



Town Council Members Present

Zane Teeters, Jr. – Mayor
Cheryl Marinelli – Vice-Mayor
Kay MacQueen – Council Member
Susan Richert - Council Member
Kim Hanawalt – Council Member

Town Staff

Charles Jacien, Town Clerk
Wally Hoagland, Police Chief
David Langley, Attorney
Larry Story, Public Works Supervisor

Call to Order

Mayor Teeters called the Town Council meeting to order at **6:30 p.m.**

An invocation was provided by Josh Lane of Astatula Baptist Church, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

The following members were present:

- Vice Mayor Marinelli
- Councilmember MacQueen
- Councilmember Richert
- Councilmember Hanawalt
- Mayor Teeters

A quorum was present. Proper notice was confirmed.

Public Comment

Mayor Teeters opened public comment and reminded speakers that items not on the agenda would not be acted upon at this meeting, and that zoning, code enforcement, and procurement matters not listed on the agenda could not be discussed during public comment.

Farmer Banks Helfrich

Farmer Banks Helfrich spoke regarding the Giving Farm, a seven-acre farm near Clermont with multiple gardens, fruit trees, crop-share farming, community harvests, and educational farm tours. He

stated that the farm teaches residents how to grow their own food and provides takeaways such as trees, plants, and seeds.

Miriam Gomez

Miriam Gomez thanked Chief Hoagland for presenting CPR information at the senior gathering and stated that the presentation was helpful and well received.

Ms. Gomez also clarified comments from a previous meeting, stating that she had mistakenly said she obtained information from posted minutes when she had actually obtained it from the posted agenda. She apologized for the mistake and stated that she now understands the difference between an agenda and minutes.

She also stated that prior comments regarding Councilmember Marinelli had been “blown out of proportion” and that her concern was that prior minutes information did not fully capture what had been said.

Mr. Hopper

Mr. Hopper also thanked Chief Hoagland for the CPR class and stated that it was a positive community event that should be expanded.

Mr. Wilbur

Mr. Wilbur spoke against the Town paying the Mayor’s legal fees, stating that the Town should act as fiscal stewards and protect taxpayer funds. He expressed concern that payment of the fees appeared to reward intimidation tactics.

Vic Stone

Vic Stone spoke in support of Mayor Teeters, Mrs. Teeters, and the Council. He stated that the Town needed to stop backstabbing, rumors, and malicious statements, and said he believed the Mayor and Council had helped move the Town in a positive direction.

Public comment was closed.

Agenda Review

Council reviewed the agenda.

A request was made by C. Marinelli to add a short break between agenda items later in the meeting so staff could prepare for the following item.

Motion: To allow a short break between agenda items By C. Marinelli, Seconded by Z. Teeters

Vote: Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Councilmember MacQueen requested changes to the agenda order, including moving financial-related items earlier and removing Item 8.

Motion: To remove Item 8 from the agenda, identified as the discussion regarding the email sent to Councilmembers on April 20, 2026, by K. Macqueen

Vote: Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Motion: To swap Item 12 and Item 2 on the agenda and move related financial items earlier.

Vote: Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

There were no consent agenda items.

Staff Reports

Police Department — Chief Hoagland

Chief Hoagland reported the following April statistics:

- 657 calls for service
- 94 uniform traffic citations
- 325 written warnings
- 1,276 total school-zone camera hits
- Approximately 1,090 approved camera violations
- Approximately 280 rejected camera violations
- Average speed was reported at approximately 50 mph

Chief Hoagland also reported that he attended the Fallen Officers Memorial during Law Enforcement Week and described the ceremony as moving and meaningful.

He also reported attending an event in Travares, where he met D.J. Daniel, a young man who survived serious medical challenges and has been honored by numerous law enforcement agencies. Chief Hoagland stated that the Town presented D.J. Daniel with recognition and credentials as an honorary assistant to law enforcement. He suggested that Council consider creating a future award in D.J. Daniel's name for community members who persevere through serious hardship.

Public Works

Public Works reported that operations were going well.

Town Attorney — David Langley

The Town Attorney reported that a matter previously set for public auction was resolved after Ms. Rayford came in and paid the amount owed, including the Town's enforcement costs and prior attorney costs.

The Attorney also reported that the Town now owns the wastewater treatment plant and related park property through the developer's agreement and must update fees for services provided. He stated that the Mayor authorized him to engage assistance to review the process and keep costs as low as possible.

Town Clerk / Administration — Charles

Charles presented the April financial report and stated that reconciliations are being completed monthly, with staff continuing to meet with accountants every two weeks. He stated that no major anomalies were identified and that the Town appeared to be moving in the right direction financially.

He also reported:

- The water project advertisement will be run May 15.
- Bids would be opened on June 23 at Town Hall.
- The project includes a 250,000-gallon concrete ground storage tank, high-service pump buildings, four high-service pumps, and a 10,000-gallon painted steel tank with associated piping.
- The Town has a \$700,000 Community Development Block Grant available for the project.
- Preliminary work is underway on the impact fee study.
- Trash fees for new construction have been reinstated at the counter until they appear on the following year's tax bills.
- Past meeting minutes are being prepared and posted to the website.
- Ordinances from 2023 forward are being prepared for Municode posting.
- Astatula Reserve plans are under review and nearing readiness, pending minor corrections and water availability.

Community Events

The Community Events Coordinator reported:

- The second annual Easter Egg Hunt was held March 28, with approximately 230 attendees.
- Memorial weekend flag marking at the Astatula Cemetery is scheduled for May 23 at 10:00 a.m., followed by flag planting and banner presentation at Town Hall.

- The seventh annual Astatula Backpack Giveaway is scheduled for August 1 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., including a dunk tank, inflatable obstacle course, hot dog lunch, school supplies, backpacks, and possible free eye exams and haircuts.
 - Volunteers are needed for preparation, event stations, setup, and cleanup.
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Approval of Minutes

Council reviewed the minutes from April 14, 2026 and April 29, 2026.

Motion: To approve the April 14 and April 29 minutes, by Z. Teeters

Vote: Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

New Business

Ordinance 2026-03 — Second Reading / Development Moratorium

Council considered Ordinance 2026-03, extending a temporary moratorium on annexations and residential developments involving more than eight new dwelling units for up to 12 months.

It was discussed that the current moratorium would expire July 1, 2026, and the new ordinance would take effect upon expiration of the existing moratorium.

No public comment was received.

Motion: To read Ordinance 2026-03 by title only, by S. Richert

Second: By, K MacQueen

Vote: Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Ordinance 2026-03 was read by title only.

Council noted a typographical error in the ordinance, where “RO” should be corrected to “TO.”

Motion: To approve Ordinance 2026-03, by S. Richert

Second: by. K. MacQueen

Vote:

- Vice Mayor Marinelli — Yes
- Councilmember Hanawalt — Yes
- Councilmember Richert — Yes
- Councilmember MacQueen — Yes
- Mayor Teeters — Yes

Result: Motion passed 5-0.

Computer Upgrades / IT Services Contract

Council discussed proposals from iTech, the Town's current contractor, and Veriteks, a second contractor that submitted a proposal.

Charles stated that the hardware proposals were substantially similar, with some differences in equipment, and that the Town needed to separate police department functions from front-office functions for firewall and security purposes.

Chief Hoagland stated that the Police Department had experienced service issues with iTech for several months, including problems related to required certifications and CJIS/FDLE compliance. He stated that police staff had been doing work themselves through a help line because iTech could not access certain systems. He stated that although iTech had since obtained certifications, the level of service had not met expectations.

Representatives from iTech responded that they had been certified for other municipalities, had passed audits elsewhere, and stopped working on devices when instructed to do so during the audit process. They stated that they had completed additional certifications and had employees fingerprinted and background-checked.

A Veriteks representative stated that the company serves multiple government agencies and law enforcement entities, has experience with FDLE audits, provides 24/7 support, and would provide chief information officer-level support, budgeting assistance, and service tracking.

Council discussed that the monthly costs were close, although there was discussion about additional monthly charges for priority or urgent after-hours support.

The Mayor stated that the issue was not only cost, but also service, law enforcement needs, and the Town's responsibility to ensure officers have proper technical support and secure systems.

Motion: To discontinue services with iTech and begin services with Veriteks, by Z. Teeters

Second: by, S. Richert

Vote:

- Vice Mayor Marinelli — Yes
- Councilmember MacQueen — Yes
- Councilmember Hanawalt — Yes
- Councilmember Richert — Yes
- Mayor Teeters — Yes

Result: Motion passed **5-0**.

CGA Piggyback Contract — Planning Services

Council discussed approval of a piggyback contract for planning services through CGA.

It was explained that the Town needs expanded planning support, particularly for the impact fee study and future development review. Charles stated that hiring a full-time planner would likely cost approximately \$85,000 to \$90,000 and that using a contract planner would be more economical.

Council discussed that planning review costs would generally be passed through to applicants through permit and review fees. The Mayor explained that developers and contractors would pay deposits or review fees, and the Town would use those funds to pay the planner and engineer for their review time.

Council also discussed that the Town's current impact fees are outdated and that a study is necessary before the Town can properly update those fees.

Motion: To approve the CGA piggyback cooperative professional services agreement for planning services, by S. Richert

Second: by, C. Marinelli

Vote:

- Vice Mayor Marinelli — Yes
- Councilmember MacQueen — Yes
- Councilmember Hanawalt — Yes
- Councilmember Richert — Yes
- Mayor Teeters — Yes

Result: Motion passed **5-0**.

CSX Property / Ownership Information

Council discussed three strips of property along County Road 561 that may be owned by CSX and may affect access, right-of-way improvements, and future gateway/Main Street enhancements.

The Town Attorney explained that CSX stated it could not sell the property because it was unsure whether it had clear title. Title companies had been reluctant to run searches because of the complexity of old railroad property records. The Attorney explained that one option would be a quiet title action, but that would likely be costly and complicated. CSX offered to run its internal title review and provide ownership information for \$5,000.

Councilmember Richert stated that the issue originally arose because a resident could not refinance due to lack of legal access. She expressed concern about spending Town money to solve what may be one family's title issue and stated that it could set a precedent if other easement issues arise.

The Mayor stated that the proposed action was not to purchase the property, but only to find out who owns it. He stated that CSX may be willing to transfer the property if ownership is confirmed and that the Town needs to know who owns property within the Town. Council also discussed whether affected residents may or may not already have easements.

Council discussed ensuring that the \$5,000 cost applied to all three parcels and agreed that if the cost exceeded \$5,000, the matter should come back to Council.

Motion: To authorize the Town Attorney to move forward with obtaining ownership information from CSX for the CSX property at a cost not to exceed \$5,000, by Z. Teeters

Second: C. Marinelli

Vote:

- Vice Mayor Marinelli — Yes
- Councilmember MacQueen — No
- Councilmember Richert — No
- Councilmember Hanawalt — Yes
- Mayor Teeters — Yes

Result: Motion passed **3-2**.

FY 2026-2027 Road Maintenance Program

Mayor Teeters presented a proposal for a not-to-exceed budget of \$20,000 for roadway maintenance services by **Mid-Florida Paving** for a 12-month period or until funds are exhausted.

The proposed services include:

- Roadway assessment
- Pothole repair
- Shoulder repair
- General road maintenance
- Quarterly reporting to the Mayor, Charles, and Public Works

The Mayor stated that Mid-Florida Paving has performed Town paving work in the past and that Albert, the owner, has voluntarily patched potholes when leftover asphalt was available. Charles stated that

the proposal would also include a pavement surface evaluation rating assessment, which would help the Town plan future paving work based on measurable roadway conditions rather than informal observation.

Motion: To approve Mid-Florida Paving for roadway maintenance in an amount not to exceed \$20,000b by S. Richert

Second: by, C. Marinelli

Vote:

- Councilmember Hanawalt — Yes
- Vice Mayor Marinelli — Yes
- Councilmember MacQueen — Yes
- Councilmember Richert — Yes
- Mayor Teeters — Yes

Result: Motion passed **5-0**.

Rescission of Resolution 2023-26 — Medicare Reimbursement in Lieu of Town Insurance

Council discussed rescinding Resolution 2023-26, which allowed Medicare reimbursement in lieu of Town insurance.

The Mayor stated that he opposed the reimbursement program when it was originally approved, describing it as a program that benefited one individual and lacked appropriate fiscal control. He stated that the resolution should be removed so it could not be used in the future.

The Town Attorney stated that if approved, he would bring back the appropriate resolution to formally remove that section.

Motion: To rescind Resolution 2023-26, by K. MacQueen

Second: by, S. Richert

Vote:

- Vice Mayor Marinelli — Yes
- Councilmember MacQueen — Yes
- Councilmember Richert — Yes
- Councilmember Hanawalt — Yes
- Mayor Teeters — Yes

Result: Motion passed **5-0**.

School Resource Officer Agreement — 2026-2027

Council discussed renewal of the School Resource Officer agreement for the 2026-2027 school year.

It was stated that the agreement is substantially the same as prior years and covers a 10-month SRO contract, including salary, insurance, and retirement. The Mayor stated that protecting the school is important and that the Town has maintained an SRO for the school.

Council clarified that during summer months, when school is not in session and there is no summer school, the SRO works on the road.

Motion: To approve the School Resource Officer agreement for the 2026-2027 school year by K. MacQueen

Second: S. Richert

Vote:

- Councilmember MacQueen — Yes
- Vice Mayor Marinelli — Yes
- Councilmember Richert — Yes
- Councilmember Hanawalt — Yes
- Mayor Teeters — Yes

Result: Motion passed **5-0**.

Production of Minutes to Council

Councilmember MacQueen requested discussion on whether minutes could be provided to Council five business days after meetings.

Charles stated that he could not commit to producing minutes within that timeframe and explained that a three-hour meeting requires extensive time to transcribe, review, correct, proofread, and verify. He stated that AI or transcription software cannot be trusted without detailed human review because names, voices, and overlapping speech are often incorrect.

Council discussed the upcoming CivicPlus software and whether video or improved recording tools may make future review easier. It was stated that the system may be approximately 17 weeks away.

After discussion, Councilmember MacQueen withdrew the item.

Action: No action taken.

Donated Sick Leave Request — Police Department

Council discussed the Police Department's request to allow employees to transfer donated sick leave under the Town's Employee Policies and Procedures Manual, Section 7.13.

It was explained that employees with more than 200 hours of accrued sick leave may donate up to 40 hours to another employee who has exhausted sick, personal, and vacation leave and is otherwise facing unpaid leave due to a non-work-related injury.

The Mayor stated that the policy requires Council approval and that it was a good program that had been used before for a Town employee.

Motion: To approve the request allowing employees to gift sick leave to the affected employee in accordance with Town policy by Z. Teeters

Second: by, C. Marinelli

Vote:

- Vice Mayor Marinelli — Yes
- Councilmember MacQueen — Yes
- Councilmember Richert — Yes
- Councilmember Hanawalt — Yes
- Mayor Teeters — Yes

Result: Motion passed **5-0**.

The Mayor thanked Council on behalf of the injured officer.

16. Break / Meeting Extension

The meeting recessed at approximately **8:06 p.m.**

The meeting reconvened at approximately **8:36 p.m.**

Motion: To extend the meeting by, S. Richert

Second: K. Hanawalt

Vote: Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Discussion Regarding March 10, 2026 Public Comment by Miriam Gomez

Vice Mayor Marinelli requested that the audio of Miriam Gomez's March 10, 2026 public comment be played and entered into the record.

The audio was played. The comments included statements regarding Council communication, prior comments about Councilmember MacQueen, and concerns that Councilmembers should communicate more and avoid unnecessary conflict.

Vice Mayor Marinelli stated that, based on the transcript and audio, the matter should be put to rest.

The Mayor stated that the audio had been played and entered into the public record, as follows:

"Miriam Gomes. I just want to start out with I'm sad about what I've been seeing on this panel. I'm going to just continue reading my three minutes from here.

And I'm sorry if I don't look up much because this takes 30 minutes to read. So it's disappointing the negativity that's been coming from this panel. Mayor, do you remember when Kay sat in that seat there next to you when no one else wanted to sit there? She did.

Not only that, she defended you. And I heard her defend you on numerous occasions. Mayor, she has done many things to help this town.

But even though it seems like it's Kay McQueen time, Vice Mayor Cherly, many of us admire you and we're happy to see you come in once we notice you were for the town. But lately your focus has been a bit on negativity. You're being driven by hearsay and the positiveness that comes from this Councilwoman Kay you don't know anything about.

If you take the time to get to know her, her personality, and her background, you will see that she is also, as you, an asset to this town. Councilwoman Kay, I want to ask you not to pay close attention to people's personal opinions, opinions of others on this panel, especially when you're standing in for the people of Astatula. People's opinions and their petty complaints, don't let them influence you.

Kay is more than capable and qualified to handle her position as Councilwoman. And on top of that, she is kind, polite, and very respectful. Please get to know Kay and not the negativity portrayed.

Panel, could you please communicate with one another? Or better yet, start communicating. I believe if there were better communication, things would not only get taken care of sooner as a team, but these meetings wouldn't last so many hours long. I personally see you people ignoring one another and then leaving all of the comments and questions for the meetings.

Please. This needs to stop. Stop.

Speak up. Communicate. A few meetings back after the meeting finished, the waivers for the gathering, our senior citizens group were mentioned.

Someone stated, I haven't been given any waivers. Then it was brought up during the following meeting. Why hasn't the town received the signed waivers? Well, just so you know, those waivers have been here in the office since Jennifer was clerk.

All of this could have been avoided if someone would have come up to me and just asked, do you see how the senior citizen group leader looks irresponsible now? It's just an example, but people, we're adults and we need to communicate. Councilwoman Kay McQueen is reliable. She's an asset to the gathering, our senior citizens group and an asset to our town.

Whenever I ask her, she's more than willing to help and her experience and kindness go hand in hand. As I say, she's my right hand person and she could be yours too. Thank you for your time.”

Action: No further action taken.

Council Discussion — Purpose of Council, Public Records, Social Media, and Conduct

Vice Mayor Marinelli led a discussion regarding the purpose of Council, Sunshine Law limitations, public records, social media activity, and concerns about hostility surrounding Town matters.

She stated that Councilmembers are present to do the work of the Town, follow state and local law, and avoid personal agendas. She clarified that Councilmembers cannot discuss matters outside public meetings when those matters may come before Council, which is why some discussions must occur during meetings.

Vice Mayor Marinelli also clarified the difference between agendas and backup materials. She explained that agendas are posted publicly, but backup materials are provided to Council and are generally released through proper public records procedures. She expressed concern that backup materials had appeared on social media without going through the public records custodian, raising potential concerns about redactions, exemptions, and Chapter 119 compliance.

She requested that the Town Attorney review whether the Town should have an official public records policy.

Councilmembers discussed concerns about hostility in the community and on social media, including attacks on elected officials, staff, and residents. Councilmember Hanawalt stated that she was disappointed by the level of hatred and bitterness and urged residents to think for themselves and not rely on social media accusations.

Vice Mayor Marinelli also discussed emails she found on a Town-issued computer previously used by Mr. Wilbur. She stated that the emails appeared to show efforts to compile information against the Mayor, influence staff decisions, and involve a former Councilmember in matters that should have been handled administratively or by the proper department. She stated that she believed the

information was relevant because of continuing ethics complaints, social media allegations, and conflict affecting the Town.

The Mayor also stated that ethics complaints had escalated to FDLE complaints and that the issue appeared to be worsening as an election approached.

Councilmember MacQueen objected to any implication that she had leaked documents. Vice Mayor Marinelli stated that she did not know who released the documents and believed Councilmember MacQueen when she said she had not done so.

Action: No formal action taken.

19. Upcoming Meeting / Items for Next Meeting

The Mayor announced a special meeting scheduled for Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting is to correct and redo a resolution previously passed regarding the revolving loan fund due to language needing correction and clarification.

20. Water Restrictions

Council briefly discussed St. Johns River Water Management District watering restrictions.

It was stated that:

- Odd-numbered addresses water on Saturday only.
 - Even-numbered addresses water on Sunday only.
 - Restrictions apply even to wells.
 - Watering is prohibited between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
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21. Adjournment

Mayor Teeters adjourned the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mayor Zane Teeters Jr

ATTEST:

Charles Jacien Town Clerk

