

CITY OF MOUNT DORA, FLORIDA CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION MINUTES

Mount Dora City Hall
510 North Baker Street, Mount Dora, FL 32757
October 7, 2025, 6:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Having been duly advertised as required by law, at 6:00 p.m., Mayor Homich called to order the October 7, 2025, City Council 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

James Homich, Mayor
John Cataldo, District 1, Vice-mayor
Cal Rolfson, District 2
Dennis Dawson, District 3
Marc Crail, District 4
Doug Bryant, At-large

Also Present

Vince Sandersfeld, City Manager
Patrick Brackins, City Attorney
Jeanann Hand, City Clerk

Members Not Present

Nate Walker, District 5

PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation Florida Municipal Power Agency (FMPA) Award

Representatives from the Florida Municipal Power Agency presented an award recognizing Mount Dora's achievements in providing low-cost, reliable electric service. The presentation highlighted the role of municipal utilities during National Public Power Week, historical data on Florida's population growth linked to affordable electricity, and Mount Dora's exceptional reliability performance during recent hurricane seasons.

The City received awards for reductions in outage duration and for maintaining outage times below the 60-minute standard.

2. Proclamation 2025 Fire Prevention Week

A proclamation was presented declaring October 5–11, 2025, as Fire Prevention Week. The proclamation emphasized safe handling and disposal of lithium-ion batteries.

Fire Chief Joseph Hightower outlined current fire-safety outreach activities and noted the increasing risks posed by lithium-ion battery fires.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

1. Request Ratification of Fire Department Grant
2. Request Approval of Meeting Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER ROLFSON TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AND THE CONSENT AGENDA; COUNCILMEMBER DAWSON SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED WITH A UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.

PUBLIC HEARINGS - RESOLUTIONS/ORDINANCES

1. Request Approval of Final Reading and Adoption of **Ordinance No. 2025-20**, Amending the Land Development Code in Multiple Chapters

Mr. Brackins read Ordinance No. 2025-20 by title only.

ORDINANCE NO: 2025 - 20

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MOUNT DORA, FLORIDA, PERTAINING TO REVISIONS TO THE CITY OF MOUNT DORA LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE; PROVIDING FOR LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT; PROVIDING FOR AMENDMENTS TO CITY OF MOUNT DORA LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE; SPECIFICALLY, THIS ORDINANCE AMENDS CHAPTER III ENTITLED 'ZONING REGULATIONS,' CHAPTER VI ENTITLED 'DESIGN STANDARDS,' AND CHAPTER VIII ENTITLED 'DEFINITIONS;' PROVIDING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION AND SCRIVENER'S ERRORS; PROVIDING A SAVINGS CLAUSE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Staff informed Council that no changes had been made since the first reading.

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

MOTION BY COUNCILMEMBER BRYANT TO APPROVE THE FINAL READING AND ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE 2025-20, AMENDING THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE IN MULTIPLE CHAPTERS; VICE-MAYOR CATALDO SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION PASSED WITH A 6-0 ROLL CALL VOTE.

YES *Dawson*
 Rolfson
 Cataldo
 Homich
 Bryant
 Crail
NO *None*

PRIORITY PROJECT UPDATES

1. Parking Downtown Improvements

Community Development Director Adam Sumner provided a detailed update on the downtown parking initiatives previously discussed at the City Council Workshops held on January 13 and September 8, 2025. He explained that the Main Street Leasing (MSL) gravel lot is permitted for MSL employee parking, with a related Land Development Code amendment still pending. He noted that staff continues to evaluate options for paid parking in the downtown core, including the use of a parking app, and that improvements are underway through the shared-use agreement for the MSL/Former Bank parking lot, which now includes designated golf cart and motorcycle spaces.

Mr. Sumner reported on the proposed one-way street conversions, describing plans to convert Baker Street and Alexander Street to one-way traffic patterns with diagonal parking to increase capacity and improve circulation. He also discussed the proposal for a dedicated shuttle service between the Methodist Church public parking lot and the downtown core to support higher-demand periods, as well as the possibility of expanding Freebee service beyond the CRA boundary. Additional updates included the ongoing review of pedestrian lighting along 5th Avenue between the Methodist Church lot and downtown, as well as continued assessment of downtown parking wayfinding signage. He stated that staff is also reassessing the 4-hour parking time limits and related enforcement needs. A summary table from the September 8 open forum parking workshop was provided as an attachment.

The cost of each improvement will depend on the specific project, and funding will be identified as items move forward. CRA funds have been set aside to assist with parking upgrades.

During the discussion, the Mayor asked whether a "do nothing" option was feasible. Staff explained it was not, and that continued progress is necessary. A consultant had met individually with Council Members before the meeting. Council and staff briefly reviewed the safety benefits of one-way street conversions, anticipated public reaction, CPH Engineering's recommendations, the possible removal of some parallel parking spaces for better crosswalk visibility, enforcement challenges, striping needs on 3rd Avenue, increased construction costs due to a gas line, and the need for more explicit parking guidance for developers. Staff noted that implementation would not occur before July–August 2026.

Council agreed to place the downtown parking and one-way street proposal on the next agenda for a formal vote.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Cultural and Special Events Manager Chris Carson provided an update on upcoming seasonal events, including the Fall Festival and the Scarecrow Parade. He invited Council Members to participate as judges for the scarecrow competition and noted the community engagement these events consistently generate.

The City Manager then discussed ongoing communication with Lake County staff regarding the Joint Planning Agreement (JPA) and requested Council's direction on how to proceed. Mr. Brackins will coordinate with Lake County Executive Director of Development Services Kathleen Dial on the City's behalf, compile Council's talking points for the County, and include those points on the October 21 City Council agenda. Council expressed consensus for Mr. Brackins to present the City's discussion points to Ms. Dial in preparation for a future joint workshop.

Council reviewed the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)'s Five-Year Work Plan, including concerns about resurfacing versus widening segments of U.S. 441. The City Manager directed Community Development Director Adam Sumner and Water Utility Director Andrew Marsian to attend the October 21 FDOT meeting to reinforce the City's transportation priorities. Council and staff discussed the importance of prioritizing the extension of Round Lake Road at SR 44 and the concern over FDOT's decision to resurface certain corridors rather than widen them. Councilmember Rolfson will attend the October 22 Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Executive Committee meeting to advocate for advancing priority projects, including SR 44B.

Council was informed that George Marek will serve as Acting City Manager from October 25–29, 2025, while the City Manager attends a professional conference.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

City Attorney Brackins provided updates on several ongoing matters. He reported that joint petitions with Lake County and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) regarding landfill permitting are continuing. The FDEP will issue a new permit that reflects the five-year limit for minor modifications. The permit extension for landfill operations, previously filed as Case 25-1305, has been referred to the Florida Division of Administrative Hearings (FDOAH) and is now identified as Case 25-5311. Additional information will be presented as the case progresses.

Mr. Brackins spoke with Council about the statutory requirements for conducting a shade meeting. He noted that he will report at the next Council meeting on whether a shade meeting is legally appropriate. If such a meeting is warranted, an announcement would be made at the next meeting, and the shade meeting would follow.

Regarding the McDaniels case, Mr. Brackins stated that a comprehensive memorandum will be issued to the Council and City Manager next week. He advised that legislative action is likely in the upcoming session to address gaps in current law, noting that the situation continues to evolve.

Finally, he reported that discussions concerning the Witherspoon Lodge had been progressing; however, Mr. Moore has been out of contact for approximately two weeks. Further updates will be provided when more information becomes available.

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

Councilmember Dawson and Vice-mayor Cataldo commended the Electric Utility Department for its efficiency.

Councilmember Crail reported on communication with Commissioner Campione on Britt Road construction.

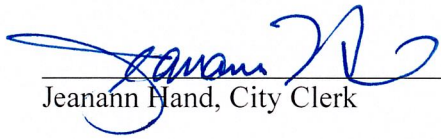
Councilmember Bryant spoke about the Florida League of Cities (FLC) committees on which he and other Councilmembers serve and their efforts to influence legislation.

Mayor Homich spoke about the Donnelly sidewalk project, the social media policy, and a City Council workshop on festivals.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:43 p.m.



JAMES HOMICH, MAYOR
City of Mount Dora

Jeanann Hand, City Clerk