



Alachua County Special Meeting

Minutes

May 15, 2025, 6:00 PM

Present: Vice Chair Mary Alford, Commissioner Charles S. Chestnut, IV,
Commissioner Marihelen Wheeler

Absent: Commissioner Ken Cornell, Chair Anna Prizzia

A. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

B. Welcome

C. Introduction

1. Dianne Dubberly, Mayor, Town of LaCrosse
2. Charles Chestnut, Chair, Alachua County Commission

D. Adoption of the Agenda

Commissioner Wheeler moved adoption of the agenda as printed. The motion carried 3-0 with Commissioner Cornell and Commissioner Prizzia absent.

2nd Commissioner Alford

E. Items For Discussion

1. Rocky Creek Bridge - ILA Discussion

Mayor Dubberly presented the above item.

Mayor Dubberly advised that the Rocky Creek Bridge was transferred from the County to the City in 1992. She expressed concerns that the bridge is in need of repair and that the City has neither staff nor the funding to perform the maintenance. She stated that City does receive the bridge reports, but it is considered functionally obsolete but structurally sound. The County has provided some assistance with maintenance over the years. The City is looking to either sign an interlocal agreement for

the County to assume the maintenance or transfer the bridge back to County.

City Commissioner Cheshire, County Commissioner Alford, and Public Works Director Ramon Gavarrete presented comments.

Mr. Gavarrete stated that he would have to discuss with Management what if any County resources would be able to be used to perform maintenance on the bridge. He stated that the County has not been successful getting any State funding for bridge maintenance.

Commissioner Alford moved to refer to staff the Rocky Creek Bridge maintenance situation for further investigation. Staff to report back to the Board within 60 days. The motion carried 3-0 with Commissioner Cornell and Commissioner Prizzia absent.

2nd Commissioner Wheeler

2. Condition of County Roads - 25-00415

Mayor Dubberly and Public Works Director Ramon Gavarrete presented the above item.

Mr. Gavarrete stated that the County has offered some road millings to all the municipalities if they have somewhere to store them. The County Road project budget is \$250,000,000. Although, that sounds like a large sum of money the needs in the County far exceed the available funding. The County inspected every road and used a computer software program to maximize the benefit to the road system with the available dollars. The County has applied for a grant to receive funding to address the CR 235A by the distribution centers and is awaiting a decision on the funding.

City Commissioner Kelly, Commissioner Alford, Commissioner Wheeler, a citizen, a citizen, City Commissioner Cheshire, Chair Chestnut, a citizen, Scott, City Commissioner Thomas, and a citizen presented comments.

3. Fire Contract Discussion

City Commissioner Thomas and Fire Chief Theus presented the above item.

City Commissioner Thomas stated that the city is experiencing difficulty with staff turnover. The city is finding it more difficult to fund the station as well and repairs of equipment are quite expensive. The current Fire Chief is in need of bunker gear. She inquired if the County has any excess bunker gear and further inquired if the County has the capacity at their

fleet management facility to perform repairs for the City on the fire equipment.

Mayor Dubberly stated that the city is committed to keeping the station in LaCrosse but would be open to the County taking over the facility and operating it similar to Micanopy.

Fire Chief Theus stated that the County does have a fire services agreement with LaCrosse which will be a little over \$386,000 for the calls outside of the city limits for Fiscal Year 2026. The County did perform repairs to the city water tanker on an in-kind services basis. The County is also experiencing turnover but is taking actions to try and address this issue, but it is a statewide issue. The County is issuing a purchase order for bunker gear at an upcoming meeting as the department is in need of equipment as well. Some of the equipment currently being used is in need of replacement so the County does not currently have excess gear available. If the City wishes to pursue a county takeover of the department similar to Micanopy there would need to be a study conducted to see if the County has a need to take over the department based on call loads and the financing available. The Micanopy station made sense because of the location next to Interstate 75 and the demand for service for the interstate.

Commissioner Alford, Mayor Dubberly, Commissioner Wheeler, a citizen, and Scott presented comments.

4. Single Member Districts Status Update

Mayor Dubberly and Deputy County Attorney Bob Swain presented the above item.

Deputy County Attorney Swain stated that there is a great deal of legal confusion regarding this matter. The County Commission chose to place returning to at large elections on the ballot. There was a lawsuit challenging and the Judge ruled to allow the election and at large elections was passed by the electorate. The Judge's opinion allows a challenge for anyone who chooses to do so. The County has appealed the ruling to the 1st District Court of Appeals as the County feels the Judge ruled on a matter that he has no jurisdiction on and is awaiting a ruling on that matter. The next election will be scheduled to be an at large process.

Chair Chestnut, Commissioner Wheeler, and a citizen presented comments.

5. Live Local Act

Mayor Dubberly, Assistant County Manager Missy Daniels, and Deputy County Attorney Bob Swain presented the above item.

Mayor Dubberly sought clarification of the impacts of this act on the City of LaCrosse. She stated this has caught the town off guard and they are not sure if they need to opt out of the act.

Mr. Swain stated that the County's decision to opt out was because the intent was not against affordable housing but the exemptions coming forward were for student housing. The County did not feel that this was the intent of the legislation.

Mrs. Daniels stated that the State Statute allows affordable housing in industrial areas. The City would need to opt out in order to avoid this. There are certain requirements that have to be met in order to opt out as well. She stated that she would provide information so that the City along with counsel can make an informed decision.

City Commissioner Cheshire and Scott presented comments.

F. Public Comment

Chair Chestnut recognized Scott who presented comments to the Board.

G. Commission General Comments and Information Discussion

1. County Commission Comment

Commissioner Alford stated that this has been probably the most community-oriented meeting she has been to. She stated that the back and forth discussion was wonderful.

Commissioner Wheeler stated that her seat will be vacant in 2026 as she is stepping down. She encouraged the community to get good strong candidates to run to represent LaCrosse.

2. Town Commission Comment

Mayor Dubberly thanked the Commission for coming out to LaCrosse to meet with the community.

H. Adjourn

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.