City Council
Special Meeting
September 18, 2025

The City of Titusville City Council met in special session on Thursday, September 18, 2025, at Titusville City Hall, second floor, Council Chamber, 555 South Washington Avenue, Titusville, Florida 32796. Mayor Connors called the City Council meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Those present in the Council Chamber included Mayor Andrew Connors, Vice-Mayor Herman A. Cole, Jr., Col USAF Retired, and City Council Members Megan Moscoso, Jo Lynn Nelson, and Dr. Sarah Stoeckel. City Manager Thomas Abbate, Finance Director Teri Butler, City Clerk Wanda Wells, and the City's Executive Leadership Team (Department Heads or designees) were also present.

Pre-recorded procedures for public comment, participation, and orderly conduct were played for all individuals that were in attendance or watching the meeting.

Mayor Connors requested a moment of silence. He then led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

xxx

<u>City's Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026</u> - City Manager Abbate reviewed the purpose of the special City Council meeting, as provided in the Council agenda packet. The request was to conduct the final public hearing on the City's Proposed Annual Budget for Fiscal Year 2026; conduct the final reading of the related Ordinances to adopt a final General Operating millage rate; conduct the final reading of Ordinances proposing the Fiscal Year 2026 Water/Sewer and Solid Waste rates; and adopt the final General Operating, Enterprise and Capital Budgets. The request also included the adoption of the following proposed ordinances:

Ordinance No. 27-2025 - Providing for the Millage for the Operation of the City of Titusville for Fiscal Year 2026;

Ordinance No. 28-2025 - Adopting the General and Related Budgets of the City of Titusville for the Fiscal Year 2026;

Ordinance No. 29-2025 - Amending the schedule of fees for Water and Sewer service by increasing the changes and rates;

Ordinance No. 30-2025 - Amending the Code of Ordinances by increasing the Solid Waste service charges and rates; and

Ordinance No. 31-2025 - Adopting the Enterprise Funds and Capital Improvements Programs of the City of Titusville for the Fiscal Year 2026.

Finance Director Teri Butler gave a presentation that highlighted the following information:

- Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Annual Operating and Capital Budget Public Hearing
- Budget process

- Budget related ordinances for final reading
- *Florida Statutes* Chapter 200 regarding procedures for Public Hearings
- FY 2026 Proposed Budget All Funds Revenues of $156,961,516
- FY 2026 Proposed Budget All Funds Expenditures of $156,961,516
- *Florida Statutes* 200.065 and statute language required to be read publicly, which was read aloud by Finance Director Butler, as followed:

    - *The City of Titusville, Florida is the Taxing Authority*
    - *$6.1938 is the Rolled-back Millage Rate*
    - *The operating millage rate to be levied is $6.3000 mils*
    - *The Percent of increase over the rolled-back millage rate is $1.71%, which is considered a tax increase*

- Millage Rate
- Use of Millage Over Rollback Rate
- Fiscal Year 2026 General Fund Proposed Budgeted Revenues $62,314,756 (pie chart)
- Fiscal Year 2026 General Fund Proposed Budgeted Expenditures $62,314,756 (pie chart)
- Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed ad valorem per resident comparison (histogram)
- General Fund millage comparisons
- Proposed property tax on a residential home in Titusville

Utility Rate Changes –

- Stormwater and Solid Waste Rate Proposals (histograms and line graphs used in presentation)
- Stormwater Rate Comparison (Single Family)
- Solid Waste Rate Comparison (Residential)
- Solid Waste Rate Comparison (Commercial 4x1)
- Typical residential monthly bill for ¾" (inch) meter at existing and proposed FY 2026 rates
- Typical commercial monthly bill for ¾" (inch) meter at existing and proposed FY 2026 rates
- Typical commercial monthly bill for 1" (inch) meter at existing and proposed FY 2026 rates
- Water / Wastewater Rate Comparison (Residential)
- Combined Utility Rate Comparison (Residential)
- Fiscal Year 2026 Follow Up Items
- Fiscal Year 2026 Follow Up Items

Attorney Stokes reviewed the proposed actions for City Council, including reading the related budget ordinances into the public record, opening the final public hearing on each budget and related ordinance, allowing public comment on each ordinance, and amending the tentative budget if deemed necessary by the City Council.

xxx

Ordinance No. 27-2025 –

Attorney Stokes read Ordinance No. 27-2025 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TITUSVILLE, FLORIDA, PROVIDING FOR THE MILLAGE FOR THE OPERATION OF THE CITY OF TITUSVILLE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE, for the second time and by title only.

Mayor Connors opened the final public hearing on Ordinance No. 27-2025.

Stan Johnston requested Council appropriate funds for equipment that detected sewer leaks, and any sewage or harmful chemicals that may be sprayed in fountains located in ponds at public parks, obtaining professional advice from engineers, concerns for forever chemicals in drinking water, testing for toxins and harmful compounds in the Indian River Lagoon, following the public participation rules, etc.

There was no Council discussion.

Motion:
Member Nelson moved to adopt Ordinance No. 27-2025 and the tentative millage rate for the operation of the City of Titusville at $6.3000 mils, which was a 1.71% increase above the rolled-back millage rate of $6.1938 mils, as recommended. Vice-Mayor Cole seconded the motion and the roll call vote was:

Member Moscoso	Yes
Member Nelson	Yes
Mayor Connors	Yes
Vice-Mayor Cole	Yes
Member Stoeckel	Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

The percentage increase above the rolled back millage rate was a percentage increase in property taxes that was tentatively adopted by the City Council.

The public hearing on Ordinance No. 27-2025 was closed.

xxx

Ordinance No. 28-2025 –

Attorney Stokes read Ordinance No. 28-2025 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TITUSVILLE, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE GENERAL AND RELATED BUDGETS OF THE CITY OF TITUSVILLE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2026; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE, for the second time and by title only.

Mayor Connors opened the final public hearing on Ordinance No. 28-2025.

Stan Johnston, a professional engineer and land surveyor, displayed signs at the back of the Council Chamber, to which he discussed the meaning and information on his signs. His concern was about fraud, flooding people's property, Council Members were not responding to his emails and calls that discussed his concerns and that were related to budgeting, etc.

Motion:
Member Nelson moved to adopt Ordinance No. 28-2025 and the General and Related Budgets of the City of Titusville for Fiscal Year 2026, as recommended. Vice-Mayor Cole seconded the motion.

Mayor Connors, along with Council and staff discussed:

- The procedures to "roll or earmark" any remaining funds from the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 budget into the FY 2026 Budget
- Ideas for the use of any remaining funds from FY 2025, such as providing services to another entity that desired holding a parade to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States (ideas may include covering the cost for the road closure or assisting with the cost(s) for a permit from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
- Awaiting the formal closure of the FY 2025 budget to see how much funding was available
- Returning to Council in January 2026 to provide cost estimates for the suggestion made by Mayor Connors regarding assisting the community to hold a commemorative parade
- Palm Bay was doing something similar to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the U.S. and observing their preparations
- *State Sunshine Laws* and legal guidance for Council Members on what they could and could not discuss outside Council meetings
- The City's annual financial audit and the City's current auditing firm
- Regarding financial auditing, *Florida Statutes* governance, how an auditing selection committee was assembled, etc.
- Human Resources Department - The budget for professional services from FY 2025 as compared to FY 2026 indicated the costs had decreased. Line-item budget details for the budgeted amount(s) and reasons for the decrease from FY 2025 to FY 2026, to which staff would need to report back to the Mayor and provide a full accounting, in order to provide the details the Mayor was seeking. The budget had also been revised and a comparison to the prior budget was also discussed

Member Stoeckel advised that she observed a decrease in the costs for professional services in other departments (Community Relations used as example) and her desire to receive a full accounting or line-item budget details for the budgeted amount(s).

Member Moscoso and staff discussed *actual* versus *budgeted* costs for professional services for Economic Development, in comparison to FY 2023 and the FY 2026 proposed budget. Staff advised that Council previously directed staff to follow-up or complete a couple or few directives in the area of Economic Development. These cost differences and professional services were attributed to consulting fees for Kimley-Horn. Member Moscoso desired receiving the budget details on these kinds of items. Staff would provide the substantive amount of information requested.

Mayor Connors commented on marketing and budgeting for Economic Development and/or benefits consultants for Human Resources. He commented on the importance of setting aside an appropriate amount of funding, in order to obtain the best advice possible, as well as setting aside enough funding to assist with aligning everyone's goals. Mayor Connors and staff also discussed learning more on how much the Mayor or Council desired budgeted on these items, contingency funds that could be used or that were available at the City Manager's discretion if "something came-up later", the significant amount of money to get started or that was set aside, and if Council desired more, the Council would also need to decide what to take out of the budget. Mayor Connors reiterated that he observed the cost for professional services for Human Resources went down from the prior fiscal year. He only wanted to make sure whether Council or staff desired more funding for this item.

Mayor Connors's last question concerned the City's organizational chart and whether the City Council was charged with approving the chart. Attorney Stokes advised the organizational chart was a justification for the dollar amounts and the line items. The organizational chart was in the purview of the City Manager. The City Manager also had the flexibility to make changes to the organizational chart. This was a feature of the Council-Manager form of government.

Mayor Connors commented on clarifying the purpose of *City Charter, Article II. – The Council, Section No. 15, Section 15(4)*, which indicated "Establish other administrative departments and distribute the work of divisions within the departments". Attorney Stokes stated that establishing the departments was one of Council's functions, but how the departments were staffed fell under the City Manager's purview. The nature of when this sometimes came-up might be when Council desired outsourcing services to the private sector or other governmental agencies.

Member Stoeckel advised City Council set policy, such as deciding what services to provide to the citizens and public, but the City Manager decided how to implement City Council's policies. Member Stoeckel added that she taught public budgeting (University level) and was aware that some public agencies did not provide an organizational chart in their budgets. She appreciated that Titusville did include the organizational chart in the budget for transparency purposes. Policy was the Council's focus.

Mayor Connors and Attorney Stokes discussed procedures whereby the City Council appointed the external auditor and the City Manager appointed the internal auditor. Mayor Connors further discussed *City Charter, Article II. – The Council, Section No. 15, Section 15(6)*, "Appoint a city auditor", and *City Charter, Article II. – The Council, Section No. 27. - Independent annual audit.*

Attorney Stokes supported comments made by Mayor Connors that it would be a conflict of interest for an external auditor to report to the City Manager. Additionally, Mayor Connors made recommendations for the future auditing of the City's budget, including having the auditor (internal auditor implied) report to the City Attorney, assigning an individual Council Member to meet with the auditor once a month, etc.

Member Stoeckel was open to Mayor Connors' ideas on auditing. She also supported current procedures for having an internal auditor to ensure everything was being done correctly, not because she felt anyone was doing anything wrong, but to ensure the correct procedures and documentation were in order for budget auditing purposes. For example, her requests to travel on behalf of City business. This was to ensure the City was in compliance with the laws and should a Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) audit occur, there would be no issues, etc.

Vice-Mayor Cole commented on his many years of experience and knowledge with the Parrish Medical Center (hospital) budget, the hospital's use of an audit committee that was made up of board members, and the audit committee reported to the hospital board members for the purpose of facilitating or conducting an external audit of the hospital's budget. Vice-Mayor Cole advised the hospital's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) received the external audit results of the budget only after it was presented to the hospital board (after-the-fact), which occurred in January each year.

Council and staff discussed the process for Council selecting the external auditor to review the City's budget, *Florida Statutes* governance on these matters (*Florida Statutes* Chapter 218.391), Council reviewing the Request for Proposal (RFP), having a separate committee to which the City's Finance Director was not allowed to participate, utilizing assistance from other agencies for the committee's make-up, such representatives from the Sherriff's Office, the Property Appraiser's Office, a Member of City Council, the committee was charged with reporting back to City Council with their recommendations on hiring an external auditor, the City Council hired the external auditor, etc.

Member Stoeckel advised the Council could bring this subject up at an upcoming regular City Council meeting.

The roll call vote on Ordinance No. 28-2025 was:

Member Nelson	Yes
Mayor Connors	Yes
Vice-Mayor Cole	Yes
Member Stoeckel	Yes
Member Moscoso	Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

The public hearing on Ordinance No. 28-2025 was closed.

xxx

Ordinance No. 29-2025 –

Attorney Stokes read Ordinance No. 29-2025 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TITUSVILLE, FLORIDA, AMENDING SECTION 21-241 AND 21-243 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES BY AMENDING AND INCREASING THE SCHEDULE OF RATES AND CHARGES FOR WATER AND SEWER SERVICE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY,

REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES, AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND INCORPORATION INTO THE CODE, for the second time and by title only.

Mayor Connors opened the final public hearing on Ordinance No. 29-2025.

Stan Johnston was opposed to the proposed ordinance. His concerns were related to water and sewer and specifically two dams at the senior center that he felt were illegal due to not having compensatory storage and surveying. He also expressed his beliefs that illegal and unconstitutional taking of property had occurred due to subsequent flooding that resulted, other dams that were illegal, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was not contacted as it related to constructing five dams, auditing the budget, concerns for fraud from his viewpoints on prior reports he advised were intended to look into his prior concerns, etc.

Motion:
Member Nelson moved to approve Ordinance No. 29-2025 amending schedule of fees for water and sewer service, as recommended. Vice-Mayor Cole seconded the motion.

There was no Council discussion.

The roll call vote was:

Mayor Connors	Yes
Vice-Mayor Cole	Yes
Member Stoeckel	Yes
Member Moscoso	Yes
Member Nelson	Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

The public hearing on Ordinance No. 29-2025 was closed.

xxx

Ordinance No. 30-2025 –

Attorney Stokes read Ordinance No. 30-2025 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TITUSVILLE, FLORIDA; AMENDING SECTION 16-116 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES BY AMENDING AND ESTABLISHING AN INCREASE TO THE RESIDENTIAL MONTHLY CHARGE FOR SOLID WASTE, RECYCLING AND ADDITIONAL CART FEES; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 16-117 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES BY AMENDING AND ESTABLISHING AN INCREASE TO THE COMMERCIAL DUMPSTER AND COMMERCIAL CAN MONTHLY CHARGES FOR SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING FEES AND INCREASING THE COMMERCIAL DUMPSTER RENTAL FEES; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 16-118 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES BY AMENDING AND ESTABLISHING AN INCREASE IN THE EXTRA CHARGES FOR SPECIAL SERVICES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES, AN

EFFECTIVE DATE AND INCORPORATION INTO THE CODE, for the second time and by title only.

Mayor Connors opened the final public hearing on Ordinance No. 30-2025.

Stan Johnston highlighted an email that he sent to Council earlier in the day. He also praised the Public Works Director that oversaw Solid Waste.

Motion:
Member Nelson moved to approve Ordinance No. 30-2025 amending the Code of Ordinances by increasing the Solid Waste service charges and rates, as recommended. Vice-Mayor Cole seconded the motion.

There was no Council discussion.

The roll call vote was:

Vice-Mayor Cole	Yes
Member Stoeckel	Yes
Member Moscoso	Yes
Member Nelson	Yes
Mayor Connors	Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

The public hearing on Ordinance No. 30-2025 was closed.

xxx

Ordinance No. 31-2025 –

Attorney Stokes read Ordinance No. 31-2025 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF TITUSVILLE, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE ENTERPRISE FUND AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM BUDGETS OF THE CITY OF TITUSVILLE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2026; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE, for the second time and by title only.

Mayor Connors opened the final public hearing on Ordinance No. 31-2025.

Stan Johnston read from an email he sent to Council earlier in the day that expressed his concerns for errors in a 1985 Freshwater Management Study, 10 problems he mentioned in his email, etc.

Motion:
Member Nelson moved to approve Ordinance No. 31-2025 adopting the Enterprise Fund and Capital Improvements Program Budgets of the City of Titusville for the Fiscal Year 2026, as recommended. Vice-Mayor Cole seconded the motion.

There was no Council discussion.

The roll call vote was:

Member Stoeckel	Yes
Member Moscoso	Yes
Member Nelson	Yes
Mayor Connors	Yes
Vice-Mayor Cole	Yes

The motion carried unanimously.

The public hearing on Ordinance No. 31-2025 was closed.

xxx

Mayor Connors commended staff on the preparation of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 budget. City Manager Abbate also praised staff and commented on the City having been able to retire (paid in full) the Riverfront Property Acquisition bonds during 2025 that resulted in a current millage that was $.19 mils lower than the previous year as well as that, as well as the City Council adopting the lowest millage rate in 17 years.

xxx

Petitions from the Public Present –

Stan Johnston commented and further read from an email he sent to Council earlier in the day that expressed his concerns on fraud, the City Council was not responding to his concerns, etc.

xxx

Motion:
Member Nelson moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:51 p.m. Vice-Mayor Cole seconded the motion. None of the Council objected and the meeting was adjourned.

____
Andrew Connors, Mayor

ATTEST:

____
Wanda F. Wells, City Clerk