Commission Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2025
5:30 pm

Mayor Redding called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Commissioner Mortimer opened the meeting with prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members in attendance included Mayor Andy Redding, Commissioner Bob Milner, Commissioner Janice D. Mortimer, Commissioner Danny Nugent and Commissioner Scott Roberts. Also in attendance were Executive Assistant Cathy Bradley, Building & Zoning Office Manager Lance Campbell, Executive Assistant Lisa Heeder, Finance Director James Hughes, Code Enforcement Officer Nick Krahl, Grants Coordinator Becky May, General Manager Drew Mullins, Captain Kevin Mueller and Attorney Scott Walker.

Mayor Redding called for any agenda additions or deletions. There were none. Mayor Redding entertained a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Milner made a motion. It was seconded by Commissioner Mortimer. The motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Redding entertained a motion to approve the consent agenda. The consent agenda consisted of the minutes of the August 26, 2025 Commission Meeting, The Great Pumpkin Escape Call Street road closure for October 25, 2025 from 12:00 pm to 9:00 pm from Cherry Street to US Highway 301 and the commissioner bill review. Commissioner Mortimer made a motion to approve the consent agenda. It was seconded by Commissioner Milner. The motion passed 5-0.

There was no old business.

There were no emergency items.

Mayor Redding called for the FMPA Presentation by Jacob Williams. Mr. Williams showed a video that was shown at their annual conference. Then he presented the Starke Providing Low-Cost, Reliable Power Presentation and presented an award for 3-years of maintaining an annual average outage of 60 minutes or less.

Mayor Redding called for a recess.

Mayor Redding said Thomas Smith was here for citizen requests but he had left during the recess. He asked if there were any other citizen requests. There were none.

Mayor Redding called for the General Manager Report. Mr. Mullins said there were applications in the packet for Planning & Zoning Board Members. He asked how the commission would like to proceed. He said 1 member should be appointed to a 1-year term, 2 members should be appointed to a 2-year term and 2 members should be appointed to a 3-year term. Commissioner Mortimer said in the past they have tried to have a member from each district but there is not an applicant from District 5. She recommended reappointing the 4 people who currently serve on the board and adding a new member. Commissioner Mortimer made a motion to reappoint John Waters, Monica Kadlec, Walter Westcott and Glenda Ruise to the Planning & Zoning Board and that Mr. Westcott and Mrs. Ruise serve 3-year terms and Mr. Waters and Miss Kadlec serve 2-year terms. It was seconded by Commissioner Milner. The motion passed 4-0. Mayor Redding said for the record Commissioner Roberts had to step away from the rest of the meeting. Mayor Redding entertained a motion for the fifth member for the 1-year term. Commissioner Mortimer made a motion to appoint Michael Heeder for a 1-year term to the Planning & Zoning Board. It was seconded by Commissioner Milner. The motion passed 4-0. Mr. Mullins said there was an incident in the city today. Someone wrecked their vehicle into Tony's Italian Restaurant. FHP is investigating the incident.

Mayor Redding called for public hearings Ordinance Number 2025-12. Attorney Walker read the ordinance by title. An ordinance of the City Commission of the City of Starke, Florida, relating to Chapter 2, Article III; repealing and replacing the Chief Administrative Officer and General Manager positions with the position of the City Manager position in the City of Starke, Florida; repealing Chapter 2, Article III, Division 5, entitled the General Manager; assigning all duties of the Chief Administrative Officer and the General M anager to the position of the City Manager; updating of policies, procedures and handbooks; providing direction for codification of this ordinance; repealing all ordinances in conflict; providing for severability; and providing for an effective date. Mayor Redding said this is on second reading. He entertained a motion. Commissioner Nugent made a motion to table it based on the legal document (letter provided by City Clerk Elect). Mayor Redding said the commission has tabled this before. The motion failed for lack of a second. Mayor Redding entertained any further motion for Ordinance 2025-12. Commissioner Milner made a motion to approve. It was seconded by Commissioner Mortimer. Mayor Redding asked if there was any further discussion. City Clerk Elect Chrissy Allen-Thompson came forward to ask the commission to delete Section 2-133 Powers and Duties Line Item 18. She said if that is not the way the commission wants to go, then she would like to read her letter into the minutes. She said "if you pass this then we are going to be in litigation." Mayor Redding said "so you are going to take legal action against the city?" Commissioner Mortimer said she would like to ask Attorney Walker a question. She asked Attorney Walker to clarify "when we started discussing the restructuring of the city, and we talked about what the charter requires, as opposed to what an ordinance requires, you directed us legally that we were on good legal sound ground and not violating the charter in any way." Attorney Walker said Section Seven, Article Two, Section Seven, which is the section of the charter that talks about the government invested in the Mayor-Commissioner form of government, and the last sentence in that provision of the charter says that the City Clerk of the City of Starke, Florida shall be the city tax collector, which, of course, the city doesn't have any longer. That's by Florida Statute directed to county tax collector the city treasurer. That is something that is in effect. The city doesn't have a city tax assessor any longer, so statutes take precedence over local charter or ordinances. He went on to discuss the charter and the proposed ordinance, specifically for comparison of the two documents and state/federal statutes. He stated his legal opinion saying: “I think that your ordinance is not violative,” “I don’t think it offends this language in the charter,” and “To your point, is the ordinance valid? I think it is based upon that analysis. I don’t think it offends the existing charter, nor do I think it offends the duties and responsibilities of Ms. Thompson when she comes in as clerk.” Chrissy Allen-Thompson said she would just like to read her letter for the record. She read:

To: City Commissioners of the City of Starke

Subject: Requesting either tabling or deleting a portion of Ordinance Number 2025-12, for further review and charter compliance.

Dear Commissioners,

I respectfully request that you table the matter and or delete Sec 2-133 Powers and Duties Line item 18 currently under consideration regarding the proposed ordinance affecting the structure and oversight of the Finance Department.

It is critical that the city attorney and administrative staff be given the opportunity to revisit and revise the language of this ordinance to ensure it aligns with both the City of Starke Charter and the intent of the voters. As currently written, the ordinance appears to reassign authority over the Finance Department in a way that conflicts with the responsibilities designated to the elected City Clerk, who serves as the Treasurer of the city under the Charter.

To be clear:

I am in full support of the City Manager's role as outlined by the Ordinance, but the Finance Department must remain under the oversight of the City Clerk, as is explicitly stated in our governing document the Charter.

The current finance director and staff were originally hired under the authority of the City Clerk. They have been temporarily assigned to an interim clerk or CFO. Not sure why this is even being questioned.

The people of Starke made their will known when they elected a City Clerk.

It is now time to honor that decision by allowing the Clerk to carry out the duties and responsibilities entrusted to the office.

Furthermore, I want to make it clear that I cannot and will not sign checks, authorize wires, or approve any financial transactions over which I have no authority or oversight. No responsible official would assume such financial liability without direct control of the related processes and personnel.

If the ordinance proceeds to a second reading and is passed in its current form, I will be left with no choice but to initiate formal litigation against the City C ommission for violating the City of Starke Charter.

> I want to be very clear: I want the absolute best for the City of Starke – now and for generations to come. My intent is not to create conflict, but to protect the integrity of our Charter, maintain checks and balances, and ensure that no single individual has unchecked control over multiple departments.
>
> I remain committed to working positively and professionally with each of you, with the City Manager, and with all staff. However, I also have a sworn duty to uphold the trust placed in me by the citizens who elected me.
>
> Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.
>
> Chrissy Allen-Thompson, Clerk Elect City of Starke.

Mayor Redding called for a vote. The motion passed 3-1. Commissioner Nugent opposed the motion.

Mayor Redding called for Ordinance Number 2025-15. Attorney Walker read the ordinance by title. An Ordinance of the City Commission of the City of Starke, Florida, creating Chapter 82, Article VI, Sections 82-339 through 82-346 entitled “Capital Improvement Plan” establishing the requirements of the Capital Improvement Plan and the Capital Improvement Plan Budget, providing for definitions; establishing a process for review, amendment, adoption, and appropriation by the City Commission; providing for a progress report on current Capital Improvement Projects to be provided to the City Commission; adopting the 2026-2030 Five-Year Capital Improvement Program Annual Update; providing for legislative findings; providing for severability; providing for exclusion from codification; and providing for effective date. Mayor Redding entertained a motion. Commissioner Milner made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-15, as read by title, by the attorney. It was seconded by Commissioner Mortimer. Mr. Mullins said each year the city has to do this for the FRDAP grant, for the city to be able to submit for that grant. The deadline is this month so this is part of that formal process. Mayor Redding called for a vote. The motion passed 3-1. Commissioner Nugent opposed the motion.

Commissioner Mortimer asked if Mr. McCutchen could speak. Mayor Redding said yes. Mr. McCutchen said his light bill keeps going up. Mayor Redding suggested sitting down with staff, Mr. Mullins and Miss Bradley. Commissioner Mortimer said she will be there.

Mayor Redding called for quasi-judicial hearings. Attorney Walker swore in Mr. Campbell. Attorney Walker asked the commissioners if they had any ex-parte communications. The commissioners each said no. Attorney Walker read Ordinance 2025-14 by title. An ordinance of the City of Starke, Florida, pursuant to Petition Number ANX 25-01, by 144 Holdings, LLC, relating to a voluntary annexation; making findings; annexing certain real property located in Bradford County, Florida; providing severability; repealing all ordinances in conflict; providing an effective date. Mr. Campbell said this is the second reading for an annexation of just over 14 acres to annex into the city. He stated he had no new notes on this and asked for any questions. This property is across from Bradford Elementary. Mayor Redding asked for any public comments. There were none. Mayor Redding entertained a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-14.

Commissioner Mortimer made a motion to pass Ordinance 2025-14 as read by title only on second reading. It was seconded by Commissioner Nugent. The motion passed 4-0.

Mayor Redding asked for the Attorney Report. Attorney Walker said the Ethics Training will be December 4, 2025 at 4:00 pm.

Mayor Redding said Captain Mueller was here earlier but had to step away. He said he didn't have anything new to report but did encourage the commissioners to contact him if there was anything they needed.

Mayor Redding entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Mortimer made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 pm.