



Minutes

Town Commission Workshop Meeting

Tuesday • July 15, 2014 • 6:30 pm

1. Call to Order: 6:30 pm
2. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance to Flag
3. Roll Call:
Commissioners Attending:
 - Joseph Aufmuth Present
 - Michael Berkowitz Present
 - Virginia Mance, Mayor Pro-Tem Present
 - Richard Shutterly, Mayor Present
 - Mike Roberts Present

 - Debbie Gonano, Town Administrator Present
 - Stephen Lee, Town Attorney Absent with notice
 - Patty Polk, Deputy Town Clerk Present
4. Consent Agenda Approval:
A. Agenda Approval
Motion made and seconded (Berkowitz/Mance) to accept the consent agenda as submitted; passed 5-0
5. Resolution 2014-05: Public Use of Town Hall and other Municipally-Owned Property
Discussion ensued. Mayor Shutterly began the discussion by asking for commissioner comments:

Commissioner Aufmuth has mixed emotions and would like to listen to discussion before commenting.

Commissioner Berkowitz doesn't believe that all uses should be lumped together and doesn't think the building should be used as a rental hall.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mance had directed our Town Administrator to communicate with other municipalities in Alachua County to see if they have written policies for the use of their public buildings. We have responses from three municipalities: Gainesville, Hawthorne, and Newberry. Gainesville only allows government entities to use their meeting rooms with the exception of 501(c)3 organizations that are non-politically oriented and who possess a license and insurance. Hawthorne's government buildings are not available for rental by any persons other than staff, but they do have an athletic park which can be rented. Newberry has a hall which is not attached to their government buildings which is available for rent. In our search, we did not find other municipalities that allow buildings to be used by the public, and Commissioner Mance has been trying to see how we could work this out here.

Commissioner Roberts would like to listen to the discussion before forming an opinion. He expressed concern that the town hall building was remodeled in the 1970's; however, the drain field was not replaced and it may not be able to handle higher usage. Also, recent repairs to the elevator were very costly and this should be considered before allowing more use.

Mayor Shutterly shares concerns with many of the reasons mentioned so far, and he is concerned with the capacity of the facility. We have some organizations already using the building, and we share one septic tank and drain field with

the Library and the Fire Department. He is not a supporter of opening the town hall building up to a variety of events prior to some major renovations being made to the facility. Possibly other places in town could provide space for meetings such as churches or the Masonic Lodge.

Public input and discussion:

Beth Allerton, Micanopy Librarian, the use of the senior center upstairs could possibly fit 70 people (Fire Chief stated 60 as the capacity), Ryan Hall, the Masonic Lodge, and the Micanopy Fellowship Church have space for meetings. There is very little space available for people to meet, and she felt that some groups would benefit by being allowed to meet at Town Hall. It was her understanding that the Thrasher Warehouse building was repaired for Town use and it doesn't seem to be used for the public. Accessibility is a consideration for people using the ramp at town hall and the building has been left open on occasion; and she felt that an opening/closing procedure should be maintained.

Mayor Shutterly stated that the Thrasher Warehouse, which is owned by the Town, was supposed to be made available for local venues and meetings. The Mayor explained that the Thrasher Warehouse has not been made as available as the commission was led to believe. Mayor Pro-Tem Mance commented that the Thrasher Warehouse Board has a lease with the Town that states it is their responsibility to maintain/repair the property. The Thrasher Warehouse Board voted not to use the facility as a hospitality venue and decided that they do not want to have groups using 'Warehouse II.'

Julie Penrod-Glenn, N Division St, stated that she had sent out a memo with her recommendations for possible use of town properties by non-profit organizations and others. She felt that the resolution for public use of municipal properties which was proposed by the town attorney was very restrictive and unwelcoming to the public.

Davetta Sawyer, Program Director Micanopy Tutoring, wanted to ensure that the tutoring program will be allowed continued use of the upstairs room at town hall. The Tutor Program had been allowed use of the building for eleven years. Following a public meeting allowed in the building on Saturday (July 12th), Mrs. Sawyer reported that there was food missing (salsa and chips) from the Micanopy Tutoring Summer Program, and that the unemptied garbage can had food remnants and the room smelled bad.

Julie Penrod-Glenn admitted that she had used the activity room on Saturday, July 12, for a meeting previously approved and they served salsa and chips. She indicated that she did not empty the trash.

Sally Stein, Micanopy Tutoring, has been with the tutor group since the program started 11 years previously. They have helped a lot of children in the past 11 years and currently have 47 children in the tutoring program. This program is extremely grateful for the use of the building and without use of the room, they could not provide help for these children. Additionally, she indicated that the tutors use a checklist with the proper procedure for closing the building in the evening.

Kylie Denning, Tuscowilla Rd, agrees with the need for a procedure for opening and closing of building, the plumbing problems would need to be addressed anyway, and that there is a need for public use of the building.

Joanne Denning, Tuscowilla Rd, because of Micanopy's obvious uniqueness, it is hard to compare with other towns. It is extremely important for a facility to be available for meetings and possibly a list of go-to-places would be great to have available. She questioned which groups are currently meeting upstairs.

Answering Mrs. Denning, the tutor program has been in place for 11 years; the Friends of the Library meet upstairs with the Library employees locking up the building upon completion; the Micanopy Fall Festival group meets monthly in the activity room; the senior meal program meets in the activity room daily (*and has for an estimated 37 years*); and the Tree Committee meets upstairs monthly by entering through the library, as the building is otherwise closed.

Troy Blakely, Seminary Ave, is speaking to the public use of the building as he felt it would benefit the whole town. He indicated that he attended the public forum last Saturday.

Karl Tarbox, Division St, would urge that whatever procedure is adopted is consistent as this is very important.

Julie Penrod-Glenn, Division St, commented on the use of the upstairs rooms and the ballpark, and that there is a precedent and long history of these facilities being used. Mrs. Glenn warned, "If you all don't permit that, there will be some blow-back from it, from that decision, from people in the town, as I have talked to at least 30 people who want to meet there when they need to." Additionally, she stated that they would like data from 2013 showing building and

ballpark usage. She believes that it is less than once a month and will not be excessive use of the facilities.

Town Administrator Gonano suggested that the commission remember that we have a limited staff. She stated that neither she nor the staff has a desire to stay after work hours for the purpose of opening and closing the building. Possible alternatives may be to hire someone outside of the staff to monitor municipal building usage.

Commissioner Berkowitz commented that any usage should be limited to functions directly related to the town and what contributes to the community.

Commissioner Aufmuth read the documents provided. Commissioner Aufmuth commented that if someone is planning a wedding or birthday party, town hall is not the place do that; the Herlong Mansion has the facilities for this. A community center would be great for meetings and social gatherings, and it would be great to work towards obtaining such a place. Things that are civically important to the people of the town and what happens in the community are the type of events that should be held in this building. Events should be considered on a one-by-one basis by the Town Administrator and then appealed to the town commission for our consideration if a decision is questioned. The citizens need to be informed of what goes on in their community. Compiling a list of contacts for other possible meeting venues is a good idea.

Commissioner Roberts is concerned with the cost of the building repairs (the elevator cost \$70,000 to repair recently) and the extra usage would put more wear and tear on the building and the drain field. He is not in favor of outside groups using this building

Mayor Shutterly would like to reconsider the contract with the Thrasher Warehouse Board as it would be a good venue for the citizens of the town. He will contact other possible meeting venues to see who is willing to provide possible meeting space. Our town hall facility should not be used as an entertainment venue. The ballpark, with the exception of the concession stand, can be used anytime during daylight hours. The Mayor was in favor of enacting a use-fee schedule, as we have had to replace items in the past which can get expensive. He would like to study this some more and not promote anymore use until we look at the alternatives.

Motion made and seconded (Aufmuth/Mance) to route request for civic use of Town properties to the commission for review until we have a policy in place; passed 5-0

Mayor Pro-Tem Mance is happy that everyone had a chance to air their ideas. Additionally, Commissioner Mance stated that required documentation is stored in the building and needs to be protected, and she reiterated the need to ensure that the building is cleared upon termination of meetings. Commissioner Mance related that if the building is requested during office hours, the request would be easier to fulfill. We have parks that can be used if an outside venue is required. Our staff should not be required to report for meetings during their time off and hiring a part-time employee would be a consideration.

Layton Glenn had a question regarding meetings that have been held since January 1, 2014, which has been one known meeting.

Reminder: 2014-2015 FY Budget workshop August 12 – 6:30 pm

6. Adjourn: 7:45 PM

MINUTES APPROVED:

As submitted _____ as amended _____ at Town Commission Meeting _____

Richard Shutterly, Mayor

Patty S. Polk, Recorder