CITY OF MOUNT DORA, FLORIDA
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
June 17, 2025
City Hall 510 North Baker Street
Mount Dora, Florida 32757

CALL TO ORDER

Having been duly advertised as required by law, at 6:00 p.m., Mayor James Homich called to order the regular session of the Mount Dora City Council in the City Hall council chamber.

MOMENT OF SILENCE & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

A moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance were led by Mayor Homich.

ROLL CALL

Members Present	Also Present
James Homich, Mayor	Vince Sandersfeld, City Manager
John Cataldo, Vice-mayor	Patrick Brackins, City Attorney
Cal Rolfson, District 2	Jeanann Hand, City Clerk
Dennis Dawson, District 3	
Nate Walker, District 5	
Doug Bryant, At-large	

Members Not Present

Marc Crail, District 4

PRESENTATIONS

1. Deputy Fire Chief Pinning

Fire Chief Joseph Hightower introduced the new Deputy Fire Chief. Mayor Homich swore Deputy Chief Dara Hennessey into office.

2. Proclamation Juneteenth

Mayor Homich read the proclamation into the record.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Homich opened public comment. No one spoke. Mayor Homich closed public comment.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

1. Request Approval of Meeting Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER ROLFSON TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AND THE CONSENT AGENDA; VICE-MAYOR CATALDO SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED WITH A UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.

Mayor Homich adjourned the meeting at 6:12 p.m. to begin the CRA Board Meeting.

The City Council Regular Session reconvened at 6:27 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Request Approval of Task Authorization with Bentley Group, Inc. for Fire Station #34 Administration Building and Fire Station Alterations

This project has been budgeted for several cycles, and the City is now ready to proceed. Funding will come from the Fire Services Bond, not the General Fund.

The Task Authorization is for civil, architectural, and structural design for a new Administrative Building and renovations to Fire Station #34. The current station no longer meets modern design standards, and staffing has outgrown the space.

Staff told Council that the new building will include offices, a conference room, a training room that can function as an Emergency Operations Center, and a public entrance. Renovations to the existing station will add updated kitchen and dining areas, a dayroom, individual bunk and bathroom spaces, office improvements, a new station alerting system, and additional storage. No renovations under this authorization apply to the Police Department.

The Fire Department does not plan to add apparatus or staff at Station 34, and there is no current need for a third fire station.

Council spoke about the Fitch report, which studied the City's fire emergency readiness.

This task authorization is in accordance with the City's Consultants' Competitive Negotiation Act (CCNA) agreement approved by Council last October.

Mayor Homich opened public comment. No one spoke. Mayor Homich closed public comment.

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER ROLFSON TO APPROVE THE TASK AUTHORIZATION WITH BENTLEY GROUP, INC. FOR FIRE STATION #34 ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AND FIRE STATION ALTERATIONS; COUNCILMEMBER WALKER SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED WITH A 6-0 ROLL CALL VOTE.

YES Walker

Rolfson

Cataldo

Dawson

Homich

Bryant

NO ***None***

PUBLIC HEARINGS - RESOLUTIONS/ORDINANCES

1. Request Adoption of **Resolution No. 2025-15**, Approving a Preliminary Fire Assessment Rate

Mr. Brackins read Resolution 2025-15 by title only.

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-15

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MOUNT DORA, FLORIDA, PERTAINING TO THE RE-IMPOSITION OF THE FIRE SERVICES SPECIAL ASSESSMENT AND ESTABLISHMENT OF PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-26; PROVIDING FOR AUTHORITY; PROVIDING A PURPOSE AND DEFINITIONS; PROVIDING FOR THE DELIVERY OF FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS; PROVIDING FOR THE IMPOSITION AND COMPUTATION OF FIRE SERVICES SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS; PROVIDING A LEGISLATIVE DETERMINATION OF SPECIAL BENEFIT AND FAIR APPORTIONMENT; PROVIDING FOR COST APPORTIONMENT METHODOLOGY; PROVIDING FOR PARCEL APPORTIONMENT METHODOLOGY; PROVIDING A DETERMINATION OF FIRE SERVICES ASSESSED COSTS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ANNUAL FIRE SERVICES SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-26; PROVIDING FOR AN ASSESSMENT ROLL; PROVIDING FOR AUTHORIZATION OF PUBLIC HEARING; PROVIDING FOR NOTICE BY PUBLICATION; PROVIDING FOR NOTICE BY MAIL; PROVIDING A METHOD OF COLLECTION; PROVIDNG FOR APPLICATION OF ASSESSMENT PROCEEDS; PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENER'S ERRORS; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

This resolution is required by the City's Fire Assessment Ordinance, which authorizes the imposition of a Fire Services Assessment for fire protection services, facilities, and programs. Each year, the City must pass an Initial Assessment Resolution establishing the maximum assessment rate.

The Fire Services Assessment Rate per residential dwelling unit is currently $209. Commercial rates are based on the square footage of the facility. The final rates for the coming year will be established at the City Council special meeting on September 10, 2025. The City is considering raising the assessment fee to $239. Those participating in the Fire Assessment Hardship Reimbursement Program will not experience an increase in their portion of payment.

Mayor Homich opened public comment. No one spoke. Mayor Homich closed public comment.

Council requested a more prominent advertisement for the Fire Assessment Hardship Reimbursement program. Mr. Sandersfeld said that staff is already working on that. This vote is for the highest rate that may pass. It is possible that the actual adopted rate may not be the number that is voted on at this meeting.

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER ROLFSON TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-15, APPROVING A PRELIMINARY FIRE ASSESSMENT RATE; COUNCILMEMBER DAWSON SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED WITH A 5-1 ROLL CALL VOTE.

YES ***Cataldo***

Dawson

Rolfson

Bryant

Walker

NO ***Homich***

2. Request Adoption of **Resolution 2025-28**, Accepting a Donation of Surplus Property from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for a Public Purpose

Mr. Brackins read Resolution 2025-28 by title only.

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-28

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MOUNT DORA, FLORIDA, PERTAINING TO CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS PARCEL 104, PART, WHICH IS NO LONGER NEEDED FOR STATE OF FLORIDA, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PURPOSES; PROVIDING FOR LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT; PROVIDING FOR ACCEPTANCE OF REAL PROPERTY FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES; PROVIDING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS; PROVIDING A SAVINGS CLAUSE; PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENER'S ERRORS; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR DIRECTION TO CITY CLERK; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mr. Sandersfeld and Public Works Director George Marek spoke about the item. FDOT has prepared a quitclaim deed for the donation of a tract that is the remainder of the property that FDOT acquired to widen SR 46. Mount Dora will receive the part of the parcel that was not needed to widen the road. It is a condition of acceptance of an FDOT surplus property donation that the City must be used for a public purpose. No adverse impacts are evident.

Mayor Homich opened public comment. No one spoke. Mayor Homich closed public comment.

Council and staff discussed the property's location and the absence of a cross-access easement.

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER WALKER TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-28, ACCEPTING DONATION OF SURPLUS PROPERTY FROM FDOT FOR A PUBLIC PURPOSE; VICE-MAYOR CATALDO SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED WITH A 6-0 ROLL CALL VOTE.

YES ***Rolfson***

Homich

Cataldo

Bryant

Dawson

Walker

NO ***None***

3. Request Adoption of **Resolution No. 2025-29,** Formalizing the Grant Application to Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Five for the Public Transit Service Development Program Funding

Mr. Brackins read Resolution 2025-29 by title only.

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-29

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MOUNT DORA, FLORIDA, PERTAINING TO THE 2027 FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT FIVE SERVICE DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE FREEBEE PARKING SHUTTLE SERVICE; PROVIDING FOR LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT; PROVIDING FOR COMMITMENT TO SHARE IN FEES AND EXPENSES; PROVIDING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS; PROVIDING A SAVINGS CLAUSE; PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENER'S ERRORS; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Council and staff discussed the map displaying the areas that the shuttle service would serve. The Freebee service route would reach the library. This item is not committing to the Freebee service at this time, but rather is asking for Council's approval to apply for this funding opportunity.

Mayor Homich opened public comment. No one spoke. Mayor Homich closed public comment.

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER ROLFSON TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-29, FORMALIZING THE GRANT APPLICATION TO THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT FIVE FOR THE PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FUNDING; VICE-MAYOR CATALDO SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED WITH A 6-0 ROLL CALL VOTE.

YES ***Rolfson***

Homich

Cataldo

Bryant

Dawson

Walker

NO ***None***

4. Request Adoption of **Resolution No. 2025-30,** Approving the Grant Application for the Window Replacement at 308 East Fifth Avenue

Mr. Brackins read Resolution 2025-30 by title only.

RESOLUTION No. 2025-30

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MOUNT DORA, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION TO THE FLORIDA DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES SPECIAL CATEGORY PROGRAM REQUESTING $90,000 FOR THE

EDUCATION HALL PROJECT AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING AN AMOUNT OF $90,000 AS THE CITY'S MATCHING FUNDS.

Building Official John Abner spoke about the item. The primary goal of the grant is to restore the first-floor windows to their historic style. The proposed windows are not impact resistant, but the location is not a high-velocity wind zone. Staff and Council discussed the window choice, and staff explained that the main goal is efficiency.

Mayor Homich opened public comment. No one spoke. Mayor Homich closed public comment.

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER ROLFSON TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-30, APPROVING THE GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE WINDOW REPLACEMENT AT 308 EAST FIFTH AVENUE; COUNCILMEMBER WALKER SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED WITH A 6-0 ROLL CALL VOTE.

YES ***Homich***

Dawson

Cataldo

Rolfson

Bryant

Walker

NO ***None***

5. Request Adoption of **Resolution No. 2025-25**, Approving Aerial Fireworks Display at the July 26, 2025, Last Call Mount Dora Summer Concert Event

Mr. Brackins read the resolution by title only.

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-25

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF MOUNT DORA, FLORIDA, PERTAINING TO THE 2025 LAST CALL SUMMER CONCERT EVENT; PROVIDING FOR LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT; PROVIDING AUTHORIZATION FOR FIREWORKS DISPLAY AND DOCK CLOSURE; PROVIDING FOR AUTHORITY TO THE CITY MANAGER FOR IMPLEMENTING ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS; PROVIDING A SAVINGS CLAUSE; PROVIDING FOR SCRIVENER'S ERRORS; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mr. Sandersfeld introduced the item. Council discussed whether fireworks were a reasonable expense. Cultural and Special Events Manager Chris Carson reported there was no fireworks display at the Corn Festival. He presented reasons to include a fireworks display as part of an event. He reminded Council of the large amount of school supplies that are collected through this event. The value of the supplies exceeds the cost of the fireworks display. Restaurants and entertainment district businesses also benefit from this well-attended event. Council and staff further discussed their perceived values of this event.

Mayor Homich opened public comment. No one spoke. Mayor Homich closed public comment.

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER WALKER TO ADOPT RESOLUTION 2025-25, APPROVING AN AERIAL FIREWORKS DISPLAY AT THE JULY 26, 2025, LAST CALL MOUNT DORA SUMMER

CONCERT EVENT; COUNCILMEMBER WALKER SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED WITH A 5-1 ROLL CALL VOTE.

YES ***Rolfson***

Walker

Homich

Dawson

Cataldo

NO ***Bryant***

PRIORITY PROJECT UPDATES

1. Odor Issues
2. Parking Downtown Improvements

Staff had no updates on the above projects.

Mr. Brackins spoke about the Florida Department of Environmental Protection releasing the City from the Consent Order and meeting with counsel specializing in environmental issues. The City and the County will be filing a petition concerning the application for an expansion permit filed by the landfill.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Lobbyist Update
2. Northeast CRA and CRA Financial Statements and Final Communications Letters

Mr. Sandersfeld directed attention to the agenda documents related to the two items above.

At Mr. Sandersfeld's request, Economic Development Director Misty Sommer spoke about the new tourism campaign partnership with Orlando City Soccer. Ms. Sommer planned to present an agreement at the next Council meeting.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mr. Brackins had no report.

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

Councilmember Walker spoke about the upcoming Juneteenth event at Cauley Lott Park and the Recreation Center groundbreaking.

He requested an update on Pine Avenue drainage. Mr. Marek spoke about the steps the City is taking to address this challenge. Councilmember Walker urged the City to take action.

Councilmember Walker requested an update from the City Attorney on policies and protocols related to Council governance, City management, and the Charter.

Mr. Brackins will present the information to Council at an upcoming meeting.

Councilmember Rolfson spoke about the Lake Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meeting taking place on June 18, during which the MPO will select its Transportation Improvement Projects for the year.

Councilmember Dawson mentioned that the Florida League of Cities (FLC) is looking for committee members. The Clerk would assist any members who wish to participate.

Vice-mayor Cataldo asked Mr. Marek about the activation of a traffic light and his sidewalk plan. Mr. Marek will review priorities with the City Manager.

Mayor Homich spoke about the groundbreaking and the Northeast CRA County meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:08 p.m.

JAMES HOMICH, MAYOR
City of Mount Dora

JEANANN HAND, CITY CLERK