



**CITY OF MOUNT DORA, FLORIDA  
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP:  
SPECIAL EVENTS MINUTES**

Mount Dora City Hall  
510 North Baker Street, Mount Dora, FL 32757  
February 9, 2026, 6:00 p.m.

---

**CALL TO ORDER**

Having been duly advertised as required by law, at 6:00 p.m., Mayor James Homich called to order the Special Events Workshop in the Mount Dora City Hall Council Chamber.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

A moment of silence and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag 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  
Nate Walker, District 5  
Doug Bryant, At-large

Also Present

Vince Sandersfeld, City Manager  
Jeanann Hand, City Clerk  
Chris Carson, Cultural and Special  
Events Manager

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mayor Homich opened public comment.

Brian Young, Director of Visit Mount Dora, 1044 North Rossiter Street, representing Visit Mount Dora, emphasized the importance of events for the City's reputation and economic impact. He mentioned the increasing costs of hosting events and the need for better parking solutions, such as shuttling from the high school.

Janet Gamache, Executive Director of Mount Dora Center for the Arts, 1044 North Rossiter Street, spoke about City support for outside events because of the expense to the organizers.

Rachel O' Ryan, Mount Dora Area Chamber of Commerce President, 341 Alexander Street, spoke about City donations toward events.

Amy Becker, 404 North Donnelly Street, spoke about City support for outside festivals.

Lisa Tapp, an employee of the Spice and Tea Exchange at 431 North Donnelly Street, noted the historical role of the City in sponsoring events.

Matt Cady, representing Adult Medicine of Lake County, 3785 Lake Center Drive, commented on the success and positive impact of the popularity of City events.

Josh Hemingway, 1177 East Fifth Avenue, spoke about past events with which he was involved.

Mayor Homich closed public comment.

Council discussed with staff the amount of time spent compiling information for this meeting. It was pointed out that most cost points were budget issues to be handled during the budget process.

Council suggested receiving material regarding trends. Council noted the economic impact of the City's events for Lake County.

Mr. Carson described the ways that the City's 35 events meet the needs of the community.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### 1. Special Events/Festivals Workshop

The purpose of the workshop was to review Chapter 36 of the City Code (2019 Special Events Ordinance) and discuss festival costs, economic impacts, parking challenges, and potential improvements to the City's special events program.

Staff provided an overview of the City's special events program and the role festivals and community events play in Mount Dora's identity and quality of life.

Staff reported that the special events operating budget is approximately \$489,000, supporting approximately 19 events annually. Staff also noted that City-hosted events generate an estimated \$10.3 million in economic impact.

Council discussed operational costs associated with major events and revenues generated through sponsorships, vendor fees, and ticket sales.

Staff explained that the financial information provided to Council reflected operating and departmental staffing costs but did not include a net cost analysis for each festival.

Council requested additional financial information to better evaluate the cost-effectiveness of major events.

It was noted that festivals generate approximately \$11 million annually in economic impact and provide significant benefits to local businesses. Also discussed were challenges faced by businesses, including rising rents and disruptions associated with festivals.

It was recognized that festivals remain essential to Mount Dora's identity and tourism economy.

Council and stakeholders discussed parking challenges associated with large festivals. Suggestions included developing shuttle services from Mount Dora High School, utilizing the Resource & Recreation Center and church properties, and coordinating with private property owners to provide additional parking options. Staff agreed to evaluate potential parking and shuttle solutions for future events.

Council discussed potential options for supporting long-standing community events, including possible City sponsorship, fee relief, or other funding partnerships. Council noted the importance of maintaining legacy events that attract tourism and support local businesses.

Council discussed the City's financial commitment to special events. Council also discussed the potential for additional support from Lake County for festivals that generate regional tourism.

Council directed staff to provide additional financial and operational information regarding major festivals, including historical cost comparisons, detailed revenue and net cost breakdowns, attendance and economic impact data, parking and shuttle options, potential fee relief or sponsorship proposals for legacy events, and staff time and departmental costs associated with event planning and presentations.

Council members thanked staff, business owners, and community stakeholders for their participation and input.

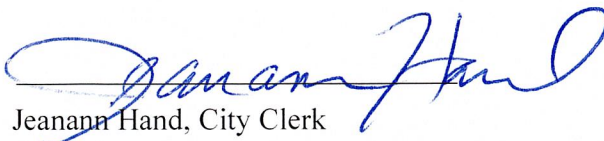
### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business for discussion, the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:59 p.m.



---

JAMES HOMICH, MAYOR  
CITY OF MOUNT DORA



---

Jeanann Hand, City Clerk