City of Starke

"Forging Tomorrow's Small Town, Today"

Regular Meeting of City Commission Minutes
Tuesday, June 2, 2026 at 5:30 PM

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

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

Mayor Redding called for 4.Roll Call. Commissioner Dimple Overstreet was present, Vice Mayor Mortimer was present, Commissioner Danny Nugent was present, Commissioner Bob Milner was present, and Mayor Andy Redding 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 Fire Chief Jason Clemons, Administrative Assistant Lisa Heeder, Assistant Finance Director Becky May, Captain Kevin Mueller, and Assistant City Manager – Utilities David Sparks.

Mayor Redding asked for 5.Approval of the Agenda. City Manager Mullins asked to add the Legal Service Contract with David Grossman to 9.New Business. Mayor Redding asked if there were any other agenda changes or deletions. Hearing none he entertained a motion to approve the agenda. Vice Mayor Mortimer made a motion to approve. Commissioner Overstreet seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Redding asked for the 6.Consent Agenda. The Consent Agenda consisted of: 6.a.Minutes of the May 19, 2026 Commission Meeting, 6.b.Resolution 2026-36 - Approving Modification Number 2 to the Subgrant Agreement Between the Florida Department of Commerce and the City of Starke, Florida for a Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-NR), 6.c.Resolution 2026-37 - Approving Modification Number 2 to the Subgrant Agreement Between the Florida Department of Commerce and the City of Starke, Florida for a Small Cities Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-CV), 6.d.Resolution Number 2026-38 – Declaring Certain Property Listed Under the Assets of the City as Surplus, and 6.e.Commissioner Bill Review: Commissioner Overstreet. Mayor Redding stated Commissioner Overstreet reviewed the bills. Commissioner Overstreet stated they were in good shape. Mayor Redding entertained a motion to approve. Commissioner Overstreet made a motion to approve. Vice Mayor Mortimer seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Redding asked for 7.Emergency Items: there were none.

Mayor Redding asked for 8.Citizens Request. He asked for Roger Crews, who requested to speak to the Commissioners about the Fire Department. Mr. Crews stated his address as 607 Bradford Court Apartment 107. He wanted to know why the City was not getting new stuff for the Fire Department. And that the Fire Department needed a new fire truck. In his opinion they need another truck at the football games too. If there's a medical call, the truck would have to take off. They just have the EMTs at the football games. Mr. Crews feels that there needs to be another truck at the football games and special events like softball and baseball. If there's another truck, then they have a back-up. If the Fire Department goes on another call, they could be there to help them out. Mayor Redding stated he understood what Mr. Crews was asking, and that a lot of it comes down to wants and needs, as well as what they can afford. So, he does not disagree. He'd like to have a law enforcement officer and a fire truck on every corner, but when it comes down to it, and what they can afford, they're in a good position now. Additionally, things have transpired with the County developing their department, and they provide a lot more mutual aid and backup, so they can work collaboratively on that stuff. They'd always like for it to be better, but he thinks they're at optimal operating capacity right now, and they're doing the best with what they've got, and have bright hopes for the future; they just have to see what the future holds. He thanked Mr. Crews for sharing. Vice Mayor Mortimer thanked Mr. Crews for coming.

Mayor Redding asked for 9.New Business: The Legal Contract. City Manager Mullins stated that this is a contract with David Grossman & Associates to put them on an Arbitration Act with PFAS. There is a large settlement being proposed and this gets them involved with that; and there is no risk to the City whatsoever. Vice Mayor Mortimer asked Attorney Walker if he approved. Attorney Walker confirmed that he approved. Vice Mayor Mortimer made a motion that they approve the Legal Services Contract with David Grossman & Associates as requested by City Manager Mullins. Commissioner Milner seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Redding asked for 10.Old Business: there was none.

Mayor Redding asked for 11.Public Hearings: 11.a.Ordinance 2026-08. Attorney Walker read the Ordinance by title. An Ordinance of the City Commission of Starke, Florida, amending Chapter 2, Article VI, Division 2, Sections 2-372 and 2-373; revising process for sale of surplus property and changing thresholds for public auction requirements for disposal of property other than real property; repealing all Ordinances in conflict; providing for severability; and providing for an effective date. The appropriate motion would be to pass Ordinance 2026-08 on reading by title only. Mayor Redding entertained a motion to approve. Commissioner Milner made a motion to approve Ordinance 2026-08 as read by title. Commissioner Overstreet seconded the motion. Mayor Redding asked for any further discussion. He stated that they've all probably read it, but this just removes some mundane, archaic verbiage. This brings it more up to date with being able to use things like GovDeals and other sites. These further moves that process along and make it go quicker once those surpluses are identified. He asked if there was any further discussion or any public input. There was none. Motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Redding asked for 12.Quasi-Judicial Hearings: there were none.

Mayor Redding asked for 13.a.City Manager Report. City Manager Mullins asked for Justin deMello with Woodard & Curran to present the 13.a.i.Extension Project Update. Mr. deMello thanked the Commission for allowing him to present. The agenda today is obviously to describe the Utility Extension Project, summarize the schedule and project funding sources to date, and to discuss the next steps. In June 2023 the City had a citywide drinking water facility plan. A planning document that outlined the City's entire infrastructure of water, not including wastewater. They identified three key projects: water treatment plant upgrades to both water plants, system pressure improvements that include elevated tanks, looping line improvements between the water plants, as well as metering projects. They estimated that project to be about $12,000,000. In the Summer of 2025 Woodard & Curran identified an opportunity through the Hurricane Appropriations Funding for Impacts from Hurricanes Helene and Milton. That program earmarked the City for over $19,000,000 with 100% grant funding for water system impacts. The Florida Emergency Management Agency got back to them and said if they want to use that grant money, they must start over with planning and modify their design, and then subsequently move into construction. That would push the project back by a couple years. In November of 2025, the City authorized Woodard & Curran to design option two, which included the two-mile force main extension out to the Bypass, a one-mile new force main on Orange Street, a Saratoga Heights lift station, as well as some other projects; all at an estimated total of $8,500,000 and $12,500,000 for the water system project. The American Recovery Plan Act funding, which was committed by Bradford County, has about $3,500,000 left in the fund. Woodard & Curran wants to couple some grants for this project. One was AWT upgrades and Collection System Rehab. The next one was the ARPA money. The next one was an Equalization Tank at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the third one was the Wastewater Collection System Rehab. Collectively they have about $9,500,000. They will pivot all that money towards this project. The next section was the City's Drinking Water Grants that they have secured. Both are earmarked towards the Utility Extensions to the Bypass. That would open up $2,500,000 in Drinking Water Funding to get utilities out to the Bypass. They have secured $2,000,000 through the Legislative Appropriation Program for an Advanced Metering Project. The projects they want to use are the Hurricane Helene and Milton Grant, which wouldn't open up construction dollars until 2027. The Water Tower, New Water Source Well, Saratoga Heights and Andrews Street Lift Station, and Collection System Phase 2 Rehabilitation Projects could wait, because Woodard & Curran would have those projects working through planning and design. For the water meter improvements, Mr. deMello recommended the City prepare for a State Revolving Fund meeting in August and leverage that Legislative Appropriation for the Water Meter Improvement Project. The next steps were to integrate these three separate designs into one priority project. The goal was to complete the 100% downstream sewer design that was still in progress. The downstream going to Orange Street and under the railroad was at about 90% completion. They need about four more weeks to finish the design of that. Given the ARPA necessity to get that money spent very quickly, they're recommending that the City advertise the entire Drinking Water Main and Sewer Forced Main Extension Projects to the Bypass in June, so that in July they can advertise and have a contractor laying pipe this summer. Then they'll prioritize the rest of the project based on the grant money that's available. The City needs to plan for any water or sewer delta that won't be eligible for funding. Mr. deMello asked for any questions. Mayor Redding recognized Commissioner Nugent. Commissioner Nugent stated that part of his District, which is by the hospital, has been needing the looping system for water. They haven't had it done and he'd been asking for that for over 10 years. Some of the lines aren't even big enough, and there's no water pressure. They're starting these other big projects and forgetting about the other areas in the City. There's been a need for years, and they're not thinking about them anymore, which is not fair to the citizens. Commissioner Milner stated they've got the $20,000,000 waste treatment plant. Commissioner Milner also wanted to know what were the $2,500,000 of additional upgrades that Mr. deMello's chart suggests were required. Would they just give the Commission a brief as to what those are. Mr. deMello stated right now the original application went in as solids dewatering, because they weren't able to do the solids dewatering as part of that project to the Advanced Wastewater Treatment Facility. So, part of it was a solids dewatering add-on and a septage to receiving a facility were items that they were earmarking for grant money. City Manager Mullins stated that while it was still a high priority, this takes a little bit more precedent. Commissioner Milner asked about the items that were in the building from

VCR, and if they were able to do anything with that, besides the building itself. Mr. deMello stated that it was surplus. Commissioner Milner stated that's what he thought. He affirmed that the forced main downstream that they're going to do under the railroad, they'll then be deflecting the sewer from what's currently going into Saratoga Heights, behind the Starke Elementary, over to the newer force main. Mr. deMello stated that was right. Also, that would be part of the additional project. So, the line extension going out to the Bypass will flow directly to the treatment plant, Saratoga Heights, reversing the flow there, and decommissioning that force main will be part of that additional project to send that flow down Todd Road into the new forced main, that's going to go directly down Orange Street. Commissioner Milner asked about the sewer force main installation to the Bypass and if it was happening between June and October of this year. Mr. deMello stated yes. Commissioner Milner stated he understands they've got to spend the ARPA money. They've got planning and design first, but after that, what would they be able to get accomplished. Mr. deMello stated they've already started having discussions with local contractors, some of which have worked in the City of Starke before on Call Street and other projects, and asked if this was possible to do. The contractors said that it was possible, that it's just pipe and pipe was readily available. So, they can get crews out there to do it right. They had contractor discussions, they said, yes, as far as installing two, three miles of sewer force main out on 301, where there was largely no utilities going out in that direction, absolutely, it can be done in a few months. In a 1,000 feet a day, a type of directional drilling, type of approach. That was the goal, to get the money, at least the ARPA component spent, and then from there use these grants and other projects to finish out the rest of the downstream portions. Start up 301 and work their way back. Commissioner Milner stated he certainly agrees with Commissioner Nugent about the need for the ending of the looping. Since being City Manager, he has learned a lot about it. He didn't know where all our current water supply dead ends are and that they're in so many places outside of the City. But they've got money allocated and they will be getting to those projects. Notwithstanding Commissioner Nugent's desire, like his, to get it done quickly; but for their citizens, they understand that water pressure is a priority. Mr. deMello stated the additional improvements of those first four asterisks that are all single asterisks, the water plant upgrades, the elevated storage at the Bypass, the new source well, and the improvements in the looping, they've got $5,000,000 in grant allocation, or the potential grant allocation to the City, was over $19,000,000. In the planning document, the City will authorize them on how to move forward. They can identify additional system improvements and additional looping. So, there's the potential there to get some of the other projects that are of lower priority, but that'll still meet the intent of the grant, into that project. He thinks that there's potential to expand, because they've got $19,500,000 available, and they're already pulling some of the water projects out of that grant to expedite it. They've got a delta of additional grant money that they certainly don't want to give back. Commissioner Milner thanked Mr. deMello. Vice Mayor Mortimer asked what the ARPA spending deadline is. Mr. deMello stated the spending deadline by the Federal Government is the end of the year, but the Department of Environmental Protection, that's managing the program, has given them an internal deadline of October, because they want to have all their paperwork done and shown to the federal government proving that it's complete. Vice Mayor Mortimer stated the slide with the funding pathway, three of those will require amendments. She inquired about the amendment process. Mr. deMello stated it was a paperwork administrative process within the department. The nice thing about those is they were water quality grants, so they can make justifications around sanitary sewer overflows and other things. They were still going to meet the intent of the grant by pivoting the money to a different project. The two bottom ones, the Legislative Appropriations, are very flexible. State Representatives and others have earmarked those to the City, so they're generally favorable on moving the money around, as long as it stays in a wastewater allocation. City Manager Mullins stated essentially what they did with consent to two of the items. Vice Mayor Mortimer inquired if there were amendments tied to them. City Manager Mullins stated not for this particular project, but it was the same concept. Vice Mayor Mortimer inquired if it was like commerce. City Manager Mullins stated yes. Vice Mayor Mortimer thanked Mayor Redding. Mayor Redding asked for Commissioner Overstreet. Commissioner Overstreet thanked Mr. deMello. She stated he was very patient with all of the Commissioners. Mr. deMello stated you are very welcome. Mayor Redding stated he thinks they're all on the same page for the most part. He thanked Mr. deMello for that articulation of the situation. What he's gleaning from it too is it was a pivot, it was an adjustment, and it was a prioritization. It was something that was necessary that we do, for one, in utilizing these funds in a timely manner, but two, as they can expand the system, and they can bring these resources and make them available to other entities. As they would come online, they would start generating revenues, and then they can put that capital back into the system to further take care of things like Commissioner Nugent wants to prioritize, and things like that, like they all do. He thinks that they're on good grounds, but that they've got to get moving on this. If they're looking at October dates and the county has had apprehension about things like that, that everybody stay on the same page so that there's no misunderstanding and that they keep marching to the beat of the same drum, they have to move this forward. Mr. deMello stated he thinks the biggest potential landmine is fitting everything into these grant buckets. They were so dependent right now on the grant buckets. Mr. deMello knows that the Commissioners understand how important that was. Mayor Redding stated they don't want to be in a position, obviously, to where they get down this road and they overextend themselves or they turn around. They've had all these woes with homestead taxes and everything else, and people aren't going to want to give as much in appropriations for things, or it's going to be harder to come by, but they're on a good track, and this is a definite need. These are not wants when they're looking at infrastructure for water and sewer, they were demands that the people need, and they have to keep moving forward. Commissioner Milner stated Vice Mayor Mortimer brought up something he just wants to make sure he understands. It was about the ARPA money, and the dates Mr. deMello mentioned. Basically, they all must have the money's committed by way of bills and encumbered, to use the accounting term. City Manager Mullins stated the money has been committed. All the entities that received the funding had to have it committed by the end of last year and then they must be expended at the end of this year, and it came in two separate tranches. The first tranche had to be expended by the end of 2024. This one is for 2026. Commissioner Milner inquired about the dates. Mr. deMello, in response to Vice Mayor Mortimer's question, do you feel like you working with us are going to be able to get those ARPA funds expended in compliance with DEP. Mr. deMello stated assuming they get contractors and an award. If they go out to bid and get no bidders, they would be in trouble. They know, these are things that may happen, but they also know that they need to do everything they can. Which is why it was stated in early discussions with contractors, getting them interested in it, because if you do a quick advertisement and a two-week turnaround on a project, they may not get bidders. So, they must make sure that they're pre-positioning this with several of them. That they would come here and be confident they could execute the first $3,500,000 of a $10,000,000 project. The goal is to spend that first $3,500,000 then they've got a little bit of breathing room, but they know they can expedite that, make sure all the invoices get paid out of that bucket first, and then they would start moving some of these invoices to the other buckets. He stated he is looking for their blessing to start executing that strategy tonight. Vice Mayor Mortimer inquired if it is a motion that he needs. Mayor Redding stated they can move forward with a motion to move forward with the plan that has been presented to them. City

Manager Mullins stated that right now, they just need consent. Mr. deMello stated they need a commitment executing a project. Mayor Redding thanked Mr. deMello. City Manager Mullins stated earlier this afternoon the Legislature did pass the homestead exemptions, raising it to start up next year at $150,000 and then following year $250,000. Which segways into his next point. The General Fund Budget will be presented at the next meeting. They'll have two separate budgets, one with the anticipated if it passes, the other one if everything stays the same. Mayor Redding inquired if they can be working on that and looking at budget shortfalls, adjustments, and everything else, so we can speak with staff about that. Commissioner Milner inquired if the legislature voted to send it to the Citizens to be on the ballot in November. The first one takes effect next year, but would be after our fiscal year, so the 2026-2027 budget they adopt shouldn't be affected by that. Mayor Redding stated it was better that they start living without it now. Mayor Redding asked for [13.b.]City Clerk Report. Clerk Allen-Thompson stated the notice of election was already noticed once, and just by their charter, they're doing a second notice of election for Commissioners' District One, District Three, and District Five. They are all four-year terms. Electors must be qualified to become a candidate by Monday, June 8th from 12:00 PM through June 12th, at 12:00 PM, and that would be done with the Bradford County Supervisor of Elections Office. The City's election would be held August 18, 2026, from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM at the polling locations. There are some options for early voting as well. She also sent the Charter Amendments over to the Supervisor of Elections Amanda Seyfang. They were 12 days ahead of their deadline, so she's very proud of that. It was sent to Supervisor of Elections Seyfang in the forms that she needed for Spanish and English, so that will definitely be on this ballot as well. It was advertised this week, and they will start their Charter Amendment advertising after qualifying. She doesn't want to confuse anybody or have too much out there, so they will do a Social Media Campaign through the City, through her page, and through other avenues. Supervisor of Elections Seyfang has agreed to share everything that they have, and they will be sharing a lot of information on County Elections as well to try to get a good turnout for everybody. Mayor Redding asked for the [13.c.]Public Safety Report. Captain Mueller wanted to let everyone know that he was there for them. If they have any questions, concerns, anything from the Sheriff's Office that maybe not be provided. He pointed out that the back two pages were something that he doesn't do for the City every time. They have a map with some specific activities that they do there on the third and fourth pages. Captain Mueller asked for questions. Vice Mayor Mortimer inquired if traffic assignments are citations. Captain Mueller stated a traffic assignment was when somebody calls it on the radio and actually says they were at this location doing some traffic control at this time. Sometimes that's working a red light or a similar situation, and oftentimes by 70% of the time, it was actually conducting speed at a particular location. What they have there on the third and fourth page are the traffic stops that were performed within the City of Starke. On the front page there were 747 traffic stops within the month of May, and that just gives them a visualization, including the streets where those traffic stops were performed. The last page is actually citations that were written as a result of those traffic stops. They know that traffic safety is important, so that's why he included it today. Additionally, as always, in this report, they have all the reported crimes. Mayor Redding asked for questions. There were none. He thanked Captain Mueller. Mayor Redding asked for [13.d.]City Attorney Report. Attorney Walker had nothing.

Mayor Redding asked for [14.]Commissioner Reports. [14.a.]Commissioner Overstreet had nothing. [14.b.]Commissioner Milner stated he will miss the next meeting because he will be on a mission trip with a church in New Hampshire that has been planned for almost a year. [14.c.]Commissioner Nugent stated the Northeast Florida League of Cities was going to be on June 18th in Orange Park.

He thinks it is at the Holiday Inn. He'll double check. It starts at 5:30 PM. He doesn't know what the menu is, but when he does City Clerk Allen-Thompson or Mrs. Heeder will send the Commissioners a letter. 14.d. Vice Mayor Mortimer stated that the Concerned Citizens of Bradford County President Alicia McMillian wanted her to announce that starting Monday, June 8th through July 3rd, they will be having their Summer Camp for Kids for grades Kindergarten through 6th Grade. So far, they've had a tremendous outpouring of support and sponsorship. They want to thank Mayor Redding and his business for sponsoring a number of kids, as well as Mr. deMello. They wanted her to share their appreciation for that, and they wanted to thank the City for their continued support. 14.e. Mayor Redding asked City Clerk Allen-Thompson if she had any current events. City Clerk Allen-Thompson stated she will send it out in a Calendar of Events. He said he has come to appreciate that calendar very much. City Clerk Allen Thompson stated that several of the attendants are traveling for different events. She knows Commissioner Nugent and City Manager Mullins are going to Washington to do a FAST Fly-In. She knows Vice Mayor Mortimer is going to some things with the Geneal Pension Board. The FMEA Conference will be right around the corner. She will provide a file. Mayor Redding asked Chief Clemons if he had anything. Chief Clemons stated he would like to address, either in an open meeting or one-on-one, solutions to the potential budget shortfall for public safety. Mayor Redding stated it would be his recommendation, before they go in front of a meeting, to have those individual meetings with the Commissioners, and then if they need to have further presentation after that, he can get together with him. Chief Clemons thanked Mayor Redding.

Mayor Redding entertained a motion to adjourn. Vice Mayor Mortimer made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 6:19 PM.