

Town of Brooker
Regular Monthly Council Meeting
July 11th, 2023

Present: Steve Acree, Gene Melvin, Joe Tolleson, Chris Caldwell, John Maines (attended virtually), Suzanne McRee, Charlene Thomas

Community: Eryn Russell (League of Cities), Diane Andrews (County Commissioner), Lynn Melvin (BCSD Board Member) Carol Mosely (Bradford Telegraph), Jack and Trudy Kennedy (EMT Affordable Lawn Care), Terry Thomas

Absent: Linda Bennett

Meeting called to order by Gene Melvin, Mayor. Meeting start time: 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

A motion was made by Steve Acree to approve the June 13th Public Hearing minutes as presented. Seconded by Chris Caldwell, Motion passed.

A motion was made by Joe Tolleson to approve the June 13th meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Steve Acree, Motion passed.

First Order of Business – Opening of Sealed Bids for Grounds Maintenance Contract – John Maines

1. Two (2) bids were received in response to the Invitation to Bid for the Grounds Maintenance Contract, both determined to be responsive.

a. Bid #1 from EMT Affordable Lawn Care for the total amount of \$12,200.00, separated into two (2) bids, representing separate mowing periods as follows:

Bid #1	\$1,100.00 per month	Bid #2	\$900.00 per month
	<u>X7 months</u>		<u>X 5 months</u>
	\$7,700.00		\$4,500.00

TOTAL FOR THE YEAR \$12,200.00

b. Bid #2 from A. J. Lawn Service for the total amount of \$14,600.00, separated into two (2) bids, representing separate mowing periods as follows:

Bid #1	\$1,300.00 per month	Bid #2	\$1,100.00 per month
	<u>X7 months</u>		<u>X 5 months</u>
	\$9,100.00		\$5,500.00

TOTAL FOR THE YEAR \$14,600.00

A motion was made by Steve Acree to accept the bid submitted by EMT Affordable Lawn Care in the amount of \$12,200.00. Seconded by Joe Tolleson, Motion passed. The bid is for two (2) years. The Clerk will notify the bidders formally of the decision.

Presentation of 2023 Mayor John Land Years of Service Awards – League of Cities

Ms. Eryn Russell with the Florida League of Cities presented Mayor Gene Melvin with this award for his forty-five (45) years of service. Mayor Melvin highlighted the Town's successes;

specifically citing balanced budgets, strong audits, and the recent re-paving of 21 city streets. He attributed his successful tenure to a strong support team and mentors through the years (Jim Temple).

Attorney – John Maines:

Nothing new to report.

Fire Department – Joe Tolleson:

Nothing new to report.

Town Clerk Report – Suzanne McRee:

1. The past due report was passed out. Still out \$477.27 in overdue accounts with three (3) accounts locked for non-payment. One (1) remains locked.
2. The Clerk reminded council members of the 2023 requirement to complete four (4) hours of Ethics Training, deadline of December 2023. Handouts were provided with instructions.
3. The double gate at the water works building was installed and barbed wire fixed along with a couple of “arms” that were damaged. The invoice provided was for an additional \$50.00 as they replaced the existing 10’ gate with a 12’ gate which required them to move the pole, incurring additional labor cost. Invoiced for \$1,245.00 rather than the estimated amount of \$1,195.00. Need a motion and second to approve payment of the new amount, utilizing ARPA funds. Steve Acree made a motion to approve the payment of \$1,245.00, utilizing ARPA funds. Seconded by Chris Caldwell. Motion passed.
4. Bernard received notification from Utility Services that they will be painting and cleaning out the water tower soon which will require it to be out of service for three (3) weeks. Bernard will let us know when this is scheduled, and this will require a Boil Water Notice to be in effect and notification to the Town’s residents.
5. A new pump to facilitate the chlorine amounts is needed. The cost to the town is estimated to be \$724.00. Joe Tolleson made a motion to approve the purchase of the pump for \$724.00. Seconded by Steve Acree, Motion passed.
6. It was discovered that the construction crew at Bragg Branch has tapped into the existing water stubs (without meters) and are using water without having established accounts or installation of meters. The Clerk has attempted contact with the owner of the property (e-mail and voicemail) however has had no response. Locks have been put on all three (3) sites by Terry Thomas.
7. The Clerk contacted Robbie Worrell Construction at 352-538-3599 regarding the broken sidewalk at the Combee residence. The driver said the sidewalk was already damaged except for a small piece that broke off. The owner was going to speak to the driver and follow up with the Town.
8. Lead & Copper testing (triennial) has been completed and the samples turned into the lab, we are waiting on the results then will forward to DEP.
9. CCR’s were mailed out with the July bills.
10. The Clerk spoke to Jason Dodds regarding the installation of the newly purchased Radar Speed signs. He will try to have someone out during the week of 7/18/23.
11. Vince Robinson provided an update on the door replacement for the Well Building, planning to finish that today. Old Park City Building repairs are underway and plans for

painting the interior of the Community Center are tentatively planned for September 2023.

12. The Town received a "thank you" card from Jim Bryant's family following the Town's bereavement donation.

Bookkeeper – Charlene Thomas:

1. Went over Revenue and Expenditures for the month of June 2023.
2. Mrs. Thomas is currently working on the budget. Copies of 2022/23 budget for the council to look over and make changes before the August 8, 2023, meeting. The Council needs to decide whether to Roll-Back taxes this year. A motion was made by Joe Tolleson to Roll-Back taxes for this year. Seconded by Chris Caldwell, Motion passed. The first Public Hearing on Taxes and Budget will be September 12th at 7:00 p.m.
3. Mrs. Thomas suggested the Council consider a \$25.00 per month increase for the meter reader position, raising the salary from \$225.00 to \$250.00 per month, in the new budget. Chris Caldwell made a motion to raise the monthly salary for the meter reader from \$225.00 to \$250.00 per month for the meter reader, effective October 1, 2023. Seconded by Steve Acree, Motion passed.
4. Mrs. Thomas also suggested the Council consider a yearly 3% raise for the Town's employees (Town Clerk and Bookkeeper) for the upcoming budget. This will assist with retention of staff as well as cost of living for staff. Chris Caldwell made a motion to provide for a yearly 3% raise for the Town's employees, effective October 1, 2023. Seconded by Steve Acree, Motion passed.
5. A box of new ceiling tiles for the community center has been purchased. Vince Robinson has agreed to replace tiles that have water damage when they paint the inside of the building. The cost of the tiles was \$43.98.
6. The front double doors of the community center need to be replaced. Vince Robinson will give a price for replacement and installation of a new set of doors.
7. On June 29th, Brooker homeowner Joe Favre showed up at Mrs. Thomas' residence to advise that he had found his back door broken into and a water hose from David Prescott's residence to his. (His residence is beside David Prescott's). He was advised to call the Bradford County Sheriff's Office, which he did. Mr. Favre's meter is off and has been locked since 2017 with a meter reading of 1913070. His meter was read on June 30th and the current meter reading is 1995390, indicating over 82,320 gallons of water usage. It was also observed that the valve ears had been cut off the meter, allowing someone to "steal" water. Attorney Maines was contacted and advised Mrs. Thomas to follow up with Bradford County Sheriff's Office, which she did and case # has been assigned. The meter has since been removed and a street stop valve will be installed before the meter is re-installed so that it can be locked in the future, if needed.

Water Department – Gene Melvin:

Mayor Melvin reiterated the need to ensure all notification to the town's residents and DEP are made with relation to the water tower clean-out.

Sanitation – Chris Caldwell:

Nothing new to report.

Road/Streets – Joe Tolleson:

Mayor Melvin reported the paving project is proceeding as scheduled. There have been a few issues that have come up, however the inspection services company, SAI Consulting Engineers, has addressed them quickly and efficiently.

Recreation/Parks – Linda Bennett (absent):

Nothing new to report.

Ground Maintenance/Mowing – Steve Acree:

Mowing is taking place as scheduled; however, note that the grass is growing quickly with all the rain. Steve Acree confirmed that the current contract ends July 31, 2023, and the new contractor will begin August 2023.

Community Center Building – Mayor Melvin:

Community Center is being rented regularly.

Town Council:

Mayor Melvin acknowledged this meeting as Clerk Suzanne McRee's last meeting, with a need to fill the vacant position. Mayor Melvin suggested the creation of a committee to keep the council informed of potential applicants and follow-up, recommending Steve Acree, Linda Bennett, and Charlene Thomas as committee members. The Council indicated agreement.

Old Business:

I. ARPA Expenditures

The Clerk provided the Council with an updated expenditure document, advising a remaining funds balance of \$12,165.14. This balance does include several amounts that have been appropriated; however not yet expended.

New Business:

I. Annual Review of Water Rates

The current/2022 Resolution provided for the Council's review. The current water rate is \$24.00 per month for 0-3000 gallons of usage, \$1.75 for each 1000 gallons of usage over that. Historically the water rate has increased by \$1.00 yearly. This will be on the agenda for decision at the August 2023 meeting.

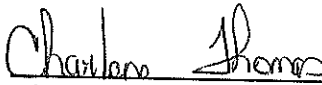
Checks approved: General Fund: 8106-8129

Water Fund: 5898 - 5912

A motion was made by Steve Acree to approve the bills. Seconded by Chris Caldwell, Motion passed.

Gene Melvin made a motion to adjourn. Time: 8:09 p.m.


Cecil E. (Gene) Melvin, Mayor


Charlene Thomas, Acting Town Clerk