

LONGWOOD CITY COMMISSION
Longwood City Commission Chambers
175 West Warren Avenue
Longwood, Florida

MINUTES
July 20, 2020
6:00 P.M.

Present: Mayor Matt Morgan
Deputy Mayor Brian D. Sackett
Commissioner Abby Shoemaker
Commissioner Richard Drummond
Commissioner Ben Paris
Dan Langley, City Attorney
Clint Gioielli, Acting City Manager
Michelle Longo, City Clerk
David P. Dowda, Police Chief
Chris Kintner, Community Development Director
Judith Rosado, Interim Finance Director

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Mayor Morgan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. **MOMENT OF SILENT MEDITATION**
3. **THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** Commissioner Shoemaker led the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. **COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS.** None.
5. **PROCLAMATIONS / RECOGNITIONS**
 - A. **District #2 Presentation of the Business Person of the Month award for July 2020 to Rob Nestor, Manager of Universal Tire & Auto, located at 300 West State Road 434.**

Commissioner Drummond read a brief biography on Mr. Robert Nestor and then presented him with the Business Person of the Month Award for July 2020. Photographs were then taken.
 - B. **Presentation of the Beautification Award to Kustom US, Inc. located at 640 East State Road 434, Suite 1000.**

Commissioner Shoemaker presented Kustom US, Inc. with the Beautification Award for the third quarter of 2020. Photographs were then taken.

C. Proclaiming July as “Parks and Recreation Month” in the City of Longwood.

Mayor Morgan read the Proclamation and it will be sent to the Leisure Services Department.

6. BOARD APPOINTMENTS

A. District # 2 (At Large) Nomination to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.

Commissioner Drummond deferred the nomination until the next meeting.

7. PUBLIC INPUT

A. Public Participation.

Kim Ladocsky, 904 Caitlin Point, Longwood. She said her husband is Mr. Robert Ladocsky, a law enforcement officer with the Longwood Police Department. He started his career in 1988 and retired in 2013 after 25 years of service in Longwood. Two years ago, Chief Dowda called him and asked him to come back. Tonight I stand before you as the wife of a law enforcement officer and someone who is vehemently opposed to a Citizen’s Advisory Review Board with discipline powers or any powers other than advisory. I am involved with the National Police Wives Association. I would like to read a portion of a letter they have drafted that was sent to the Mayor and the Director of Public Safety in Atlanta, Georgia, and it made its way to the City Commission. The contents brought to light a side that had not been heard before, the side of Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) families. It gave the National Police Wives Association local chapter a seat and a voice at the table for those involved in the decision making and process in Atlanta right now. Currently, the same letter and action plan are being prepared for Indianapolis, Seattle, and Columbus. As spouses and families are being organized in Portland, I realize Longwood has not faced the turmoil these larger departments have had but in many places, the letter is still appropriate. She asked that before you make any decisions about how Officers perform their everyday tasks and duties you, personally, do these few things.

- Sit down and review the information provided during Citizens Academies given by your Police Department.
- Go on ride-alongs during several shifts, in several areas in your city.
- Go through a Police Simulator with the use of force scenarios and document your results for study. As you begin to form your opinions on Officer response, these notes will be so helpful and useful to understand what might go through an Officer's mind in those milliseconds they have to act.
- Lastly – and this is most important – arrange to sit down and talk with widows and family members of Fallen Officers. Talk with wounded and injured officers, both permanently disabled and those who were able to return to work after their challenges. Sit down with spouses and families of those who have committed suicide. Finally, speak with Officers who have had to cut their careers short due to issues with PTSD and other issues that sprung from trauma experienced because of the weight of the job.

She said in recent weeks, in the court of public opinion, the complete and total way those in the law enforcement profession have been marginalized and come under attack has caused great difficulty, pain, and strife in all our households. It's difficult to describe how hard it has become to support Officers who feel like they have lost the hearts of the communities.

Dawn McCranie, 168 Willow Creek Cove, Longwood. She said I stand before you this evening as the proud wife of Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) Corporal Spencer McCranie Badge #809. He became part of the Longwood Police Department (LPD) family on August 25, 2015. We consider them family as well as other police agencies. Before he was a Police Officer he served as a Marine who fought for our Country's freedom to help protect the United States of America. He could have chosen any other profession, but he wanted nothing more than to serve, continue to protect, and selflessly help others in our community. As a spouse, I ask you kindly to reconsider the thought of the Citizen's Review Board with discipline powers. Should it be more of a form of recommendations to the Chief of Police or even the Mayor to ultimately decide how a Police Officer should be disciplined? Law Enforcement is a job that is unpredictable day by day. They cannot predict the situation they are called to. You may think it might be a normal call but it can turn into a serious and

unexpected problem within seconds. They are expected to make a split-second decision of life or death without the benefit of hindsight. Unless the panel has been trained to understand policing not just any volunteer can be biased. I guess in my head, I think of picking twelve people for a jury and lawyer to ask us questions, decide our fate, and hold prejudice. There have been unfortunate events over the past few months which has reflected there is still goodness within agencies and officers throughout the country. Before these recent events, I used to be able to stand tall with pride letting others know that my husband was an LEO without the worry or harm to me or my children. I can no longer speak out loud about him without wondering how others portray the police. Some husbands and wives are scared to speak up regarding their concerns without the possible repercussions that someone may come upon their loved one. Now I must deter my children from the news to keep them from worrying about the safety of their father or themselves. As a wife of an LEO that is my job. It is my job to stress on the inside and show no anxiety or fear on the outside. I worry about getting a phone call one day or a knock on the door that my husband will no longer be coming home. Have you ever had to personally experience this sense of emotion? The havoc and chaos have not reached our community or the neighboring areas but where will you be if it does? Will you back the blue? We as spouses of the LEO family firmly stand not only behind them but next to them hand in hand. Again, I ask you to rethink the Citizen's Review Board not for the sake of our families but for the sake of our Community itself.

Johannah Bleus, 833 Seminole Avenue, Longwood. She said the reason why I oppose the Citizen's Review Board is because I think it would breed corruption. Everybody has different agendas and though that may still be good, I do not have confidence in it. What I do have confidence in is total transparency. I would love to be able to see what the Police are up to. I think that would be a better solution. I also think the problem is that we hire Police Officers that were fired by their prior police station. It is a big problem in the Community. I call it recycling bad police officers. If Longwood fires a Police Officer, Windermere, nor another State or Country should ever hire them. If we do that we would have more positive experiences with the Police Department. I have also had some positive experiences with the Police and I would like to share them with you. My brother was stabbed in Longwood over 36 times on Thanksgiving morning. The Police were the first ones to respond. They said if it was not for the Police applying pressure with no gloves, he would not be here today. I would like to thank

Longwood Police for saving his life. I also have a dog that likes to get out. She has been picked up a couple of times by the Police and returned to me safely, so I appreciate you giving me the opportunity as an African American and listening to my suggestions. Thank you and have a good night.

J.P. Gilbert, 2086 Prairie Sage Lane, Longwood. He thanked the Mayor and Commission and said Daytona Beach, Tallahassee, and North Miami are three cities spread out across the state with different folks and different constituencies. What do they all have in common? In the past month, since this group last met on June 15th, these municipalities have voted to implement Citizen Review Boards. They have joined cities like Orlando, Key West, Fort Myers, Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, and St. Petersburg, just to name a few of the Florida cities that have these boards already in place. Now, these cities did not create these boards because they are anti-police or because they are dissatisfied with their departments. They created these boards because they want transparency and accountability in their community. Transparency and accountability are better for everyone involved. In June, the Associated Press and the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago conducted a pole of 1,310 Americans of all races and political affiliations on their opinions of Police reform. The study concluded with 29% of respondents think that the criminal justice system needs a complete overhaul, 40% said that there need to be major changes, 25% said there need to be minor changes, and 5% said that no changes were necessary. Those results tell us that 95% of Americans want to see some reform in their communities. So the question this Commission must ask themselves is this: Does this Commission want to be part of that 95% or does this Commission want to be part of the 5% doing nothing? I heard from my fellow citizens here in Longwood and I am happy to hear from you. We may disagree, but I do respect everything that was said and that is the beauty of the United States. Overall they asked to be sure the Board is advisory, make sure those who sit on the Board have some use of force training, require that the Board study Longwood Police Department procedures, and bring this all in an Ordinance to vote. The citizens want it. At least bring it to a vote. I implore you.

Kim Buchheit, 252 Spring Run Circle, Longwood. She said she is here tonight to encourage your leadership to implement some form of independent oversight of the City of Longwood Police Department. First, I would like to thank you for showing respect for Mr. Gilbert's advocacy efforts. I am very impressed with J.P

and you are lucky to have someone as intelligent and well-informed as him approaching you on this. I applaud his efforts on this matter and I support what he is trying to accomplish. Please consider placing the matter on your formal agenda to facilitate a robust public discussion of community concerns. At this time it may be necessary to be creative with the forums or the outreach or even have several options for people to participate in the process while we are operating under COVID-19 guidelines. That is no excuse to not move the ball forward. I have been listening to this issue, and from what I have heard, people generally want the same things. They want more transparency, accountability for actions, higher standards for hiring and retention, the ability to remove bad actors, and improvement of relevant policies and laws. Of course, there are challenges but that is what we are good at. We are good at overcoming challenges and the good news is that you do not have to reinvent the wheel. There are models in place for Citizen's Advisory or Review Committees and they are here in our local jurisdiction. Seminole County has a Civilian Review Board, Orange County has a Citizen's Advisory Committee, and the City of Orlando has a Citizen's Police Review Board. Since you would not be the first to implement something like this you have a very unique opportunity to do better at a time where we are being asked to do better and to be more just. You can take the best of the best of all of these things and do better. You would not be an outlier. You would be consistent with what other jurisdictions are doing in our area. It is a good idea that would help restore and strengthen the public trust in policing and in governance.

8. MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORT

District #2. Commissioner Drummond said he appreciates everybody that came to speak tonight about the Citizen Review Board and to give their input. It is very important we take a look at this and consider all of our options. I know that Chief Dowda has my utmost confidence and will be giving a presentation tonight that will address a lot of things that have been brought up. If you stick around for his presentation you will get some answers to your questions. He thanked Chief Dowda and Mr. Gioielli for all the hard work and effort they have put into this. You are talking about two dedicated professionals, both Law Enforcement Officers, that have taken this to heart and want to find the best way for the City of Longwood to move forward with transparency and to ensure that we have the safety of everybody in the Community at heart.

District #3. Commissioner Paris thanked Nate's Shul of the Chabad of North Orlando. He said Rabbi Yanky Majesky came out last Friday and

donated a bunch of Longwood Police Officer masks with the emblem from the shoulder patch embroidered or stamped on the front, along with some letters of encouragement from his congregation. It is great to see the outpour and support of our local religious leaders. He even had some inspiring words of encouragement for our Officers that he gave in our Police Department. It is nice to see that comingling and support from different organizations in the City of Longwood. He reiterated that it is a difficult time, there is a lot of stuff going out of line, and there is a lot of conjecture. He asked that everyone remain calm and listen to your government officials, leaders, Commissioners, and Mayor. They are going to be there to try to give you information, help, and support. This is a trying time for everyone. If you have any questions or concerns, all of our numbers are public record, please reach out. We would be more than happy to try to help you during these difficult times. He also encouraged everyone to buy local and shop in Longwood.

District #4. Mayor Morgan thanked Cheryl Bryant from Wild Hare Kitchen and Garden Emporium and our Police department for getting together with residents and other business owners to have a round table discussion on June 16. He said on June 18 he attended the Publix grand opening and it was phenomenal. We are very blessed to have Publix in this community. We waited quite a while to have this and now we finally do. On June 20, Cascade Heights had a driveby parade for the seniors in that community. Their family members were able to come out and see them. They decorated their vehicles with the family names and messages. I was honored to be a part of it. On June 22, I had a great conversation with Mr. Gilbert, Chief Dowda, and Mr. Gioielli. Thank you for your time on this Mr. Gilbert. On June 25, we had an awesome ribbon cutting for F&D Woodfired Italian Kitchen. It is an awesome addition to Longwood. You would think COVID would slow down grand openings and businesses coming in, but it has not. I would argue we have had more ribbon cuttings than ever and that is a good sign. On June 26, I had an interview with Janet Sawyer on ADHD. For those of you who do not know, I have ADHD. We did a video that is going out to Special Needs Schools all across the state of Florida. It is about trials and tribulations I have gone through as a young adolescent until today. He said on July 2, the Christian Sharing Center did an awesome job on the Watermelon challenge to raise awareness on togetherness during these crazy, unpredictable, and nervewracking times. I thought this was very creative on their part. On the 4th of July, I took my family over to Nan & Pop's Ice Cream Shop. We had done a ribbon-cutting for them a few days ago. It is an awesome place for families to go after a long day at the park. Continue to stay here, shop, and eat in Longwood. They have an array of original flavors. I cannot suggest them enough. On July 7, I attended a 2-hour discussion with Longwood Babe Ruth board members about trying

to better the situation that is going on and getting everyone on the same page. He congratulated Lyman High School for the Career and Technical Education (CTE) building groundbreaking ceremony on July 13. He said this is a really big deal for Lyman. They continue to lead the way. On July 17, I attended the Leadership Seminole Board meeting. He gave an update on the Mayors and Managers meetings where they had long-distance learning versus an online educational system setup overview. He recognized the Seminole County Public School Board for the incredibly arduous situation they were put in the other day in trying to decide on our kids' future and whether or not they should return to school. He said he thought they did a great job of creating different options for the parents to decide what they feel is best for their child. He thanked Ms. Rosado for spending time with him this morning to go over one of our special assessment neighborhoods that were having a couple of issues.

Mayor Morgan then went over a motion he would like to have the Commission entertain. He said I understand that the recent changes to the City of Longwood Business Tax Receipt rules were recommended by the Business Tax Receipt Committee in an attempt to improve efficiency and streamline a complex fee schedule. Now, I have recently learned that while there may have been many businesses that benefited from this change, there are some owners that have experienced hardship with it. This is especially disheartening considering the current economical difficulties COVID has brought. It is times like this where our City has to be creative and continue to identify ways to support our citizens. With our local businesses being so heavily impacted, I have a proposal for our City to continue to be supportive. I would like to make a motion to authorize staff to use the previous fee schedule and to allow those businesses who would have benefited financially under the new fee schedule, to pay that amount instead. Additionally, in this motion, I would like for all associated late fees to be waived considering the times we are dealing with.

Mayor Morgan moved to direct staff to use the previous fee schedule and to allow those businesses who would have benefited financially under the new fee schedule, to pay that amount instead. Additionally, in this motion, he would like for all associated late fees to be waived for one year. Seconded by Commissioner Paris.

Discussion ensued on the length of the proposal and adding this as an Agenda Item at the next Commission meeting.

Mr. Langley advised we would need to prepare an Ordinance for consideration at the next Commission meeting along with the workup for the Agenda Item.

Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote to bring the proposal as an agenda item for the August 3, 2020, meeting.

District #5. Deputy Mayor Sackett asked if the signage for businesses has a completion date because he is receiving phone calls from people advising they are working from home and not going back to the office until January 1st, and he would like to extend it through Christmas time.

Mr. Gioielli says he believes it goes until two weeks after the end of the Emergency Order. He says he believes it expired on July 14.

It was the consensus of the Commission to extend this until December 31, 2020.

Deputy Mayor Sackett welcomed Publix to Longwood and said he attended the ribbon-cutting and was the first one to go through the cash register. I got about four packets of the special sausage they make. He also welcomed F&D Woodfired Italian Kitchen and said they have wonderful food there too. He said he already put in an order for black raspberry ice cream at Nan & Pop's Ice Cream Shop. If you tell her what flavor of ice cream you want by Wednesday she will order it for you and it will be in the next week. How about that for service for a small operation. She has sold out of ice cream on two or three weekends. They are doing very well and it is good to see that. He said it seemed like July 4th was Red, Hot, and Boom in Longwood. I was impressed with what the visuals and audio were. I hope there were no injuries. He said Longwood Babe Ruth is moving forward. They now have a new president, and I wish them well in their ventures for Fall Ball. Going back to school scares me as a teacher. What was put out by the School Board last week is still in negotiation with the School Unions as to how to protect the teachers as well. Those things are on the discussion table today and tomorrow. Opening up schools later is a smart move. They are delaying it. Teachers are going to be coming in on August 3rd and the children will be coming in on August 17th. It is just a hard decision people are going to have to make. Everyone who is voting out of the four choices they have to choose for their child has to have that in by this Friday. If you do not vote, your child will be a face-to-face student.

Deputy Mayor Sackett asked where we are with the Christmas banners at the gateway parks to the City, not only within Reiter Park. It is time to be sure we are celebrating the holidays in our City. Let us live it up a little

and excite people about the holidays. I want to make sure those banners are in the budget proposals, purchased, and up.

Mr. Gioielli responded in the proposed budget, we have included additional funding to provide Christmas decorations for the intersection of Ronald Reagan Boulevard and Church Street which will be something new in addition to what the City already has. Additionally, I have asked the Director of Leisure Services to start finalizing the purchase of Christmas banners that the City would own and would allow the City to add to it as the years move forward. There was some additional money as a result of different events being canceled this year, and we are going to take advantage of that to get the banners paid for and get the necessary hardware to post them on the poles for the holidays.

District #1. No report.

Mayor Morgan allowed Ms. Katrina Shadix to speak for public participation as she arrived late.

Katrina Shadix, 1133 Covington Street, Oviedo. She said she wanted to support Mr. Gilbert in the formation of the Police Review Board. I also think it is a very rational approach to what is going on in the country, and I think it is always good to have citizen committee oversight, especially where taxpayer money is concerned. My son and I support you, Mr. Gilbert, and whatever we can do to help you we are here.

Mr. Shadix, Ms. Shadix's son, said they are here to support Mr. Gilbert and the Citizen's Review Board for the Police.

Ms. Shadix said I also want to thank you for being the only City to respond to the trap ordinance resolution from the bear being cared for from the illegal traps. Although we cannot do an ordinance, I was hoping that maybe the City of Longwood would adopt a non-enforceable resolution. This sends a message to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) that the City of Longwood does not want these wire net snares and steal like traps in the City. If any of the Longwood Police ever have to respond to a bear call, please do not shoot the bear, rather just whistle and clap your hands and they will run away. I have bags that I can supply to the entire City containing retrofit trashcan straps saving you \$240 from buying a bear-proof trash can, a whistle, and educational literature.

9. ANY ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA. None.

10. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. **Approve Minutes of the June 15, 2020, Regular Meeting.**
- B. **Approve the Monthly Expenditures for June and July 2020.**
- C. **Approve the Monthly Financial Report for June 2020.**

Deputy Mayor Sackett moved to approve Items 10A through 10C as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Shoemaker and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

11. PUBLIC HEARINGS. None.

12. REGULAR BUSINESS

- A. **Read by title only, set August 3, 2020, as the public hearing date and approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 20-2183, which proposes an amendment to the City Charter and provides that said proposed Charter Amendments be submitted to the voters for referendum at the election held on Tuesday, November 3, 2020.**

Mr. Langley read Ordinance No. 20-2183 by title only.

Commissioner Drummond moved to approve Ordinance No. 20-2183 and set August 3, 2020, as the public hearing date. Seconded by Commissioner Paris and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

- B. **Read by title only, set August 3, 2020, as the public hearing date and approve the first reading of Ordinance No. 20-2184, which amends and extends the Residential Solid Waste and Recycling Collection Services Contract with Waste Pro of Florida Inc.**

Mr. Langley read Ordinance No. 20-2184 by title only.

Mr. Gioielli presented the Item and went over the requests made by Waste Pro. The requests included an intent not to request a rate increase for the next fiscal year, an adjustment to the existing contract allowing them to be paid on all City residents Waste Pro Services and not just the residents that pay as is the current contract, and a 4-year extension of the contract which would start October 1, 2021, if approved. He said I am assuming the Commission has no issue with no rate increase, but the rest is something we seek the Commission's guidance on. If we were to approve Waste Pro's request to pay them for all the houses they service and not just those that pay, essentially the City would be

responsible for whatever the difference is. While we can enjoy not seeing a rate increase, there would be a cost associated with that decision. Currently, on average with COVID, we typically see about 15 houses that regularly do not pay for their solid waste pickup. If you live on the East side of the City and you choose not to pay your bill, your penalty would be a disconnection of your water. But if you live on the West side of the City, water and solid waste pickup are paid separately. You can pay your water bill and not your solid waste and there is no penalty or process in place by the City of Longwood or Waste Pro to motivate a homeowner to start paying their bill. While the staff is currently seeking a solution to help motivate these homeowners to not skip their solid waste payments, automatically approving this request would have an associated cost. As a solution, we could consider proposing we approve part of the request, recognizing there will be a contract next year, or we split the difference, recognizing there is truly no easy process in place for Waste Pro to stop collecting trash on the houses that do not pay.

Discussion ensued on how much this would cost the city, the items in the contract, and looking further into the contract. Going out to bid for the waste collection was also discussed.

Commissioner Shoemaker moved to table the Item until the August 3, 2020, meeting. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Sackett and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

C. City Commission to approve and confirm the appointment of Ms. Judith Rosado as the Director of Financial Services.

Deputy Mayor Sackett moved to confirm the appointment of Judith Rosado as the Director of Financial Services. Seconded by Commissioner Shoemaker and carried by a unanimous roll call vote.

D. Commissioner Shoemaker requests to review a proposed Monthly Financial Statement Report.

Mr. Gioielli presented the Item, stated Commissioner Shoemaker has been working one-on-one with Ms. Rosado, and the new report would be what is presented to the Commission in the agenda packet as the financial report each month. He answered questions from the Commission.

It was the consensus of the Commission to use the proposed report going forward for their monthly financial report.

E. City Commission to designate one Member of the City Commission to be a voting delegate for the City of Longwood for the August 2020 Florida League of Cities Annual Business Meeting, which will be on a fully virtual basis.

Commissioner Paris nominated Commissioner Shoemaker to be a voting delegate at the August 2020 Florida League of Cities Annual Business Meeting. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Sackett and carried by a unanimous voice vote.

13. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Gioielli announced the Fire Department's Fire Battalion Chief, Don Castner, is set to retire on July 28, 2020, after nearly 29 years of service here in the City of Longwood. He asked the Commission for guidance on the August 17th meeting. There are a couple of things going on that may cause a distraction for the Commission, staff, and our citizens. It is the first day of school and this will probably be the most unique school year coupled with the fact that it is the eve of the countywide elections. He asked if the Commission was interested in moving the meeting to August 24, 2020.

It was the consensus of the Commission to move the August 17 meeting to August 24.

Mr. Gioielli reminded the Commission there will be a budget workshop this Thursday, July 23 at 1:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers and Deputy Mayor Sackett will be attending through WebEx. He said currently the Pennies for Park budget is up to \$525. The staff would like some guidance from the Commission on how to move forward with this particular project. The staff recommends we keep the project as it is, allow there to be a collection in Pennies for Park bank, and consider allowing the Parks and Recreation Board to make a recommendation on the expenditures which would be brought forward to the Commission for confirmation. If that is approved it would become a permanent project.

It was the consensus of the Commission to allow the Parks and Recreation Board to make recommendations on the expenditures for the Pennies for Park budget and have those brought before the Commission for confirmation.

Mr. Gioielli said as the Commission is aware, because of the current national attention on law enforcement coupled with citizen input after the recent, unfortunate situations in other areas of the country, Chief Dowda has been working diligently to determine if any action was necessary for the police department to continue to be an example of professionalism while ensuring, in part through transparency, the agency continues to build partnerships with the community. At the beginning of this journey we asked ourselves four questions:

1. Are there appropriate policies, training, and equipment in place to ensure the egregious actions reported recently in other areas of the country are not permissible by Longwood Police Department officers?
2. Have Longwood police officers been actively or passively involved in the types of inappropriate activities reportedly taking place in other areas of the country?
3. Is there proper accountability within the agency?
4. Does Longwood Police Department provide an acceptable level of transparency to its citizens?

Mr. Gioielli said with those established priorities, I ask Chief Dowda to please come forward to provide his report.

Chief Dowda said the Longwood Police Department is accredited by the Commission of Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation and meets or exceeds every one of the organization's applicable standards. This department is comprised of an outstanding group of law enforcement and civilian employees who consistently demonstrate a commitment to the professional service to our community and are held to the highest standards of conduct. Over the last month, I have assessed various systems of the Police Department to ensure we continue to provide the best service possible. As part of this effort, I began a review of our policies and procedures, service training curriculum, community relations efforts, and other outreach programs. My evaluation is ongoing, however, it included meetings with officers, command staff, and many community stakeholders. While doing so, I confirmed my belief about our staff and received overwhelming support from our community. I did, however, identify a few areas where I felt positive adjustments could be made. Those include the addition of the Longwood Police Officer's Code of Ethics onto our webpage. It is currently displayed for the public on the title page of the Police Department's website. A professional standards link has also been added to the title page of the website. This link will take a viewer directly to options to commend or complain about an officer's actions. While always accessible upon request, our department's enforcement procedures and general orders will soon be added to the

website as well. Our agency has been enrolled in the recently recreated National Use of Force data collection project coordinated by the Federal Bureau of Investigations. I am also excited to announce a technological improvement to our agency which our staff has been looking forward to for some time. The department's body-worn cameras have arrived. Over the last month, we have developed a policy for the cameras and they will be deployed beginning on July 30th. In the interest of further developing citizen interaction, a community engagement group was recently organized. This group consisted of citizens, community and faith-based leaders, business owners, City human resource personnel, as well as a Police Officer. They came together in June to discuss the relationship our staff has with the citizens of the community and how it may be improved. The group engaged in a great conversation on a myriad of subjects related to law enforcement over several hours. The discussion generated many great ideas. One of those topics focused heavily on was a regular open community meeting designed to solicit input on stakeholders, provide department related information in the interest of transparency, answer questions, and allow the members of the public to make recommendations. As a result of our meeting and further research into the topic, I am pleased to announce the formation of the Longwood Police Department's Community Forum. While still in development, this Forum will provide an opportunity for members of the public to meet with law enforcement personnel, express concerns, and be briefed on various law enforcement topics such as crime trends and events in the community, police recruitment and training, policy issues, completed citizen-initiated internal affairs investigations to include excessive force, and any claims of biased-based policing. It is important to note all of the resolved employee disciplines have always been available to the public but I hope this will further demonstrate our commitment to transparency. The outline of the Forum is still being considered but once it begins, it will be held monthly initially, as a way of gauging public interest. Over the last month, I have also researched the recently discussed concept of civilian review boards with binding oversight. While doing so I considered our officer's collective bargaining agreement, Florida State Statute to include the Florida Law Enforcement Officers Bill of Rights, our City Charter, and the legal opinion provided by our City's labor attorney. The collective bargaining agreement between the Teamsters Local 385 and the City of Longwood prohibits the formation of a civilian review board. The Teamsters' position is that a board of this type is illegal, and the union has indicated it would oppose its implementation. Florida State Statute 112.532 details the Florida Law Enforcement Officer's Bill of Rights and describes the process for investigating and disciplining law enforcement officer's misconduct. The detailed process described in the statute does not include a civilian review board. A deviation from the officer's bill of rights like allowing

citizen authority to adjust disciplinary findings after the conclusion of the process would be illegal. I was unable to identify any other agency in the State of Florida providing a group with this degree of authority. The City of Longwood Charter assigns disciplinary authority which does not include a board of this type. Additionally, the City of Longwood's labor attorney completed a detailed analysis of the proposed board, and he found the concept not only illegal but unconstitutional. Beyond these obstacles, the need to establish any type of citizen's police review board in the City of Longwood has not been demonstrated. Our department has a detailed procedure for disciplining officers which is consistently applied. Upon an allegation of misconduct, our personnel is subjected to an internal investigation, sustained allegations are reviewed by an internal discipline review board, and I review the results of each to determine the appropriate level of discipline. This internal investigation includes consultation with the Seminole County State's Attorney's Office when appropriate, and when warranted, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Bureau of Standards and the Criminal Justice Professionalism Division also investigates specific instances of response to resistance and misconduct to provide independent oversight. This method of internal discipline with an external independent review is consistent with other professions such as the oversight provided by the Florida Bar Association for Attorneys and the American Medical Association for Physicians. There is no indication that the Longwood Police Department's process of maintaining officer discipline is deficient or that we do not have the complete trust of our community. All our personnel has been consistently selected during a professional hiring process, vetted during a thorough background investigation, subjected to comprehensive and continued training, and provided consistently strong leadership. While infrequent, there have been instances of misconduct on the part of Longwood officers. All have been addressed with professional investigations and appropriate discipline. It is the Police Chief's responsibility to maintain discipline within a Police Department. If the Commission ever came to the belief that I was not meeting this obligation, I would recommend you remove and replace me with someone who will, rather than implementing a board of this type. In conclusion, the Commission and Community can feel confident that the Longwood Police Department is staffed with professionals who demonstrate a daily commitment to providing outstanding law enforcement services and maintaining the public's trust. As the Chief of Police of the Department, I am committed to ensuring that goal is achieved.

Mr. Gioielli thanked Chief Dowda for his review and presentation. He said in conducting a City Manager review, I evaluated our police department in comparison to the national issues being reported around the country.

There are several facts this review confirmed. First, there are national organizations that have provided lists of changes for law enforcement agencies across the country recognizing, if implemented, these changes would protect citizens against excessive force while helping to build community trust. I am proud to announce the majority of the changes requested by these organizations are already in place at the Longwood Police Department and have been for some time. I propose to the Commission the majority of these items are already industry standards for all law enforcement agencies in Central Florida, if not the entire state. I also reviewed the department's staff composition and learned that in general, the department reflects the racial and ethnic diversity of the community but falls short on the number of female officers which is an ongoing struggle industrywide. It seems this diversity is supported by the department's recruitment policy which establishes diversity as a priority. It is also important to know all available records of citizen complaints at Longwood Police Department were reviewed during this process, and we were able to locate records back to 1988 which revealed:

1. There were zero complaints of bias-based policing (any form: race, sex, religion, sexual orientation, nationality, etc.)
2. There were four complaints of excessive force during the same 32 year period with the last being in 2011 when the officer was cleared of wrongdoing based on clear video evidence.

Additionally, there were no incidents or citizen allegations of any Longwood officer killing or seriously injuring anyone at any time, justified or not. There have been no in-custody deaths at any time for any reason even for medical issues. This is important considering each time an officer uses force, it is documented in an agency Response to Resistance report and reviewed by the Police Chief. Additionally, at the end of each year, the Chief reviews a separate, annual summary report which includes all use of force incidents and biased based complaints. Evaluating the information available to me, including department policy, the training program, and the historical stats just reviewed here along with the thorough inquiry just completed by Chief Dowda, we have the answers to the questions I first asked when we started this topic tonight.

1. Does the Longwood Police Department have a proper policy, training, and equipment in place? He responded yes, especially with the future deployment of the body-worn cameras.
2. Do members of the police department engage in unprofessional, bias-based behavior, or excessive force? He responded there is no evidence of that taking place.

3. Does the current system maintain accountability at the police department? He responded yes.
4. Is the agency transparent to the residents? He responded yes, but acknowledged that in an ever-changing world we must never give up on the priority of exploring new ways to engage with even more of our citizens.

Mr. Gioielli said recognizing our police department must always strive for new ways for positive community involvement I agree with the Chief's plan to create a Community Forum. This new endeavor will be open to any and all members of the public. The police department staff will share all the important information the Chief listed with its citizens. I truly believe this initiative offers the police department an opportunity to come together with those citizens who have not been engaged yet through the other community relations programs. Combining this forum, the updates to the website, the deployment of body-worn cameras, and all of the wonderful initiatives and processes already in place will give our officers more opportunities to help demonstrate their professionalism and the department's accountability through an even higher level of transparency. Lastly, through this review, it was established that the members of the Longwood Police Department are a group of true professionals who, by the way, I trust every day with my family's safety. I thank each and every one of them and their families. I also want to thank all of the citizens who contributed time and effort to this process; especially the members of the Community Engagement Group. I am also very appreciative of the hard work and dedication of Chief Dowda who has managed this review most appropriately. It is with his leadership the police department has been able to consistently maintain the highest level of police service for our citizens and for that I am grateful. He thanked each Commissioner for their continued support of all employees, your guidance, and doing what is the very best for the community.

Mayor Morgan asked how many residents are allowed to go to the Forum he mentioned.

Mr. Gioielli responded as many as the Fire Marshall will allow in the building.

Commissioner Shoemaker asked if it will be streamed on Zoom.

Mr. Gioielli said we are still working out the details but we want to take this opportunity to connect with more people. We want more people to be involved. The more people involved and brought in, the more we can

work together to make our community even better and safer than it already is. We hope to have it electronically too.

14. CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT. No report.

15. CITY CLERK'S REPORT

Ms. Longo said due to the uncertainty of COVID-19, the Florida League of Cities has canceled its annual conference. However, they have enabled a virtual platform to conduct their 2020 Annual Business. The Commission will be able to attend the Resolutions Committee Meeting, the Nominating Committee Meeting, and/or the Annual Business Meeting. The resolutions and nominating committees will be conducted via Zoom, and the Annual Business Meeting will be via GoToWebinar. Once you are registered, you will receive follow-up emails with links to join those meetings, as well as more detailed instructions for voting delegates. She asked that those wishing to attend let her know so she can get them registered.

Ms. Longo said the Executive Order issued by Governor DeSantis on June 23rd extended the suspension of certain Sunshine Law requirements, previously set to expire on June 30th, and now through August 1, 2020. This Commission is meeting with all members present in the Chambers being mindful of social distancing and wearing masks. She thought the Commission might wish to have a discussion about virtual meetings and whether they may wish to offer both options, in the event the Governor does extend this Executive Order. She asked if they would want to offer the option for citizen participation virtually as well as the in-person option.

Discussion ensued and it was noted the Commission would maintain a physical presence in the Chambers in person and allow citizens to participate in-person as well as virtually.

It was the consensus of the Commission to offer a hybrid option for citizen participation virtually as well as the in-person.

Ms. Longo reminded the Commission that the nominations for the Key to the City Award will be on the August 3rd agenda. They should have received an email with the list of past recipients, award criteria, and nominee sheets. She said this Wednesday, July 22nd we have a Ribbon Cutting for P.H.I.T (Performance Health & Integrative Training) at 4:00 p.m. As mentioned earlier by the Acting City Manager, the Budget Work Session will be held this Thursday, July 23rd at 1:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers.

