

**Minneola City Council  
Meeting Minutes  
Minneola City Hall  
January 2, 2024 at 6:30 PM**

The City of Minneola City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Pat Kelley. Also present were Councilor Pam Serviss, Vice Mayor Debbie Flinn, Councilor Erick Hernandez, Councilor Joe Saunders, Scott Gerken (City Attorney), Mark Johnson (City Manager), and Kristine Thompson (City Clerk).

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Mayor Pat Kelley** called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

A moment of silence was observed, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by **Vice Mayor Debbie Flinn**.

**AGENDA REVIEW**

There were no changes.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Banks Helfrich**, 9100 Sams Lake Rd., spoke about free public tours offered at his farm.

**Wally Szkwarko**, 802 S. Main Ave., expressed concern with vacation rentals, such as Airbnb, and suggested the City should have more regulations in place for this type of use.

**Scott Gerken** explained overnight vacation rentals have been preempted to the State of Florida and local governments have been limited on what they can regulate. He suggested some regulations, such as noise violations, can still be addressed should they occur.

**Councilor Serviss** requested staff research how the City of Clermont regulates vacation rentals, such as Airbnb.

**PRESENTATION**

**Item 1: Award Presentation – Paul Giacalone**

City Council presented Paul Giacalone with a service award for his nine years of service on the Planning & Zoning Commission.

**CITY MANAGER'S CONSENT AGENDA****Item 2: City Council Meeting Minutes – December 19, 2023****Item 3: Purchase Request – SMW Geosciences Wetland Monitoring and Reporting****Public Comment**

There were no comments.

**MOTION by Vice Mayor Flinn, SECONDED by Councilor Hernandez to approve the City Manager's consent agenda.**

**AYE:** Serviss, Flinn, Kelley, Hernandez, Saunders

**NAY:** None

**MOTION PASSED: 5-0**

**COUNCIL DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS****Item 4: Ordinance 2024-01 Townhome Design Standards – First Reading**

**Scott Gerken** read the ordinance by title.

**Joyce Heffington** explained the proposed ordinance is to establish design standards such as number of units per building, each unit must be fee simple and individually owned, have rear loading garages, and have alleyways in the rear which are an acceptable size to allow for egress/ingress for emergency services. She indicated it also allows for on-street parking which must be carved out so as not to block traffic.

**Public Comment**

There were no comments.

**Item 5: Ordinance 2023-32 Extension to Solid Waste Collection Franchise to GFL Solid Waste Southeast, LLC – Second Reading**

**Scott Gerken** read the ordinance by title and suggested if the city wishes to extend the contract with GFL, notice will need to be given by the end of the month.

**Councilor Hernandez and Vice Mayor Flinn** indicated they spoke with Skip McCall, GFL's contract manager, regarding this ordinance.

**Councilor Serviss** expressed concern with the possibility of a significant cost increase in three years once the contract reaches the end of its term and that items were not being recycled.

89 **Vice Mayor Flinn** indicated residents have come to her with concerns relating to the quality of  
90 service. She also expressed concern with how much rates will increase at the end of the three-year  
91 term.

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93 **Councilor Hernandez** suggested the extension can be granted and the City could go out for bid  
94 in a year.

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96 **Scott Gerken** indicated all the contract terms and remedies would still be in effect if the contract  
97 is renewed for an additional three years. It is suggested that prices would go up if the contract was  
98 bid out now, rather than in three years. The City negotiated an additional three years at a lower  
99 price seven years ago so residents could enjoy those rates for 10 years. However, if the City does  
100 not wish to have the lower rates, they can negotiate with the hauler for any changes, including  
101 prices. The sole issue for discussion is whether the City wants to exercise their option for an  
102 additional three years at the current price.

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104 **Councilor Saunders** recounted instances in which neighbors had issues with the service, but  
105 overall, he indicated he believed the service is good. He mentioned that there are always little  
106 glitches in any trash hauling contract, but they still think the contract they signed is a good one.  
107 He discussed the possibility of looking at alternatives for waste management, such as having the  
108 City handle facilities themselves or getting bids from other trash haulers. He also touched on the  
109 topic of recycling and the challenges and costs associated with it.

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111 **Mayor Kelley** spoke on the cost and frequency of solid waste collection for the City of Mascotte,  
112 the City of Clermont, and the City of Groveland. He indicated he is in support of keeping the  
113 contract the way it is. He indicated he is not opposed to the City handling waste collection, but it  
114 is a major capital outlay to achieve this.

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116 **Councilor Hernandez** asked for the cost of the recycling collection.

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118 **Skip McCall**, GFL Contract Manager, indicated he was unsure of the exact cost, but it is broken  
119 out individually, separate from the cost of regular trash pickup.

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121 **Councilor Hernandez** inquired if it would be possible to remove the recycling pick up day, but  
122 pay the same price, in order to hedge a cost increase after three years.

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124 **Mayor Kelley** suggested a lot of residents use the recycle day as a third pick up day. He indicated  
125 he is opposed to removing recycle day.

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127 **Skip McCall** indicated the recycled material is taken to a waste energy facility and turned into  
128 energy, which the City receives credit for.

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130 **Mark Johnson** indicated the cost for the pickup of recycling material is \$2.75 a month.



**Public Comment**

**Nathan Focht**, 707 Blue Citrus Ln., suggested by keeping the contract how it is it would save money for the next three years.

**Wally Szkwarko**, 802 S. Main Ave., suggested he is generally satisfied with the service and praised the hard work of the waste haulers. He recommended extending the contract with the service provider and expressed the importance of keeping the recycling pick up day.

**MOTION by Councilor Saunders, SECONDED by Councilor Hernandez to approve Item 5: Ordinance 2023-32 Extension to Solid Waste Collection Franchise to GFL Solid Waste Southeast, LLC – Second Reading**

**Roll Call Vote**

<b>Serviss</b>	<b>NAY</b>
<b>Flinn</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Kelley</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Hernandez</b>	<b>AYE</b>
<b>Saunders</b>	<b>AYE</b>

**MOTION PASSED: 4-1**

**Item 6: Discussion – Downtown CRA Projects**

**Mayor Kelley** asked for this item to be a workshop discussion which would be held in March. He asked for staff to draft a letter to send to residents informing them of the workshop and the projects to be discussed and to have the letter ready for Council's review at the next City Council meeting.

**FINAL PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no comments.

**REPORTS****Mark Johnson:**

- Updated, in response to a question at the prior City Council meeting, that the City does have internet redundancies in place. Currently, the City utilizes cellular backup and stated staff has looked into Starlink and if this is something the Council wishes to pursue, we can present pricing and other options at an upcoming City Council meeting.
- Indicated he has not received an update from Lake County regarding signage and the striping but will work to have this information for the next City Council meeting.
- Stated GFL has provided dumpsters at no cost for holiday packaging disposal. These dumpsters are located at City Hall and the Minneola Athletic Complex.
- Mentioned the City created a Facebook post informing residents to watch for crime and other suspicious activity.

There was a discussion regarding the status of the Public Safety Building next to City Hall and the new Library on Main Avenue.

**Scott Gerken:**

- Indicated a resolution would be brought to the next City Council meeting which authorizes staff to investigate and provide recommendations on how to regulate “head shops”. It would also inform business owners the city is looking into these types of uses.

**Councilor Hernandez:**

- Spoke about selecting a Lake County resident as a Professional Liaison for the Planning & Zoning Commission.
  - **Mayor Kelley** suggested this opportunity should be open to all Lake County residents who reside in the City’s utility service area.
  - **Mark Johnson** asked if it was the Council’s consensus to create a Facebook post on Thursday to advise Lake County residents of the Planning & Zoning Commission professional liaison opportunity. This opportunity would remain open until next Friday, January 12, 2024.

**City Council** consensus was to post the Planning & Zoning Commission professional liaison opportunity on Facebook on Thursday and accept requests until Friday, January 12, 2024.

**Mayor Kelley**

- **Mayor Kelley** requested for the City to make a social media post containing a comparison showing what Minnecola Ridge was originally approved for, what changes they requested, and what revisions they made to these proposed changes.
- **Mark Johnson** confirmed council is requesting a social media post be made, containing a spreadsheet showing what Minnecola Ridge was originally approved for, what changes they requested, and what revisions they made to the proposed changes. He also suggested he would circulate this spreadsheet to the developer to confirm its accuracy prior to posting it on social media.
- **Mayor Kelley** confirmed that was the Council’s intent and requested it be posted on social media by next Thursday, January 11.

**MOTION by Councilor Flinn, SECONDED by Councilor Serviss, to adjourn.**

**AYE:** Serviss, Flinn, Kelley, Hernandez, Saunders

**NAY:** None

**MOTION PASSED: 5-0**

*(Meeting adjourned at 8:17 P.M.)*

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**ATTEST:**

  
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Kristine Thompson, City Clerk

  
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Pat Kelley, Mayor

