

CITY OF WALKER COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

February 10, 2025

6:00 PM

The regular meeting of the Walker Mayor and City Council was held at Walker City Hall—13600 Aydell Lane Monday, February 10, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jimmy Watson, followed with prayer led by Mr. Eric Cook. The Municipal Clerk, Tammy Payton, conducted the roll call of the council members.

The following council members were present: David Clark, Eric Cook, Tracy Girlinghouse and Scarlett Milton-Major. Councilman Gary Griffin was absent.

Mayor Watson called for a motion to adopt/approve the minutes of the January 13, 2025 council meeting. With there being no comments or objections, a motion was made by Mr. Cook, seconded by Mr. Girlinghouse, to approve said minutes.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Girlinghouse, Major
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Griffin

Finance director, Mike Cotton, presented the December 2024 finance report. It was reported that the net profit ending December 31, 2024 was \$2,281,614. The sales tax increased by 9.7%; gas revenue decreased by 8.1%. Mr. Cotton stated that gas is projected to increase in March. Gas meters were read prior to the snowstorm.

Mayor Watson called for a motion for the council meeting to enter into public hearing. The motion was made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Cook.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Girlinghouse, Major
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Griffin

The Ordinance to Ban the Sale of *Mitragyna Speciosa Korth*, also known as *Kratom* within the city limits of Walker, was brought before the council by Ms. Major.

Mayor Watson opened the floor to public comments. There were public statements made in support of the sale and medicinal use of *Mitragyna Speciosa Korth* (Kratom) and those in opposition to its sale/use. Those opposing the sale/use presented statistical data that supported the devastating physical and psychological side effects of *Mitragyna Speciosa Korth* (Kratom). A medical professional spoke of her first-hand account working in an emergency room. She witnessed the degree of damage this substance have the potential to cause. Information from law enforcement further reinforced the previous opposing comments.

With there being no further comments, a motion was made by Mr. Girlinghouse, seconded by Mr. Cook, to Enact Chapter 10, Section 10-3 to Ban the Sale of *Mitragyna Speciosa Korth* (a.k.a.) *Kratom*—Ordinance 02-2025-01.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Girlinghouse, Major
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Griffin

Ms. Major presented before the council the Ordinance to Approve Amendments to the City of Walker Unified Development Code (UDC) “Regarding Minor Subdivisions in R-80 Zoning”. Kresten Brown (Forte and Tablada) reviewed the proposed changes that was approved by resolution through the Planning and Zoning Commission on January 27, 2025.

Mayor Watson welcomed public comments. There were a few inquiries asking for clarification about the proposed UDC amendments.

With there being no further questions or comments, a motion was made by Ms. Major, seconded by Mr. Clark, to approve Ordinance 02-2025-02 as recommended by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Girlinghouse, Major
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Griffin

A motion was made by Ms. Major, seconded by Mr. Girlinghouse, to close the public hearing.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Girlinghouse, Major
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Griffin

City Attorney, Bobby King, gave an update on the status of the Geaux-Wider Project lawsuit. He reported that the lawsuit resulted in an injunctive relief settlement of \$21,350,000. The funds will be given to the Department of Transportation and Development. DOTD will be responsible for administering corrective drainage measures in Livingston and East Baton Rouge parishes.

Mayor Watson read aloud an emailed message from one of our gas customers who expressed her gratitude for Larry Williams. She complimented him for being an excellent City of Walker employee. Larry contacted her daily asking if everything was going well with her heating. His attention and concern for their needs during the snowstorm was a great relief to she and her neighbors.

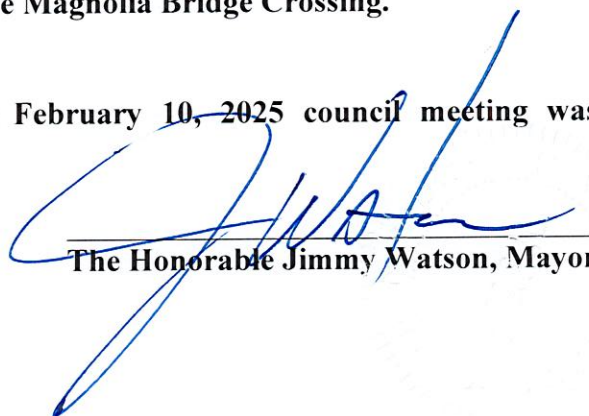
Larry Williams gave a Natural Gas System Update slideshow presentation which provided an overview of the Florida Gas Transmission Gate Project. He reviewed the modernization accomplishments completed to date.

Mayor Watson signed a flood awareness proclamation declaring March 2025 - Flood Awareness Month. The proclamation was read aloud by Tammy Payton.

Additional Comments:

- ❖ The Kroux of Barkus parade event and the Farmer's Market is scheduled for Saturday, February 22, 2025 @ 11:00 a.m.—Sidney Hutchinson Park.
- ❖ Mary Maiden announced that Club Outreach has its Black History Program also on February 22, 2025. It's scheduled to start @ 10:00 a.m.
- ❖ Jamie Etheridge gave a brief update on the Magnolia Bridge Crossing.

With no other matters to discuss, the February 10, 2025 council meeting was adjourned.


The Honorable Jimmy Watson, Mayor

Attest:

Tammy Payton, Municipal Clerk