



TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2015 – 7:00 PM
PIERSON TOWN HALL**

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1. Call meeting to order

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10 Chairman Samuel G.S. Bennett called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and asked Town Clerk
11 Spelorzi to take the roll call.

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2. Roll call

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PRESENT:

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Chairman Samuel G.S. Bennett

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Vice Chairman James Peterson

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Councilmember Herbert Bennett

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Councilmember Robert Greenlund

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Councilmember Thomas R. Larrivee

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Mayor James Sowell

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Also present were Town Foreman Louis Longo, Town Planner Jim Smith and representatives
24 from the Volusia County Sheriff's office.

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3. Invocation and pledge of allegiance

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Chaplain Danny Crosby gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

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4. Approval of Minutes – Chairman Samuel Bennett

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a. Council Meeting March 24, 2015

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Chair Bennett read the date for the Minutes and asked if there are any changes/additions or
35 deletions and hearing none he entertained a motion for approval of the minutes listed above.

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**Councilmember Tom Larrivee made the motion to approve the minutes listed above;
38 seconded by Councilmember Herbert Bennett. All agreed; motion carries.**

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Chair Bennett stated that the Town is honored to have Chaplain Crosby to give the invocation
41 and asked him to introduce himself. Chaplain Crosby stated that he is a Battalion Chaplain
42 with the National Guard and has been wearing the uniform for over nineteen (19) years.

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5. NEW BUSINESS

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46 a. Proclamation designating May 10th, 2015 as World Lupus Day 2015 as
47 requested by the Lupus Foundation of Florida – Mayor James Sowell
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49 Chair Bennett turned the item over to Mayor Sewell who summarized the context and asked
50 the Town Clerk to read the proclamation, which she did.

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52 Chair Bennett commented on the devastating effects of the disease and was thankful that the
53 Mayor put this on the agenda.

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55 b. Renewal of Airport Liability Insurance for 2015-2016 and to elect or decline
56 terrorism coverage – Vice Chairman James Peterson

57 Chair Bennett read the item and turned it over to Vice Chair James Peterson who gave a brief
58 history.

59 **Councilmember Herbert Bennett made the motion to approve the renewal of Airport**
60 **Liability Insurance for 2015-2016 and to elect terrorism coverage; seconded by**
61 **Councilmember Tom Larrivee. All agreed; motion carries.**

62

63 c. Discuss abatement received from IRS for \$14,792.99 regarding 2011 W-2
64 forms not filed on time – Chairman Samuel G.S. Bennett

65 Chair Bennett gave a brief history about a form that was not filed and thus penalties were
66 incurred and proceeded to read the letter from the IRS which stated that the penalties were
67 abated and the account had been adjusted to a zero balance.

68 The Council commended the Chair and the Town Clerk for their diligent work in this matter.

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70 d. Update on the 2015 application for project prioritization – Feasibility Study
71 for a Bicycle/ Pedestrian Project for Highway US 17 in Pierson (1 of 2) and
72 County Road 3 in Pierson (2 of 2) – James Smith, Town Planner

73 Chair Bennett read the item and turned it over to Town Planner Jim Smith who gave updates
74 on what staff had done in regards to submitting the applications for the Feasibility Study for
75 the Bicycle/Pedestrian and County Road 3 Projects in Pierson. Mr. Smith stated that the
76 projects were moving forward as staff had received some matching funding as well as
77 numerous letters of support.

78 Mr. Smith continued that the Town of Pierson is now competing with Flagler County for the
79 limited funds that are available, but feels hopeful that Pierson has a good chance of receiving
80 some of those funds.

81 The Council was pleased and had no additional questions.

82 Mr. Smith informed the Council that during today's Planning Commission meeting the Board
83 suggested doing a study for set-back requirements along US 17 to be compliant to the potential
84 widening of that roadway and that they had asked him to bring this suggestion to the Council's
85 attention.

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87 Chair Bennett stated that this item could be discussed tonight and that he is in favor of doing
88 such a study to be proactive. Mr. Smith stated that he would contact FDOT about their right-
89 of-way requirements and that he would be able to get more detailed information.

90 The Council decided to make this an agenda item for the next Council meeting as per the
91 recommendation from the Planning Commission.

92 Mr. Smith asked if the Council had any additional questions or comments, which they did not.

93 e. Presentation of the Economic Strategic Plan Grant received by Mr. Andrew
94 Landis of the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council – Chairman
95 Samuel G.S. Bennett

96 Mr. Smith asked to introduce Andrew Landis of the East Central Florida Regional Planning
97 Council, who has been instrumental in receiving a grant from the Florida Department of
98 Economic Opportunity to prepare a strategic economic plan for the Town of Pierson.

99 Mr. Landis gave a presentation about who his organization is, what they do; the history on the
100 grant; its eligibility requirements, as well as the progress he has made in getting input from
101 the Planning Commission (during their meeting just prior to this Town Council meeting) and
102 the Public in order to prepare for the strategic economic plan.

103 Discussion ensued about including the hookup to sewer and water component to entice new
104 development and being proactive as a Town.

105 Ms. Sue Elliott stated that she and Ms. Roach learned how to write grants during a recent
106 workshop and that they could produce a grant to apply for water and waste water funds that
107 are being offered.

108 Councilmember Greenlund felt it was important for Pierson to invest in this type of
109 infrastructure and an audience member (name not given) affirmed that he has paid for sewer
110 hookup.

111 Mr. Landis felt the need to focus on visioning sessions and polling stakeholders and all
112 segments of the population to get more quantitative information, but also focus on where to
113 wisely invest any potential grant monies.

- 114 • Pierson is lacking until proper infrastructure is in place
- 115 • Great ecosystems
- 116 • Golf course – revenue making
- 117 • Transportation – 4 lane (council asked for Mr. Landis’ assistance in getting this quest
- 118 accomplished; Carmen to give pertinent resolution to Mr. Landis)

119 Mr. Smith spoke on enhancing the Parks.

120 Discussion ensued about doing a visioning sessions to include large corporations and focus
121 on public outreach.

122 Mr. Smith stated that Tallahassee has been a great help to rural communities, but recent
123 restructuring of regional planning groups may have a negative impact.

124 Mr. Landis stated that the ECFRPC has been receiving State funding since the 70's and that
125 unfortunately they have lost this funding and that heavy-handed past practices by some
126 planning councils may have tinted public and political opinion on the benefits of having these
127 types of organizations.

128 Mr. Landis asked if change is required than what kind of changes should be made.

129 Councilmember Greenlund would like to see Pierson remain a farming community that
130 coexists with non-farming industries.

131 Micah Bennett, an audience member, felt that something needs to be done to support the
132 educational level of the younger generation to stay in Pierson and be able to find a job after
133 graduation.

134 Ms. Sue Elliott commented that starter homes for young couples or apartments for seniors
135 where needed in Pierson. Ms. Elliott also commented on the need for connectivity of roads so
136 highway travel can be circumvented.

137 Ms. Roxanne McTeague suggested creating entertainment venues.

138 Councilmember Tom Larrivee stated that he was not born in Pierson but has lived there for
139 over 50 years now and that the farming end needs to be nurtured and marketed to coexist with
140 non-farming to increase Pierson's population. He continued that any success again hinges on
141 the proper infrastructure.

142 Discussion ensued about how similar communities are tackling issues; how more growth
143 might make the fern growers pull out; how more population can mean more crime.

144 Mr. Landis suggested "playing up" all that Pierson has to offer and that the Town's
145 Comprehensive Plan is a great starting point. Mr. Landis encouraged everybody to contact
146 him with any suggestions thanked everybody for their time.

147 The Chair called for a five (5) minutes recess.

148 f. Discussion on backup personnel for Town Hall as needed – Chairman
149 Samuel G.S. Bennett

150 Chair Bennett stated that Town Clerk Spelorzi has informed him that the Utilities/Water
151 Clerk, Ms. Ward, has to be absent for two (2) weeks for jury duty and that Ms. Spelorzi would
152 like to bring in a resident to answer phones, take payments and greet the Public on an on-call
153 basis during that time.

154 Ms. Spelorzi gave a brief history that this has been past practice in her other jobs and that she
155 will need assistance during Ms. Ward's absence.

156 Discussion ensued about what is stated in the personnel policy and the Chair felt that contract
157 employees were not mentioned. Further discussion occurred about maybe creating a policy to
158 limit the length of time an employee can be contracted and the Council agreed that the Chair
159 can approve this kind of request without consulting the Council.

160 Micah Bennett suggested using High School Students from Taylor High School in a co-op
161 intern program. The Sheriff's office stated that Stetson College reaches out to them frequently
162 for accepting interns.

163 Ms. Spelorzi thanked the Council for their input and consideration.

164 **6. OLD BUSINESS**

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166 a. Re-announcement of the St Johns River Cleanup for 2015 - Chairman
167 Samuel G.S. Bennett

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169 Chair Bennett informed the Council about the clean-up event scheduled for 4/18/2015 from 8
170 – 11 a.m. and that the former Town Foreman is offering his boat to be used and encouraged
171 everybody to assist.

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173 b. Re-announcement of "Pop with a Cop" for April 23 2015 - Chairman
174 Samuel G.S. Bennett

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176 Chair Bennett informed the Council of an event called "Pop with a Cop" and encouraged
177 everybody in the Community to attend this meet and greet.

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179 c. Update on the Baseball Field Score Board – Water Committee
180 Chairman / Councilman Robert F. Greenlund

181 Chair Bennett read the item and turned it over to Councilmember Greenlund who stated that
182 if everything stayed on schedule, the score board should arrive before the next Council
183 meeting at the latest.

184 d. Update on Public Works Road Projects – Public Works Director/
185 Councilmember Herbert Bennett

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187 Chair Bennett read the item and turned it over to Councilmember Herbert Bennett who
188 updated the Council that the holes on CR 3 had been patched as well as the project on rerouting
189 the water almost being finished. Discussion ensued about proper placement of the hydrant to
190 avoid potential incidents with semi-trucks hitting the hydrant.

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192 Councilmember Bennett stated that he would contact Mr. Meeks for cost to repair the street
193 at Franklin and Cade and bring that info back at the next meeting if possible.

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195 **7. OTHER BUSINESS**

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197 a. Council and staff reports

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199 Vice Chair James Peterson had no comments

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201 Chair Bennett thanked Ms. Elliott and Ms. Roach for attending the grant writing workshop.
202 Ms. Elliott and Ms. Roach stated that there are online options to find out what grants are
203 available.

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Councilmember Bennett had no comments.

Councilmember Greenlund stated that he was contacted by the Pierson Saddle Club to find out if Public Works could help them level out the rodeo area as holes are developing. Discussion ensued that the Town owned the property and the Council agreed to assist. It was further discussed that there may be some issues about overwatering the grounds and to notify the Lion’s Club that the Town will be grading the arena.

Councilmember Tom Larrivee stated that the abandoned house has been removed and the Town Foreman was asked to put down grass seed. The Council complimented Public Works for their diligent work.

Councilmember Larrivee asked for an update on the unsightly conditions of a property. The Town Clerk informed him that she had to research other offending properties in the area not to give the perception that the Town is targeting a single property and that letters will be sent out to several properties soon.

Councilmember Larrivee further inquired about an update on the berm on Braddock. Ms. Spelorzi stated that due to an entry error the work order was never received, but that this had been rectified and that the issue will be addressed next week.

Mayor Sowell stated that he had completed the required ethics training and presented his certificate. Chair Bennett asked Ms. Spelorzi to email the Florida League of Cities to get a written notification of when the next training session is.

Mayor Sowell informed the Council that he became a great-grandfather to a little girl. The Council extended their congratulations.

Town Clerk Spelorzi informed the Council of:

- an Agricultural survey and that student surveyors will stay on public roads and would not trespass on private lands,
- on the dates and times of Public meetings taking place for a Volusia Transit Connector Study
- Ms. Sue Elliott suggesting having a town-wide cleanup and to offer prizes to the residents for participating.

Volusia County Sheriff’s office had no comments.

8. GOOD AND WELFARE (public participation)

Ms. Roach asked about the progress of the Charter Review. Ms. Spelorzi gave a history of the steps that have been taken to establish the committee.

Chair Bennett reminisced about the nice prayer delivered by Chaplain Crosby and asked that everybody please pray for the military but especially the local soldiers. Chair Bennett thanked

252 all the Veterans that were present during the meeting for their service and they received an
253 ovation.

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255 Councilmember Larrivee stated that one of his sons is currently on deployment in the Middle
256 East.
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258 **9. ADJOURNED**

259 **a. Chairman -**

- 261 i. Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, April 28, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.
262 ii. RFQ Opening of submitted packets: Monday, April 27, 2015 at 2:00
263 p.m.
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265 **Hearing no further business, meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM**

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267 Minutes prepared by: Minutes approved by:

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273 _____
274 Carmen M. Spelorzi

Samuel G.S. Bennett, Chairman