

**TOWN OF ASTATULA
MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MINUTES**



**THURSDAY APRIL 25, 2019
TOWN HALL**

Having been duly advertised as required by law, Mayor Robert Natale called the Planning Workshop to order at 6.00pm. Vice-Mayor Mack gave the invocation and Mayor Natale led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present:

Robert Natale, Mayor
Mitchell Mack, Vice-Mayor
Gayle Sikkema
Stephen Cross
Kimberly Kobera

Staff Present:

Graham Wells, Town Clerk

Roll Call was performed, and it was determined that a quorum was present.

Mayor Natale opened the meeting by welcoming Brandon Matulka, Executive Director from the Agency for Economic Prosperity at Lake County and also the twelve residents who were in attendance. He then handed over to Mr. Matulka to give an economic overview from the County's perspective. Mr. Matulka introduced himself as a resident of Astatula.

His department, the agency for economic development includes; Elevate Lake for business development, Visit Lake to encourage Tourism and the Lake County Fairgrounds. He went over a PowerPoint presentation showing economic indicators; population growth in the County from surrounding counties and from other States and job growth and employment, particularly in healthcare, manufacturing and agriculture.

He talked about the various segments of his agency and the personnel heading them up. He announced that Kroger is moving into the County with building of a new distribution plant which will create jobs and he went over the new volleyball facility which is funded from tourism taxes and is attracting major tournaments with competitors coming in from all over the country. He concluded with the new logo that the county was using.

Mayor Natale thanked him for his presentation and said that Astatula was reaching out to have stronger relationships with Lake County Government. He added that the Town was working on their own twenty-year plan and said the any help and guidance that the County can offer would be very welcome.

He and the Clerk had met with Fred Schneider from Lake County and Mike Woods from the Lake-Sumter MPO to discuss the future traffic impact on Astatula because of the development around us, in particular from Minneola.

County Road 561 is the main link between South and North Lake County and the traffic is only going to get worse over time. We had discussed at the meeting to have a loop road around the Town to take the traffic from 561 but there are no funds available at this time. The aim of Council is to change the zoning and regulate the growth surrounding Astatula so that it remains a rural gem in twenty years' time.

He talked about the issues concerning water and sewer and the State legislators and Water Authorities aims to regulate septic tanks and limit the installation of new ones. He said that the Town was looking at ways to fund the provision of water and sewer for new development and for the existing residents who want it without raising taxes or borrowing money.

There is considerable vacant land on the lake and outskirts of the town and the intention is to meet with the owners to discuss what they want to do with their land and incorporate their desires into the master plan so that we are all working together. He added that there was not money to develop in Astatula and we would therefore need to look outside which would include the annexation of surrounding property into the Town.

If the traffic could be moved away from the Town by a ring road we could start to look at how we develop the inside of Town. The Mayor said that small development would be preferable with maybe a dentist or laundromat or another restaurant. He talked about the potential to move Town Hall from its current location and build a new one. The site can then be used for commercial development and create a downtown area in a different part of Town, maybe down by the lake. This could include some retail and new restaurants. To do anything or bring in development, the town needs water and sewer or people will not come.

He then opened the floor for comments from the residents. To give fair and proportionate coverage of individuals opinions, a recording of the total discussion can be requested from the Clerk.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business Mayor Natale adjourned the meeting at 7:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert C. Natale, Mayor

ATTEST:

Graham Wells, Town Clerk