public Places work plan, to be presented at a future General Policy Committee meeting.**

Aye (7): Mayor Ward, Commissioner Book, Commissioner Chestnut, Mayor Pro Tempore Duncan-Walker, Commissioner Eastman, Commissioner Saco, and Commissioner Willits

Approved (7 to 0)

**4. 2023-839 General Policy Committee Administrative Session (B)**

Morgan Spicer, Policy Oversight Administrator, gave an overview of the City Commission General Policy Committee schedule.

**Recommendation:** The City Commission set its General Policy Committee schedule for FY2024 Q1.

Heard

**Moved by** Commissioner Eastman

**Seconded by** Commissioner Chestnut

**Motion: Cancel the General Policy Committee meeting for October 12, 2023.**

Aye (7): Mayor Ward, Commissioner Book, Commissioner Chestnut, Mayor Pro Tempore Duncan-Walker, Commissioner Eastman, Commissioner Saco, and Commissioner Willits

Approved (7 to 0)

**5. 2023-701 Utility Discussion Item (NB)**

Mayor Ward spoke to the item requesting to discontinue this placeholder item.

Public Comment: Jim Konish

**Recommendation:** The City Commission discuss necessary and relevant utility issues.

Heard

## **F. MEMBER COMMENT**

Commissioner Willits - Spoke to the success of the Forest Park opening ceremony on September 23, 2023, and thanked Commissioners and staff for their efforts.

Mayor Pro Tempore Duncan-Walker -

1) Thanked Cynthia Curry, City Manager, for her staff's efforts in the Duval sidewalk improvement and inquired about expanding the improvement plan.

2) Mentioned enforcement of the noise ordinance regarding the Hyatt Place Gainesville Downtown and another downtown business. Cynthia Curry, City Manager spoke to this item.

3) SELVA art exhibition on Friday, September 29 from 7-10 p.m.

4) Concerns about growing workplace friction at Gainesville Police Department between civilian staff and sworn officers. Cynthia Curry, City Manager, spoke to this item.

Commissioner Chestnut spoke about the Sunshine Meeting on Tuesday, October 3, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. regarding noise ordinance enforcement in downtown Gainesville.

Commissioner Eastman spoke about Laura Jane Grace receiving a key to the City of Gainesville and mentioned possibly adding a Mayor's Award of Distinction or a Lifetime Achievement award as alternative honorifics.

Commissioner Saco asked about a clawback provision included in the sale of Lot 10. Andrew Persons, Chief Operating Officer, spoke to the item indicating there was not a clawback provision.

Mayor Ward -

1) Spoke about noise ordinance enforcement in downtown Gainesville and the growing workplace friction at the Gainesville Police Department between civilian employees and sworn officers.

2) Spoke to the upcoming City Commission schedule and mentioned there will be no meetings until October 19, 2023.

3) Mentioned the Gainesville Innovation Summit and is interested in how the City of Gainesville can support startup business efforts locally.

4) Mentioned he attended the Gainesville Housing Authority Choice Grant Kickoff Meeting, and he looks forward to the impacts it will have in the East Gainesville community.

**G. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 4:27 p.m.

---

Kristen J. Bryant, Interim City Clerk