



City of Starke

"Forging Tomorrow's Small Town, Today"

Regular Meeting of City Commission Minutes

Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at 5:30 PM

Mayor Redding called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Commissioner Nugent opened the meeting with a time of ²Voluntary Prayer and the ³Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Redding asked for ⁴Roll Call. Commissioner Dimple Overstreet was absent, Commissioner Janice D. Mortimer was absent, Mayor Andy Redding was present, Commissioner Bob Milner was present, and Commissioner Danny Nugent was present. Additionally, City Clerk Chrissy Allen-Thompson was present, City Manager Drew Mullins was present, and City Attorney Scott Walker was present. Also in attendance were Executive Assistant Cathy Bradley, Executive Assistant Lisa Heeder, Code Enforcement Officer Nick Krahl, Grants Coordinator Becky May, Captain Kevin Mueller, and Assistant City Manager-Utilities David Sparks.

Mayor Redding asked for any agenda changes for the ⁵Approval of the Agenda. City Manager Mullins asked to add 10.a. Purchase of a Dump Truck. Mayor Redding entertained a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Milner made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Commissioner Nugent seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.

Mayor Redding entertained a motion to approve the ⁶Consent Agenda. The Consent Agenda consisted of: ^{6.a}Minutes of the January 20, 2026 Commission Meeting and ^{6.b}Commissioner Bill Review. Commissioner Milner reported he reviewed the bills, and they looked in order. He made a motion to approve the consent agenda as published. Commissioner Nugent seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.

Mayor Redding asked for ⁷Emergency Items. There were none.

Mayor Redding asked for ⁸Fire Department Donation to Recreation. City Clerk Allen-Thompson said the Starke Firefighters were involved in a competition at Wawa, and they won over the sheriff's office, and they were given \$1,000 as a prize. They are, in turn, going to donate their prize to Bradford Sports United for recreation for the kids. It was a sub making contest. Recreation Director Deana DiSiena said they appreciate the donation. She invited the firefighters to come to Edwards Road Park. She would like to get a game scheduled between the Starke Firefighters and the Bradford County Sheriff's Office. She thanked them again. Captain Greg Starling said they were glad to help and support the kids. She said Opening Day is March 21st 9:00 am is the ceremony. The games will start promptly around 10:30/11:00 am. They also have in person sign-ups this Saturday from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. She invited everyone to get a free hot dog and meet some of the board members. They will be happy to help with sign-ups or if they know any children who want to play rec, they'd be happy to have them.

Mayor Redding asked for ⁹Citizens Request. *He asked for Dr. Willie Perry. Dr. Perry said he was here to ask for the Commission to provide funds to tear down a building to put their RJE building in. The building that they have has been delegated as dangerous to the community. They are a 501(c)(3) Florida organization. They are asking to be put in the City's budget now or in the near future. He thanked the Commission. Mayor Redding asked City Clerk Allen-Thompson and City Manager Mullins to please communicate with Dr. Perry on the City's process for applying for grants. City Clerk Allen-Thompson presented him with her business card. *Mayor Redding asked for Mr. Paul Still. Mr. Still said he has been working for years trying to get the Suwanee River Water Management District to clean up some real problems in Alligator Creek. He stated they simply weren't moving. He said it is important to recognize that for the City of Starke and Bradford County, there are two peaks in flooding. One of those peak periods is in February/March/April, and the other is during hurricane season. It is really critical that some work be done now to avoid flooding in this February/March/April timeframe. They need to clean all the trash and debris out of Alligator Creek. They also need to mow the vegetation that is in what is called the secondary channel. The secondary channel allows water to flow when it comes up higher than the meandering channel that they have dug, and that keeps water from backing up into the City of Starke. He urged the Commissioners to ask their wastewater engineers to take a look at the issue. He would be glad to walk the site with them, show them where the problems are, and discuss the problems with them. The other issue that he wanted to talk about is the ICE Detention Facility that is in Bradford County. Bradford County indicated that the City of Starke would provide sewer and water to the facility. He thinks this is a really a bad deal for the City. It would take up about the same capacity as 1,000 homes. You would be trading the income from your water treatment plant against the loss of potential taxes from 1,000 new homes if the Commission approved that use of the sewer capacity. He urged the Commission to take a hard look at that as soon as possible. If they decide they don't want to provide those services, let the County know, so that they can plan for that alternative with their consultant. He thanked the Commission. Mayor Redding said for the record, to his knowledge, as a Commission they haven't been given anything in regard to the ICE Detention Facility. He knows that this is in the exploratory stage, but for the record, they do not currently have anything on that request. *Mayor Redding asked for Ms. Valara Pettaway. Ms. Pettaway said it is a pleasure to be here this afternoon. She would like to give out some thanks and considerations for Cathy Bradley and a few other people. She had some problems at her home with her sewage and her water. She called Ms. Bradley and she got right on the issues. The gentleman that came out from the City, the supervisor and all, were right on it. They changed everything over and that was very encouraging to her, but she's been thinking about what may happen in the future. She knows that the Commission has said they had nothing on the ICE Detention Facility, but she asked them to think about anything that may happen in the City of Starke that will cause people like herself not to have the immediate attention that they may need. Think about the fact that if she had an emergency in her home, or if she had to call Fire Rescue. If there are other things going on in the County or if it's something that the City allows to let someone else come in to do that's going to take away from the residents, then please think about the citizens. Think about their needs. Think about the timely response. Think about how the citizens depend upon the City, and think about not standing in the way of maybe one day taking that away from them. Citizens don't have that assurance that if they call the City, the City is going to be there in a couple hours if something happens somewhere else and there is a large facility if the electricity goes off there. The City has just enough to accommodate what citizens are here with the water and sewage. If the Commission tries to bring in a lot of homes that's going to take away from the citizens. She encouraged the Commission to please think about the grid. Think about what the

Commission will be doing. Think about the capacity to be supportive of the citizens, to be there when they need the City, to be there when that emergency happens. She appreciates it very much. She appreciates City Clerk Allen-Thompson because she can call her. Commissioner Mortimer shows fairness and promptness in Starke. She hopes that they will keep that hometown feel and that they will always encourage each other to be there for each other. She thanked the Commissioners. Mayor Redding said he can assure her City of Starke staff is working diligently every day to stay ahead of the curve and provide the best services that they can. *Mayor Redding asked for Mr. Milton Baker. Mr. Baker said he has a concern. He understands the Commissioners haven't gotten anything on the ICE Detention Facility, but if they listen to the news please take this into consideration when whatever comes to them about the ICE Detention Facility. He hasn't heard anything good about them wherever they may go and set up a place. To him, it seems like they have a mask on and can't tell who they are. He asked if we really want that here in Starke. Think about that whenever that time comes because the Commission will be faced with it. It doesn't come with anything nice. It comes with something that can really create problems for all of us. He said please don't think he's trying to be racist, but it can happen to any of us. They can make a mistake. Please keep that in mind when that time comes. He thanked the Commissioners. *Mayor Redding asked for Ms. Melissa Protomastro. Ms. Protomastro said she would also like to speak about the ICE Detention Facility and how it affects Starke. She stated that she is a resident of Starke. She has lived here since 2014, but when she first moved here, she was so excited. She would tell people she met that she just moved to Starke, and they almost always asked why. She would say because it's a great little town. When she told her friends from St. Petersburg that she moved to Starke, they still hold on to the stereotype of "Old Sparky" and the "speed trap." She would say that that's not Starke. This ICE Detention Facility is going to change that. People don't know Bradford County, but they do know the City of Starke when they pass that beautiful, big billboard that says, come to Downtown Starke because of southern hospitality. Then they make the turn and see the ICE Detention Facility with the solid walls, razor wire, and guard towers. At night when one whole lane is clogged up with blue lights and cars, they're going to know they are in Starke. That's one wrong. Another wrong is the cost it's going to give Starke. In fact, that someone that is going to be putting in 40 apartments, what if they came to the Commission and said not 40, but 400 apartments. The Commission would say they were out of their minds. The City doesn't have that kind of capacity in the sewer. The City doesn't have that kind of capacity in the water. The City doesn't have that kind of infrastructure. Three thousand human beings are going to be in the detention out there, twelve hundred workers, not workers from here, even though they say they are going to start with the workers from Bradford County. They can't get 1,200 qualified workers from Bradford County. They're going to come in from other places. They're going to bring in RVs, and not at the KOA like they do in Baker County. They're going to be in a field. They're not going to be full hookups. They're going to have what they call a honey wagon going around to empty the sewer or they're going to just ignore the fact that people are going to dump sewer in that critical area. Please think about it. Please do everything the Commission can to stop it. The City of Starke doesn't need it.

Mayor Redding asked for ¹⁰.New Business: ^{10.a}.Purchase of a Dump Truck. City Manager Mullins said in the budget that was passed in September, he had included in the Capital Improvement Plan the purchase of a bucket truck and a dump truck. They have purchased the bucket truck, and had \$90,000 in the budget for a dump truck. They have found a really good used one for \$45,000. He was asking for approval in the amount of \$45,655 with the tag and everything. The newest one they have is a 1997. Mayor Redding entertained a motion, and then they could have discussion.

Commissioner Nugent made motion to approve. Commissioner Milner seconded the motion. Mayor Redding asked for any further discussion. Commissioner Nugent asked what kind of warranty the truck had. Assistant City Manager – Utilities Sparks said it did not have a warranty, but they have tested the truck out, put it under all kinds of tests, put scanners on it, and it has checked out. Commissioner Nugent asked if it had a 90-day warranty or anything. Assistant City Manager – Utilities Sparks said it had nothing at all, but added it did have low miles. Commissioner Nugent asked if they tested the hydraulics. Assistant City Manager – Utilities Sparks said they put scanners on the engine and everything checked out perfectly. They ran it for a little while, turned it back on in case somebody tried to clear codes, ran it for 20 or 30 more minutes, then put the scanner back on, and it cleared no codes. Commissioner Nugent asked what the odometer reading was. Assistant City Manager – Utilities Sparks said 170,000. Commissioner Nugent asked if it was a diesel. Assistant City Manager – Utilities Sparks said it was a Cummings Diesel, and it's good for about 350,000 to 400,000 miles. They will never put more than about 15,000 to 20,000 miles on it. Mayor Redding asked what the current mileage was on the 40 year-old truck. Assistant City Manager – Utilities Sparks said they have a truck that is 7 or 8 years old with 18,000 to 19,000 miles. Commissioner Milner said he trusts Assistant City Manager – Utilities Sparks' 30 to 40 years experience. He knows they did their due diligence. It's not just a matter of whether or not the City had the \$90,000 in the budget for a newer one. They're hard to get number one, and the time to get them is sometimes a year. If these two gentlemen are recommending that the City spend half that for what they have determined to be a worthy truck that will meet our needs, he agrees with them. Mayor Redding called for a vote. Motion passed 3-0.

Mayor Redding asked for ¹¹.Old Business: ^{11.a}.Charter Review and ^{11.b}.Impact Fees. He called for the ^{11.a}.Charter Review. Clerk Allen-Thompson said they met this afternoon and they are moving along. Attorney Scott Walker was with them. There have been a lot of good questions and good feedback. Mayor Redding asked for ^{11.b}.Impact Fees. City Manager Mullins said due to the ever-changing legislature, he's not going to bring anything back until after the legislative session is over in March or April. He's going to keep it on the agenda, just as a reminder.

Mayor Redding asked for ¹².Public Hearings. There were none.

Mayor Redding asked for ¹³.Quasi Judicial Hearings. There were none.

Mayor Redding asked for ^{14.a}.City Manager Report. City Manager Mullins said the only thing he had to report was the cold weather. He's been here 4½ years now, and this was the first time he has recommended running your water at night because of the danger of freezing the pipes. The electric grid, not just in Starke but nationwide, the electric grid was pushed to its maximum. FMPA reached out to all of their member cities to ask if they had the ability to generate their own power going with back-up generators or just simply cut back. They made a couple posts on Facebook alerting the community to cut back their thermostats. He notified the school system, and they turned on their generator at the wastewater treatment plant. That was able to bring some load off. They did have a couple issues Saturday and Sunday, but overall, they were fine, but very, very cold. They actually reached near summer peak load on the electric system. That just goes to show how absolutely cold it was. A reminder for bills, this upcoming month, they will be significantly higher. There was a spike in natural gas prices last Thursday and they doubled. People might ask why in the world does natural gas prices affect my bill if they don't have natural gas in their house. That's because 85% of Florida uses natural gas for electric generation. FMPA has 75% locked up

fuel costs, locked up through spring, early summer, but that still leaves 25% up on the market. They were still within the market range when it doubled. So, we will see some costs go up along with just simple usage. Mayor Redding said the more people use, the more they pay.

Mayor Redding asked for the ^{14.b}City Clerk Report. Clerk Allen-Thompson said as a reminder the Annual Northeast Florida Chamber Banquet, is Saturday, February 7th. They will be honoring all the Teachers of the Year and the SRE from each school. The governor has issued President's Day as a State Holiday, and it has always been a Federal Holiday. Herself, Assistant City Manager – Finance James Hughes, and City Manager Mullins looked at some numbers earlier. They didn't have anything extra going on. She would ask for the Commissioners to allow them to add that to the calendar this year, to allow employees to be off. Mayor Redding confirmed that City Clerk Allen-Thompson's recommendation was to make that a paid holiday for this year. City Clerk Allen-Thompson confirmed. She said another reminder, on February 19th the Northeast Florida League of Cities Dinner will be hosted by the City of Starke. Please make sure that's on your calendar. They have it taken care of, and Commissioner Nugent has lined up the speaker. They're good to go with that. Mayor Redding entertained a motion to approve Monday, February 16th, as an employee holiday. Commissioner Nugent made a motion. Commissioner Milner seconded the motion. Commissioner Nugent said he just wanted to mention that he doesn't have an issue with some of these holidays, but they have to remember that they picked so many holidays a year, and they figured that in their budget. It affects the whole City when they do that work-wise. City Clerk Allen-Thompson said they did check the budget, and they are fine on the budget. Mayor Redding said a lot of employees have kids in school. So, versus them calling out, and then the City have to pay somebody extra that day, they're going to get somewhat of a balance when it's all said and done. He asked for any further discussion. There was none. He called for a vote. Motion passed 3-0.

Mayor Redding asked for the ^{14.c}Public Safety Report. Captain Mueller said he provided the report for January 2026. The calls for service within the City with the incident report break down, and the criminal charging documents that were done. He added on the last page some locations of traffic stops to note. The only reason he did that was to assist the Commission. He knows they receive and pass on complaints of certain areas where they want some traffic enforcement. These aren't all the traffic stops that they did that he highlighted here, but it gives the Commission specific locations of streets that traffic stops were conducted to help with that education and enforcement. Mayor Redding said he gets a lot of complaints about Pratt Street, Orange Street, and Cherry Street quite often. Captain Mueller stated he thinks they will find each of those streets listed on there where some traffic stops were done. These would be actual traffic stops that became necessary on those roadways. City Manager Mullins said he has commenced a road study that will encompass traffic counts on some of these major thoroughfares in town, along with speed and conditions of roads, so that will definitely be able to help out as far as traffic counts on which roads are more traveled. He just wanted to let the Commission know.

Mayor Redding asked for the ^{14.d}Attorney Report. Attorney Walker had nothing to report.

Mayor Redding asked for the ¹⁵Mayor and Commissioner Reports. ^{15.a}Commissioner Overstreet was absent. ^{15.b}Commissioner Milner said he's not asking for discussion or anybody to change, but it looks like the minutes from the last few meetings have gotten to be almost word for word. They're five pages long or more, and of course, they are public information. Anyone who wants

the actual recording, can request it. He knows the City allegedly had a new recording system a while back. He doesn't know if it's AI assisted or whatever, and too much information is better than not enough, but he just thinks that the minutes have gotten quite long, and he doesn't know that it's necessary. Minutes are supposed to be who was here, who said that, and be done with it. City Clerk Allen-Thompson said they are doing lengthy minutes because there have been multiple meetings when the attorney has said that they don't have enough to substantiate what they are doing in a conversation. They had an issue with a developer, and the minutes were not strong enough to hold up. So, they're very close to verbatim. Mayor Redding said with AI and the additional technology, more is always better. Mayor Redding said he sees both sides of it, but good point.

^{15.c.} Commissioner Nugent said they are hosting the Northeast Florida League of Cities Dinner. We should expect around 150 people. If Commissioners are going to participate, they need to go ahead and get their name on the list ahead of time. Let City Clerk Allen-Thompson know so she can give a head count. Mayor Redding said they definitely want to have a good showing. They're almost up to 30 cities now, and Amber Shepherd will be the speaker. ^{15.d.} Vice Mayor Mortimer was absent. ^{14.e.} Mayor Redding said they had a very successful trip to Tallahassee for Rural Counties Day. He thanked City Clerk Allen-Thompson and the Chamber of Commerce for their hard work. He thinks the number was 1,500 strawberry shortcakes. Rural Counties Day is for smaller, fiscally restrained counties go to the Capitol and appeal to their representatives, staffers, etc. A lot of counties have their niche, maybe it's seafood, maybe it's citrus, but Bradford County serves 1,500 strawberry shortcakes that day. People were lining up at 9:00 am that wanted it, and he didn't see anybody else wanting something like that from any other county. So, the City of Starke, Bradford County is definitely on the map. They got to spend time speaking with their representatives and senators, and how that affects the citizens. That's where they go and present the needs and wants to them, and the desires of the counties and cities so they can go back and through appropriations help them out. The City just got a large grant. Starke has had about \$40,000,000 in sewer improvements and monies towards that for the City just in the last four years. They're working diligently to stay ahead of the curve for those services, roadways, water, sewer, and public safety. They appreciate the input as citizens, presenting the needs and wants, and what the desire for their community. It does not stop with the Commission, those representatives take them beyond Tallahassee.

Mayor Redding entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Milner made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Nugent seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:06 pm.