

City of Bowling Green

Minutes of Regular Meeting

November 1, 2022

Present: Outgoing-Mayor Gardner, Vice-Mayor Fite, Commissioner Durastanti, Commissioner Lunn, Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Arreola, City Manager Thompson, Interim City Clerk Kinzel, Chief Scheel, Attorney Buhr, and members of the audience.

1. **Call to order** – The meeting was called to order by Mayor Gardner.
2. **Prayer** – Commissioner Durastanti
Flag Salute

3. Old Business

A. Approval of Minutes

1) Regular Meeting 10/11/2022

Commissioner Jones made the motion to approve. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Durastanti. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

4. Swearing In of Commissioners

New Commissioner Arreola was sworn in by City Attorney Buhr. He also swore in returning Commissioner Lunn and Commissioner Jones.

A. Election of New Mayor

Commissioner Jones nominated himself for Mayor. Commissioner Durastanti nominated Vice-Mayor Fite which was seconded by Vice-Mayor Fite. City Attorney Buhr said that nominations do not require seconds. No other nominations were brought forth and City Attorney Buhr said a motion for Commissioner Jones or Vice-Mayor Fite needed to be made. Commissioner Jones was the first to be put up for a vote. Roll call vote, 3 yeas, 2 nays, vote passed in favor of new Mayor Jones.

B. Election of Vice-Mayor

Commissioner Durastanti made a motion to nominate Vice-Mayor Fite. No other nominations were brought forth and Vice-Mayor Fite remains Vice-Mayor.

At this time the gavel was passed to newly selected Mayor Jones to continue with the meeting.

5. New Business

A. Rapid Systems Contract

City Manager Thompson recapped what was discussed at the last regular meeting. He had sent Rapid Systems an invoice for \$50,000 and they got back to him. They drew up a contract to agree to pay \$400 per month rental fee at the water tower effective January 2021. He is bringing it to the Commission to decide whether the Commissioners want to accept this offer or not. He also stated that he got a return call from the representative at Rapid Systems who said they only wanted to pay \$200. The terms are still being negotiated. Mayor Jones asked if this was in a contract or verbal agreement. City Manager Thompson said that it is in a contract and currently being reviewed by City Attorney Buhr. Commissioner Durastanti said that the City is currently receiving \$0 which City Manager

Thompson agreed. City Manager Thompson also said the contract will allow for a percentage increase each year. Rapid Systems does subsidize services in Bowling Green for residents. Vice-Mayor Fite asked City Attorney Buhr if it states in the contract regarding damages to the water tower. City Attorney Buhr has sent the contract back with corrections. Mayor Jones asked if the Commission is waiting for the final contract to be set before the Commission votes on it but City Manager Thompson said that the Commission can vote on the contract now at the \$400 monthly rent and yearly increase. It will be for fifteen years and there will be a clause to cancel the contract with written notice. Commissioner Lunn asked if they really have not paid until now to, which City Manager Thompson said that the issue was Rapid Systems thought the County was reimbursing the City as they had been paying the County. Rapid Systems is willing to pay from January 2021 up to now. A motion was made by Commissioner Durastanti to accept payment by Rapid Systems of \$400 per month for rental and seconded by Vice-Mayor Fite. Vice-Mayor Fite asked if the City received the Communication Tax which City Manager Thompson said yes but the City was not receiving rent from the use of water tower. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

B. Hardee Help Center Proclamation

Hardee Help Center Executive Director Jill Vaillancourt came before the Commission and introduced herself and Amy Harper. She gave a history of the Hardee Help Center as this is their 9th Annual Campaign for Drive Out Hunger. This year they have retitled the campaign Drive Out Hunger and Homelessness to focus on Hardee's homeless population. Since COVID hit in 2020, they have provided weekly meals, monthly hygiene kits, resource counseling, showers, laundry service, lockers for possessions, seasonal clothes vouchers for local thrift stores and a place to receive mail. Also, during this time, they have registered 90 homeless friends. They have become homeless for various reasons and does include a variety of individuals. Hurricane Ian made things harder for them with destroyed porches, flooded wooded areas and closed campgrounds. Their goal is not being a sanctuary city but to find creative ways to help them from being homeless. Although the Help Center provides the necessities, the goal is to build a relationship with them. As part of their campaign, they will have a grand opening of the shower units and fall bazaar. There will also be a memorial service and December 21st is Homeless Remembrance Day. They asked the Commission for help to find creative ways to fight homelessness and sign a proclamation declaring November hunger and homelessness awareness month. Mrs. Harper read the proclamation to the Commission. The proclamation motion was made by Vice-Mayor Fite and seconded by Commissioner Durastanti. City Manager Thompson said it was a great program. The motion moved forward, and the proclamation was signed by Mayor Jones.

C. Leased Vehicles

City Manager Thompson said this information was provided at the last regular Commission meeting. He believed the Commission was on board and the only issue was how to pay for it the first year. He said that it could be paid for with overages from 2021-2022. Going forward, it would be paid for out of the General and Enterprise funds. Enterprise Fleet does have some vehicles ready to go and representatives (Mike Sosa and Jamaez Taylor) were present to answer questions. Mike Sosa stated that a proposal was sent to the City for review that would cut the replacement cycle in third. This would create a cost savings and be sustainable over time. He said that all questions from the last meeting

had been answered. City Attorney Buhr said that if a motion is made then it would be subject to final review by himself and City Manager Thompson prior to becoming effective. Mayor Jones asked how the vehicles would be serviced and Mr. Sosa would provide a list of vendors that would be responsible for maintenance. If the City went with a mobile vendor, five to six vehicles would need to be seen to prevent being charged maintenance fees. All the local dealerships are on the list. Vehicles can be ordered at the manufacturer in 4-5 months or readily available vehicles can be received within 4-6 weeks. There are ten candidates for replacement. City Manager Thompson said that in the last year, the City spent \$34,000 in maintenance fees for Parks, Police and Administration vehicles. Maintenance would be included in the price of the lease. He stated that the City would get ten vehicles for approximately \$90,000. Motion was made by Commissioner Lunn but motion failed due to a lack of second. Commissioner Arreola asked how long the contract was. City Manager Thompson said that it can be cancelled within thirty days and cars can be resold. Motion was remade with condition that contract be approved by City Attorney Buhr and City Manager Thompson by Commissioner Lunn with a second from Commissioner Arreola. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

D. Recreation Committee

City Manager Thompson said that there was a lot of misunderstanding with the committee regarding funds. The Committee is budgeted every year which makes it difficult when they raise money. The money must be put back in for the next year. There are two options: take the committee out of the budget and they raise their own money for what they want to spend. The City is taken out of it and does not provide them when a budget amount or pay for what they spend (they operate as a standalone); the second option is to put the committee on hiatus and hire a recreation person on a contract basis. They would have a specific budget for recreation events and this individual would request items to be ordered and raise money from donors. Each option would alleviate the current issues. Typically, they spend more than they bring in (electricity, maintenance, etc.). Mayor Jones stated that facilities usage would be spent anyway but City Manager Thompson said that parks have their own budget line item. It is adjusted when the parks are in use as best as possible. Mayor Jones said that donor money should cover it, but City Manager Thompson said that the recreation department made \$9,000 but spent over \$30,000 which is covered by the City. He said that he cannot be accountable for the recreation funds and let them have autonomy at the same time. He stated that there was a lot of disagreement between the Committee and the City. Also, there may have been issues with not following the Sunshine Laws since meetings were not publicized (ZOOM meeting). Vice-Mayor Fite asked City Attorney Buhr if ZOOM meetings had been withdrawn from public use or just commission meetings. City Attorney Buhr said there must be a physical quorum in Commission meetings. If someone cannot appear, there needs to be significant reason for not attending such as health/hospitalization related. Three commissioners must be in attendance for a physical quorum. City Manager Thompson said that a contracted employee would take care of getting volunteers. He agreed the events are great for the community, but the contract employee would be accountable for getting everything in place and putting it on a group of volunteers. Mayor Jones said that all committees must follow the same ordinances, laws, and statutes. City Attorney Buhr said all committees under the Commission follows the Sunshine Laws; only fact-finding committees do not. Mayor Jones asked for City Manager Thompson's advisement on what the best course of action is. City

Manager Thompson said that the Commission do away with the Recreation Committee and the City take care of it. Vice-Mayor Fite said that Visit Hardee has been handling all the events for the county and could take on Bowling Green's events. He suggested City Manager Thompson investigate this option but, in the meantime, put it back under the umbrella of the City. City Manager Thompson said that the office has been doing most of the work but has been pushing it back on the committee. He feels like that the only events be Trunk or Treat, Christmas, Black History month, and Cinco de Mayo. Mayor Jones did tell the committee to do as much as they possibly can themselves. Since there were office changes recently, he wanted the committee to only reach out to the office when necessary. City Manager Thompson stated that City-sanctioned events should be taken care of by city staff. Vice-Mayor Fite said that all donations are made to the City of Bowling Green and City Manager Thompson also said that the committee would need to have their funds audited if they chose to go out on their own which would cost money. The City pays for it now. Vice-Mayor Fite made a motion to have the City take over the recreation events with a second from Commissioner Lunn. Michelle Jones (4829 Sally Blvd) said she was asked to help with recreation events and received questions regarding donations without having an explanation or understanding of it. She stated she understood the City Manager's explanation for it. City Manager Thompson said he told the committee that when they spend more money than they are budgeted or take in, the donations are put back into their line item to offset it. Mrs. Jones said that the Fall Festival brought in \$238 and was well received. There were only a couple of comments that it could have been better. The goal was to make Bowling Green better and will support whoever does that. She apologized for any animosity in the Recreation meeting. Her only concern was being able to use the money that is brought in to make the events the best they can be. However, according to City Manager Thompson, that cannot be accomplished with the City's involvement and accountability. Chiquita Robinson (310 Pennsylvania Ave, Wauchula) addressed the Commission and believed she had been doing a great job. She agreed that the City should be involved with the events. She was upset that she had been attacked despite doing her best to putting on these events. She provided feedback from the public on the Fall Festival. She still wants to be involved if the City needs her.

E. Ordinance 2022-03: Water/Sewer Deposit Increase (Second Reading)

City Attorney Buhr read a short description of Ordinance 2022-03 for a second time. City Manager Thompson said that if residents are late more than three times then their deposits can be raised which is occurring much more frequently. Their bills are invoiced a month behind so residents can owe far beyond their deposit amount. A letter would go out stating that an increase in their deposit amount is necessary due to their late payment history so the City does not lose money. Mayor Jones asked if deposit increase is after a turn-off, but City Manager Thompson said it would go forward and would be charged a one-month bill, but many residents only have a deposit less than \$170 due to having paid one prior to the last increase. The ordinance will allow the City to send a letter to get a resident's deposit up to current rates if they have a late payment history. A motion to accept this ordinance was made by Commissioner Durastanti and seconded by Vice-Mayor Fite. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

F. Ordinance 2022-04: Amendment to City Procurement Code (1st Reading)

City Attorney Buhr read a short description of Ordinance 2022-04 for the first time. He explained that this ordinance would clear up purchasing items for the City. It allows for

the City to purchase goods/services from vendors who have already committed to larger governments or government cooperatives at a much better price than otherwise available to the City. Motion to accept first reading was made by Vice-Mayor Fite and seconded by Commissioner Lunn. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

G. 2021-2022 Budget Amendment

City Manager Thompson stated that the City is currently undergoing an audit. One of the items that the City was reprimanded for was not having a balanced budget so he balanced it for the last fiscal year. The City's revenues were originally set at \$1,386,577 but brought in \$1,533,755 in general funds. The overage was reallocated to those line items that went over. After everything is finalized, the net will be \$172,399 due to cut backs and overages. For the enterprise fund, \$1,453,400 was budgeted at the beginning of the fiscal year but the City brought in \$1,558,244 and once again, the overage was reallocated to other line items that went over. One of the issues the City encountered was an SRF loan that was not understood when the budget was originally presented. He will pull that out of the reserve fund. Overall, the City lost \$25,000 but it is accounted for this fiscal year. The reserve fund has enough to pay for the lease program. He also said that any overages can be used to build the next budget per state statute. Motion was made by Commissioner Durastanti to accept the revised 2021-2022 budget and was seconded by Vice-Mayor Fite. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

H. Inframark – Invoices

City Manager Thompson said that we have a very small cap for the City's maintenance, sludge, and materials to clean water/sewer. The City was over the cap by \$40,000 which is owed to Inframark. He built it into the new budget since there were a couple of expenditures that were not spent (\$30,000 engineering fees). Mayor Jones asked if the screw press will help with, and City Manager Thompson said yes. City Attorney Buhr asked how long the City would be contracted with Inframark and City Manager Thompson answered three more years. They just went up 3½ % going from \$42,000 to \$48,000. Mayor Jones asked if the City is on the search and City Manager Thompson asked for clarification on search. City Attorney Buhr stated that if there was about a year left then staff can be used to manage this. City Manager Thompson said that there was a plan made in case the City no longer used Inframark and the plan is still viable. Motion to accept these invoices was made by Vice-Mayor Fite and seconded by Commissioner Lunn. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

I. Backhoe Purchase

The City's backhoe blew up and maintenance is running \$5,000 per month to keep it running. With Vice-Mayor Fite's assistance, City Manager Thompson found a suitable one on the Sheriff's website for a cost of \$116,874. It is in Ocala and can be received in two weeks. He suggested paying it off and putting the interest that would go to a bank if financed back to the City in the event of needing another one years down the road. Vice-Mayor Fite about the warranty to which City Manager Thompson stated that the motor/engine parts is five years while everything is one year then the City would have to pay for it. He did inquire about and extended warranty. Vice-Mayor Fite said that when he was researching it there were two versions of the extended warranty. He also said it was reasonable. City Attorney Buhr explained that grants could be utilized in the future if this happens again; City Manager Thompson said that the City can apply to have it paid

for by FEMA since it broke down during the hurricane preparation/aftermath time period even if it is a stretch. They may provide a little something, but it was twenty years old. Mayor Jones said that the City should submit it to FEMA since it was utilized during that time and City Manager Thompson said he did. He said the new one will be paid for through reserves and he will amend the budget to reflect that once he knows if FEMA will provide money for it later in the budget year. The City will pay itself interest at about \$10,000 per year for ten years. Vice-Mayor Fite made a motion to purchase the backhoe with potential reimbursement from FEMA with a second from Commissioner Durastanti. Commissioner Lunn asked if the new backhoe would still be available while waiting on FEMA to reimburse the City. City Manager Thompson said yes but the City should consider buying it as it is costing \$5,000 to rent one. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

J. Meter Installation

City Manager Thompson is bringing this before the Commission one last time to use Fortiline meters. The cost is \$219,810 down from the original cost of \$252,000 for 1,000 meters. Due to the change in meter companies, the City is unable to use the original installer who charged \$49 per meter so another installer can put them in for \$55 per meter. Mayor Jones asked the plastic lid was extra or is it in the current amount quoted. City Manager Thompson said it was extra and is not considering them as the meters will have a ten-year warranty. These will be less bulky than the original ones already approved by the Commission (similar to what the City already uses). If the Commission approves the use of the Fortiline meters, City Manager Thompson just needs to send a letter to the original company cancelling the order since they have not shipped yet. Motion to move forward with Fortiline meters was made by Commissioner Durastanti and seconded by Vice-Mayor Fite. Jim Kelly (4640 Bryan Ave and owner of the Herald Advocate) asked when they would be installed, and City Manager Thompson stated that it would start around end of this year. City Attorney Buhr wanted City Manager Thompson to cancel the previous ones prior to ordering the Fortiline meters which City Manager Thompson said he would. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

6. Mayor

Mayor Jones was grateful for the opportunity to serve the community and is continuing to learn due to changes and trends. He is open to suggestions and assistance.

7. Commissioners

Commissioner Durastanti congratulated Mayor Jones on his selection as Mayor. He also welcomed new City Commissioner Arreola. Vice-Mayor wished Mayor Jones good luck. He stated that things are going well and complemented the City and Manager and staff on their work during the hurricane. He also praised Police Chief Scheel and his officers for their hard work. He also welcomed Commissioner Arreola. Commissioner Lunn said he missed the Fall Festival due to his sister's birthday. He said Captain Dowden was assisting children at a school crossing and suggested that he have a light when the skies are darker due to the storm. He appreciated the cleaning of Main Street and welcomed Commissioner Arreola. Commissioner Arreola was welcomed by Mayor Jones.

8. City Attorney

City Attorney Buhr explained to Commissioner Arreola that if he needs assistance with his new position with regards to the Sunshine Act to let him know. There are online Ethics classes going on now. Mayor Jones said the Commission will need to approve funds for

Commissioner Arreola to take the classes. City Manager Thompson stated that the City of Wauchula is holding one on November 7th if he can attend. Vice-Mayor Fite sent information on a webinar for newly elected commissioners. Mayor Jones said that Wauchula's Christmas parade \$35 deadline had passed and that the Commission participated in it last year. City Manager Thompson would check on getting a spot at the \$35 fee.

9. City Manager

City Manager Thompson had three items for the Commissions. First, there are two CDs that need to be rolled over and will need a motion for that. Commissioner Durastanti made a motion to that effect with a second from Vice-Mayor Fite. Jim Kelly asked what bank they were at and the approximate amounts. Per City Manager Thompson, they are with Wauchula State Bank and since the audit is going on, it is unknown about the amount due to the interest that needs to be added in since the City does not have access at the moment. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried. Next, Central Florida Regional Planning raised their fee to \$10,000 from \$8,500 which just needs Commission approval and is already built into the budget. Commissioner Lunn made the motion to approve with a second from Vice-Mayor Fite. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried. Lastly, City Manager Thompson said that he would stay with the City as long as he could but has experienced obstacles. He reviewed improvements for the City during his time here, such as the opening of the Community Center, which will bring in revenue; the new garbage truck that rolled out in June and the upcoming new meters both that will generate much needed revenue for the City. Also, the screw press will make things easier and save money. In the last few months, however, he has felt his confidence shaken and to do his job questioned. He has done a good job and been a faithful steward of the City's finances. He does not feel he has the full support of the Commission and resigned but will stay until the end of the year. During this time, he will be searching for the next City Manager who has the same vision that he has to move the City forward. City Manager Thompson has loved the experience and the residents have been fantastic. He believes Bowling Green can stay on the right path by the decisions made tonight and elevate pride for the City. The current staff in place has been doing a great job and replacement of a longtime employee was made but he needs support of the entire Commission which he says is not there now. The job will be posted, and he will write out a letter to the Commission. He said this has been the best year of his life. He urged the residents to question everything and was apologetic to them for leaving.

10. Police Chief

Nothing to report.

11. Interim City Clerk

Nothing to report.

12. Public

Natalie Brown asked about the trash cans and has already discussed it with the City Manager. She was only speaking about her church and wanted to return a trash can since they only need one. Since the pandemic, they have not had as many events as previously done. The letter they received stated that commercial accounts would get two trash cans with two times pick up but they did not get the second pick up. A second church near here was not picked up also. She wanted clarification on the days of commercial collection. City

Manager Thompson told her that commercial garbage collection is on Tuesdays and Thursdays. He will make sure every church would have their garbage picked up on Wednesday. Vice-Mayor Fite asked for clarification on residential collection. City Manager Thompson and Interim City Clerk Kinzel both stated that the East side would be on Tuesdays and the West side is on Thursdays. Commercial accounts are picked up on both sides for both days. Ms. Brown asked why churches needed two trash cans. Mayor Jones and City Manager Thompson reiterated that churches are considered commercial accounts and charged a flat fee. It was not feasible to change it for them; Vice-Mayor Fite stated that churches typically generate more garbage. City Manager Thompson will clarify that with Sanitation staff. Frank McMonigle (1119 N Palm Dr) had two questions. The first question was if FEMA was going to their park (Avion Palms) or to place items on Main St. City Manager Thompson stated that their park is private property so all junk and yard debris will need to be moved to the public roadway outside the road. There was a question by a second park resident of where to put it in relation to power lines. Mayor Jones said that items should be placed away from power lines especially trucks with retractable arms for safety. There was discussion as to where the best place to put it so it will get picked up and now in the way. City Manager Thompson reminded him that next week will be the last week for FEMA to clear items away, but the park has a contractor taking care of this. Mayor Jones reminded the speaker that he had to state his name and address (Rush McKee of 1102 Royal Ln). Mr. McMonigle had concerns that the county posted that next week was the last week since there was still a lot of debris around. His second question was concerning beautifying Bowling Green for commercial use. He was gone for six months and just returned to see a "junk store" (reference to Hanusch's store on Main St & Hwy 17) where they have items for sale in front near the road. He was under the impression that this was what the City was trying to avoid. City Manager Thompson said that it is a retail store and within the ordinance he is selling retail. The store has paid taxes and the occupational license; the items were only being sold on the weekends but has moved into the weekday. City Attorney Buhr said that city code could prevent this, but City Manager Thompson said that he researched this and since this is retail, it can be done. Charles Fulse (4915 Doyle Parker Ave) thanked City Manager Thompson for a job well done and praised his efforts. Jean Kelly (4640 Bryan Ave) said that there have been many City Managers for Bowling Green and does not remember a harder working one than City Manager Thompson. She thanked him for a great job. Bill Reynolds (4661 W Palm Dr) said that City Manager Thompson has done an outstanding job and would like the Commission to work something out with him so he could stay. Michelle Jones (4829 Sally Blvd) said that City Manager Thompson was the first City Manager that was visible to the residents. She stated he has done a great job in the short time he has been here. Brenda Rodriguez (432 Sellers St) wanted City Manager Thompson to reconsider his resignation and for the Commission to come together. No one will have everything they want and to pray about keeping him here. Jim Kelly (4640 Bryan Ave) said Bowling Green has had many City Managers in the last several years and that is not good to turn them over every year. He also stated that the City Manager in Fort Meade (Jan Bagnall) recently got overwhelmed with problems and people saying things about him and his job. He resigned his position over the criticism and feedback; he stated there needs to be support for the person in the job. The Fort Meade Commission is giving him time to reconsider, and Mr. Kelly is by no means telling the BG Commission what to do but maybe let things settle before making this decision. Commissioner Durastanti said he supports Adam and does not want to see him leave. Vice-Mayor said they would talk to see if he would consider staying. Mayor Jones stated

that City Manager Thompson does give his heart to this City. Duane Gardner (4726 Bryan Ave) thanked the residents for allowing him to serve Bowling Green as Commissioner and Mayor. Due to his job, he decided to step down but wanted to say what a great hire City Manager Thompson was. He feels this situation needs to be rectified since Bowling Green should not be going through City Managers every year. As former Commissioner and Mayor, it is exhausting to keep hiring City Managers. Mr. Gardner feels Mr. Thompson needs support and to do what needs to be done to keep him.

Mayor Jones adjourned the meeting.

N'Kosi Jones, Mayor

Katherin Kinzel, Interim City Clerk

City of Bowling Green

Emergency Meeting Minutes

December 9, 2022

Present: Mayor Jones, Vice-Mayor Fite, Commissioner Lunn, Commissioner Durastanti, Commissioner Arreola, City Attorney Buhr, City Manager Thompson, Interim City Clerk Kinzel, and members of the audience.

Call to order – The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jones.

Prayer was led by Commissioner Durastanti and everyone said the pledge of allegiance.

City Attorney Buhr stated that he was asked to research whether the agenda for this meeting had to specify the purpose. The Attorney General's office and the City Attorney recommend having it listed but it is not mandated. Sunshine Law does not mandate it. In the future, City Attorney Buhr said that it would be best to specify that in the future. City Manager Thompson stated that the regular meeting on December 13th would be extremely heavy with items. Mayor Jones wanted to confirm that not having the purpose on the agenda is not mandated by the Attorney General's office which City Attorney Buhr said that was correct but to maintain best practices, it should be even if it is a broad agenda. City Manager Thompson said that all the items on this agenda would be put on Tuesday's regular agenda once he has readjusted based on what is discussed tonight. Vice-Mayor Fite said this was more like a workshop and City Manager Thompson said it was more a conversation starter.

City Manager Thompson started by discussing the budget amendment for 2021-2022. There is \$170,000 which was reinvested into the 2022-2023 budget. This will help to pay for the \$116,000 backhoe and participate in the lease purchase option for the city vehicles. There is \$123,280 that is transferred but will still have \$40,000 from last year's budget. The City is not touching anything from the bank account and is actually putting money in which the City is allowed to do per state statute. Vice-Mayor Fite asked if the money will be put into the sinking fund for the garbage truck issue. City Manager Thompson said that could not be done as this was General Fund money. \$50,000 was put into Physical Environment for the lease vehicles. The vehicles would arrive in six months, and it would include two police cars (outfitted). \$58,000 of the backhoe was paid for out of the General Fund since there was usage of it from there. He also put \$3,000 into Contract Labor since the Commission voted to hire Chiquita Robinson as Recreation Support (\$250/month). In the Enterprise Fund, \$74,800 was taken out of the bank due to a loss. \$67,000 was taken out to pay the remainder of the backhoe. He feels once the new meters are in the ground, the City will make money and he was conservative with his budget numbers. There are new houses being built and he stated that there were a couple houses that had not been paying. Mayor Jones asked about the plastic covers recommendation from the manufacturer and what was the cost difference of getting them. He wanted to make sure it would not be a maintenance issue if the City does not use them. He wanted to verify there were not any warranty issues, but City Manager Thompson said that the warranty was good with or without them. Mayor Jones also mentioned the manufacturer stating that using the plastic cover provides peak performance where it could read less (City losing) or it could read more (residents losing). He felt it was best to get them so no one loses but City Manager Thompson stated that getting the covers could be discussed later and with the amount of money/work to be spent/done initially, it would be much costlier/time consuming. Mayor Jones wanted to know what it would cost to put on the caps on later than

initially. City Manager Thompson said that it would be an up sale that would not help with the meter. He said it would only be advisable if the warranty would be void after five years if there are no caps. City Attorney Buhr said the change out of meter should be five to seven years. City Manager Thompson said the City's meters are twenty years old. The warranty will be ten years with or without the caps and the money is coming from ARPA. He will check on the cost of the caps and bring it back before the Commission for Tuesday's meeting. Vice-Mayor Fite asked when the meter installation would start. City Manager Thompson said that four days after receiving the executed contract, meters could be here. There will be additional costs if a pipe breaks because of removing an older meter that has not been touched in years. He said he had visits from a couple commissioners who were not in favor of the lease program. Their concern was how it would be paid for but he said it is a viable vehicle solution for Bowling Green splitting the cost between Enterprise and General funds. It will save on maintenance costs and buying police cars. He is willing to accept them holding off until a new City Manager is hired. He also contacted Enterprise to hold off if the Commission chose. He can redo the budget with that lease program taken out. Mayor Jones asked for an explanation of the maintenance costs. City Manager Thompson said that along with paying for a vehicle the City would be still be responsible for maintenance costs. Vice-Mayor Fite stated that he was not a fan of leases but the City is in a bind and it may be the best thing to do. City Manager Thompson said that if the City continues to purchase vehicles then a capital expenditure has to be a part of the budget and plan to purchase vehicles over time. The City has a lot of equipment/vehicles that need to be replaced. Mayor Jones stated that the City needs to evaluate what is required especially when things were bought forty to fifty years ago. City Manager Thompson said if it is budgeted then it needs to be bought. There are several items that had to be replaced now when they should have been replaced years ago. The City needs to reinvest in replacing older items. Mayor Jones said that there also needs to be an investment in human capital and there needs to be a plan for everything. City Manager Thompson feels like the Commission needs to be provided the information to help them decide when things like this come up. The motion to accept the amended 2021-2022 budget was made by Commissioner Durastanti and seconded by Vice-Mayor Fite. All commissioners were in favor, and motion carried. Commissioner Lunn was absent.

City Manager Thompson stated that when the office opens at 8:00am residents are already there to pay bills and request information before staff has counted drawer and prepared office for the day. He recommends opening the office at 8:30am to 4:30pm. The staff would still work 8:00am to 5:00pm and City Attorney Buhr stated that would be City Manager Thompson's decision. Mayor Jones said that would be advisable to keep staff from rushing around. Vice-Mayor Fite suggested staggering shifts so someone comes in at 7:30am and someone stays until 5:30pm. He is against working four days a week. The new office hours would begin in January 2023.

There are new emails through Google and all staff, commissioners, officers, and public works would have new emails. The current provider was hit with a virus that has made emails unavailable. The generic emails will also provide for incoming new hires to use the same email with history of what the previous person has done. Microsoft Exchange is not working, only the POP accounts are. Gerald Shackelford will help back the current emails up. There will only be a slight rate hike.

City Manager Thompson said that he posted the City Manager position on Indeed and Hardee County but did not put it in the Florida League of Cities. There were about 40 applicants and he called everyone. Some did not have any experience whatsoever and there were some being charged with crimes. Many were out of state and requested too much money. He selected four people and only liked one; he is requesting that the Commission invite any or all to interview with them. They can also appoint an interim. Mayor Jones wanted to know if doing the interviews on a Tuesday would make the regular meeting agenda too lengthy. City Manager Thompson agreed since there were a lot of things to discuss. He wanted the Commission to select someone so that he could have time to train them. Mayor Jones suggested that they select a separate

day for interviews. City Manager Thompson said one of the applicants, former ROTC instructor at the high school, is an Iraqi War veteran and once he was told what the job entails decided to withdraw his application. He had discussed the daily job duties with other potential applicants since most have a different view of what is required of the job. Angela Wiggins has managerial and financial experience. Simon Shackelford also has managerial, financial, and project management experience. Pamela Durrance has financial experience. The City needs someone with finance experience but management can be taught. George Sterner is the applicant that City Manager Thompson recommends for the position. He does not have any City Management experience, but he works for Saint Lucie County in the tax office which give him financial and governmental experience. Mayor Jones asked what his motivation for coming to Bowling Green and City Manager Thompson said that his partner is from this area. He has been in his current field for a long time and wants to move up. Vice-Mayor Fite recommended another option: a Senior Advisor Program that can assist with providing a retired City Manager as an interim and help with a job description. They can rank applicants going forward for a permanent City Manager. They are not headhunters but can get the word out and assist with quality applicants. City Manager Thompson had concerns about going this route since previous City Managers did not want to be here. He was not sure they would have the vision to move the City forward and see the growth potential. It needs to be someone who wants to make a difference and not just want a paycheck. Vice-Mayor Fite said that his option would provide an alternative plan and the City would be without. It would keep the Commission from making a bad decision. City Manager Thompson said that there is the option to hire an interim. There are a lot of things coming in to promote growth. Mayor Jones said that the new hire needs to be someone who has a vision and long-term goals. The root issue of not keeping City Managers needs to be addressed. Three of the applicants are close to Hardee County which will help in making sure they are looking for the best for Bowling Green. City Manager Thompson said he would be willing to repost the job. Vice-Mayor Fite said that the Florida League of Cities would be an option as to not leave the City without a City Manager. City Manager Thompson told Commissioner Durastanti that everything that needs attention has been taken care of. If the Commission does not pick someone, then the City will be okay for about a couple months until they do pick someone. He is available even after he leaves but he wanted the Commission to pick someone so he could explain what needs to be done. He provided the Commission with the resumes of the top four candidates. Mayor Jones said that City Attorney Buhr stated the notice for interviews had to be posted for at least three days (with two days at bare minimum). He wants to do it separate from the regular meeting since there are a lot of things to discuss. City Attorney Buhr recommended posting it on Monday, so it meets the 48-hour minimum requirement. City Manager Thompson suggested having it Thursday, February 15th which Vice-Mayor Fite agreed to allow time to schedule interviews. City Manager Thompson said he will contact all four at staggered times, starting at 5:30pm. City Attorney Buhr asked if he needed to attend. Vice-Mayor Fite said he would only need to be there if there was a job offer. City Attorney Buhr reminded them that there were certain questions they could not ask. City Manager Thompson said he had a degree in Human Resources so he can guide the interview process and will put together a questionnaire.

City Manager Thompson brought up the generator (main well field) and said that the magnets needed to be replaced which has not happened. There is a lot more wrong with it when it was being serviced (\$25,946.18 quote to repair). Mayor Jones said that the money to keep equipment running and wanted to know how much it would be to replace. City Manager Thompson said it would be about \$60,000 and said that the City can afford to have one. Mayor Jones said it makes more sense to purchase one. He can get quotes on new ones. Vice-Mayor Fite said he can look on the Sheriff's site for one. City Manager Thompson said Zolfo Springs is allowing the City to borrow one of their portable generators. He also said that ARPA funds can be used if needed since there is up to \$10,000,00 that can be available without explanation. There will be some money available after the big-ticket items are bought. Mayor Jones asked about the torch but City Manager Thompson did not get that information yet.

City Manager Thompson said that a rate study from Central Florida Water and needs to be looked at then discussed. It will be on Tuesday's agenda. He stated that when loans are taken then certain conditions apply. They expect an increase from \$22.83 to \$36.53 and then less than \$2 per year. If the City fixes everything that needs to be fixed and follow the asset plan, then the City can bank several thousands of dollars. He stated an increase is needed. Mayor Jones asked if what the amounts the new meters will bring in but City Attorney Buhr said that cannot be done since they have been under recording. Mayor Jones clarified that he was talking about the new meters. City Manager Thompson said an increase is inevitable. City Attorney Buhr stated an increase needs to be made as recommended. City Manager Thompson said if the big increase is approved then making smaller incremental increases every year so there does not have to make the big increases. City Attorney Buhr recommended having Cost of Living increases to keep from having the huge rate increases occasionally. City Manager Thompson has the rate study information available for review. City Attorney reminded everyone that it cannot go on the agenda until the first notice on the bill has been done. City Manager Thompson agreed and said it will be put on the January's agenda. Jim Kelly (4640 Bryan Ave and owner of the Herald Advocate) wanted to know if the sewer rates would go up. He said that would make it a double increase and if the water is going up ~\$12 a month what would be the increase on the sewer. City Manager Thompson said it would and City Attorney Buhr said that this discussion cannot go too deep until the January meeting. Commissioner Arreola asked if costs are being considered once Inframark's contract is up in three years. City Manager Thompson said that numbers should never be reversed but should go up in small amounts. Vice-Mayor said another rate study can be done once the numbers are in. City Attorney Buhr said the Commission should move on from this since it cannot be discussed at this time. Commissioner Durastanti asked for confirmation on the Special Meeting for City Manager interview to which City Manager Thompson said Thursday, December 15th at 5:30pm. Carolyn Pasdurak at 4681 West Palm Dr (Avion Palms Treasurer) already has their budget in place. There are 234 lots in the park, and some are only occupied during the winter months while some residents have an extra lot to park motorhomes which are not connected to water or sewer. However, they are still paying all 234 lots and their monthly bill next year will be over \$17,000/month. They pay that same amount in the summer when they have only thirty units being used. She is concerned about the increase which are not built into their budget. City Manager Thompson said that is they are not billed at 100%. He said their agreement would go January to December which was made with the previous City Manager. She has based her budget on the finances of the part-time residents. She feels that the City is providing less service and requesting more money. It was normally going up every year and not sure why the ball was dropped but knows the \$12 rate increase will be too much for them. She said they pay only about 65% of what residents pay and next year it will be 72.5%, then the year after that will be 80%. City Manager Thompson will check on this and advised if they are on vacation, a \$45 rate is charged. Ms. Pasdurak said the way it is being done now is more beneficial from them and the City. City Attorney Buhr said that this issue needed to be addressed at the January 2023 meeting. She said she would rather City Manager Thompson would stay.

Meeting adjourned.

N'Kosi Jones, Mayor

Katherin Kinzel, Interim City Clerk

City of Bowling Green

Minutes of Regular Meeting

December 13, 2022

Present: Mayor Jones, Vice-Mayor Fite, Commissioner Durastanti, Commissioner Lunn, Commissioner Arreola, City Manager Thompson, Interim City Clerk Kinzel, Chief Scheel, Attorney Buhr, Jennifer Codo_Salisbury and Benicia Frazier (CFRPC) and members of the audience.

1. **Call to order** – The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jones.
2. **Prayer** – Pastor Scott Tharp with First Baptist Church, Bowling Green
Flag Salute

Mayor Jones stated that agenda item 4F will need to be renamed Infrastructure Grant per City Manager Thompson.

3. Old Business

A. Approval of Minutes

1) Regular Meeting 11/1/2022

Per City Manager Thompson these minutes will need to be tabled until the December meeting due to an error in printing.

2) Emergency Meeting 11/8/2022

Commissioner Durastanti made the motion to approve. Motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Fite. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

4. New Business

A. CRF – Master Plan Kickoff

Jennifer Codo-Salisbury with the Central Florida Regional Planning Council, along with Benicia Frazier, gave an overview of their organization that partners with Hardee County and the municipalities in planning related items. She said that CoBG was awarded a Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant. CFRPC worked with BG to apply for the grant to develop a Downtown Master Plan for the City and with that, an update to the land development code for consideration. She provided handouts to the Commission for review. The first step of this is to schedule a community workshop to hear from the residents and stakeholders as to where the core downtown area is and the periphery of the downtown. Also, they are going to identify what is the community's vision. Mayor Jones was concerned about the capacity due to the flyer stating that the workshop would be held at the community center which only holds 49. Ms. Codo-Salisbury will investigate a larger venue and asked for venue recommendations. City Attorney Buhr and Mayor Jones suggested BG Elementary as that would be the optimal location for capacity within the City. City Attorney Buhr asked for a definition of stakeholders. Ms. Codo-Salisbury said that stakeholders are schools, FDOT, committees, the BG City Commission, any other organizations they are identified to be included. Mayor Jones said since there will be so many people and groups involved there needs to be a large enough place to accommodate everyone. The CFRPC wanted to

schedule it for a Thursday evening to avoid conflicts with other meetings. City Attorney Buhr recommended including a closed-circuit TV set up if the venue is not large so that the Sunshine Act is complied with so many other can be involved. She stated that they will look into the larger venue so that there can be open discussion which is what they want. They will be looking at existing conditions in the City and checking on current/planned infrastructure. They will also look at land use and zoning for economic development and growth. Mayor Jones thanked her for her presentation and said the Commission would review. She said they would coordinate with the City Manager.

B. Ordinance 2022-04: Amendment to City Procurement Code (2nd Reading)

City Attorney Buhr read a brief description of the ordinance. Vice-Mayor Fite commented the reading was as the previous month which was confirmed by City Manager Thompson who said it was needed. A motion to accept this ordinance on its second reading was made by Vice-Mayor Fite and seconded by Commissioner Lunn. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

C. Rezoning of Parcel Number 05-33-25-0000-09780-000 (Chester Ave, NW of the Intersection of Chester Ave & Hardee St) – Sergio/John

City Attorney Buhr read the short description of Ordinance 2022-05. City Manager Thompson stated that both Sergio and John are present for questions but it is so the property can be rezoned so it can be developed. Mayor Jones asked if they were getting ready to put in some homes which City Manager Thompson said yes. Sergio Jimenez (PO Box 1703 Wauchula) and John Raymond (3690 W Gandy Blvd Tampa) have acquired this property and it is currently zoned single family residential and they are looking to develop single family homes and duplexes on the site. Mr. Raymond stated that they are allowed to build the single-family homes but want to make the lots smaller for additional development in the CRA area. He said they are currently building a subdivision in Zolfo Springs. It will be concrete construction, single story and high-end. Mr. Raymond said that Vice-Mayor Fite has seen it which Vice-Mayor Fite complimented them on. City Manager Thompson stated that it is needed in Bowling Green. Mayor Jones said the main need is housing and City Manager Thompson said it would be side-by-side with the Diocese project. It will make the whole area residential. Vice-Mayor Fite asked them to state what their intentions are and how the plan to do this. Mr. Jimenez reiterated that they will be building duplexes and single-family homes. They plan to some deed restrictions that will monitor what the owners can and cannot do. Mayor Jones stated that this would minimize unnecessary traffic. Mr. Raymond said that there would restrictions on what the owners will be allowed with regards to number of cars at homes and color of paint used for houses. It will go to improve the quality of the houses over time. Mayor Jones asked if this would be synonymous with HOA or a little less. Mr. Raymond said it would be less of an HOA. Mayor Jones asked if there as a limitation on this to which City Attorney Buhr answered that he was not sure if there was a limitation on it. Mr. Raymond said it was a branding item for them. He stated that the initial plans would have duplexes in the front section with larger parcels in the back for single family homes. City Attorney Buhr stated that the ordinance number had a typo and needs to be corrected from 2022-005 to 2022-05, Interim City Clerk Kinzel will correct for the second reading and confirmed for the record. Motion was made by Vice-Mayor Fite with a second from Commissioner Durastanti. Mayor Jones said the Commission was on Agenda Item C and are they voting on Items D and E together,

but City Attorney Buhr said they must be considered separately. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

D. Ordinance 2022-05 (First Reading)

This was taken care of in Agenda Item C.

E. Ordinance 2022-06 (First Reading)

City Attorney Buhr read the brief description of this ordinance. Vice-Mayor Fite said that he would make a motion for this ordinance since the discussion had previously taken place during Agenda Item C. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Arreola. City Attorney Buhr said the same error in ordinance numbering needed to be corrected which Interim City Clerk Kinzel will fix. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried. City Manager Thompson commended both Mr. Jimenez and Mr. Raymond for their presentation.

F. Infrastructure Grant

City Manager Thompson said this was a board item. He, Mr. Solin, and City Attorney Buhr has gone through the contract to get this settled. Two issues that came about was when they took it to the EDA and the City was shovel-ready, it was already bid out as a private person. City Attorney Buhr had the question if the City could proceed without bidding it out itself. City Manager Thompson spoke with the County Attorney and the EDA Chairman both who said it was okay to proceed. But City Manager Thompson wanted the approval of the BG City Commission prior to proceeding. He stated that if it went to rebid it would put the project out a couple months and increase the price of it. He recommended the City proceed but he wanted the Commission to agree first. City Attorney Buhr said he would have the final contract ready based on the decision of the Commission. He asked City Manager Thompson if he has an engineer reviewing the plans which City Manager Thompson confirmed. He asked for a set of the plans which City Manager Thompson said he would provide. Motion was by Vice-Mayor Fite stating that the County and City Attorneys and the County have approved to proceed with rebidding the project City Manager Thompson explained that Mr. Solon was a private citizen, but the grant was secured by the City. City Attorney Buhr said that since the County was providing the grant money it was ultimately their decision. A second came from Commissioner Durastanti. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

City Manager Thompson said this project (Peace River Campground) started prior to his employment with the City and whether any concessions would be given to them with regards to impact fees since he is building. He wanted to get this taken care of by providing some kind of concession whether it be waiving or charging half on the impact fees, whatever the City is willing to provide. Commissioner Durastanti and Mayor Jones do not recall discussing providing any concessions. City Manager Thompson asked if the Commission would be willing to consider it. Commissioner Durastanti said no. Mayor Jones asked if it was something that needed to be voted on, but City Attorney Buhr and City Manager Thompson said the Commission only needed to vote if they were considering waiving or charging less on the impact fees.

G. Inframark – Corrosion Control

City Manager Thompson said the item name should only state Corrosion Control only. Inframark is trying to get more business and with the City. They purchased a company

that does corrosion control in water and wastewater plants. City Manager Thompson said he was not entertaining this but the City's contract with their current corrosion control provider goes by CPI to adjust their pricing which increased about \$200 per month (8.1%). Inframark provided an offer that would offer more services such as more frequent tank washings and paint more often. Corrosion Control charges about \$2200 per month and the subsidiary company associated with Inframark would charge \$1775 but would offer more services. City Manager Thompson said he does not keep track of CPI as the City does not do anything that deals with CPI (consumer price index – fluctuates pricing). He only built a 4% increase, but Corrosion Control doubled it. He said that with CPI could raise due to inflation. They have done a great job but wanted to bring the other option before the Commission as a cost savings item (about \$200 per month). Vice-Mayor Fite asked if the City was under any contractual obligation with the current provider. City Manager Thompson said the current contract rolled over into a month-to-month deal. Mayor Jones stated that the City cannot afford to continue a relationship with a company that is continually going to raise their costs and save now. He recommended that City Manager Thompson reach out to the City Attorney to verify there are no penalties on the current contract. City Manager Thompson said he would send both contracts to the City Attorney for review. Motion was made that City Manager Thompson send both contracts to the City Attorney for review by Vice-Mayor Fite with a second from Commissioner Lunn. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

H. Doug Batey – Waiver

Kyle Strickland (640 S 8th Ave Wauchula) spoke about 0 Mason Dixon (2.5-acre parcel) where he is building a new single-family home and wanted to address the sewer and water. The sewer line is not near the property. When the plans were drawn up, it was drawn up with a well but were told they had to tie into the City with a pump. He is requesting a waiver from the Commission to avoid doing this but still have everything work properly. They already have an existing well, so they do not need to connect to the City water. City Attorney Buhr said the water did not have anything to do with the sewer. Mr. Strickland confirmed he was only addressing the sewer portion by putting in a septic tank instead of connecting to the City. City Attorney Buhr said the City has a mandatory connection policy which requires a waiver first. City Manager Thompson said that before he was employed with the City there is an agreement between the City and his father (Mr. Doug Batey) that we waive the connection fees for Mr. Batey which was done and he does not know if that was brought before the Commission. He advised Mr. Batey this was above his authorization as the City Manager must follow the ordinances while the Commission can decide however they want. City Attorney Buhr said it would determine who signed the agreement, the Commission at the time had to approve it and there should be minutes stating such waiver and agreement. Commissioner Durastanti said he remembered Mr. Batey coming before the Commission and that it was approved because the City could not provide sewage service without a lift station. Mayor Jones wanted confirmation that this was a request for a fee waiver, but Commissioner Durastanti said it was not since Mr. Batey was only asking for an exception to have a sewer since there was no lift station available. City Manager Thompson said the manhole was only a couple feet deep. The City would have to upgrade the pipe and put in a fire hydrant. If the City forced the issue for connection to the sewer the City would be required to make the upgrades not just to the front of the house but down to Grape St. Then Mr. Strickland would have to put in a lift station (pump or grinder). City Attorney Buhr clarified this would not be a lift station but

a grinder station. City Manager Thompson said he required two houses on Dixiana that set off the road to put in grinder pumps. It cost the City because they had to bore into the road so they could tap into it. City Attorney did not understand why the City took on that cost since all costs associated with connecting to the City should be paid by the resident. City Manager Thompson clarified that the residents may have repaid the boring costs but the City had to order the boring but he would check on it. The City was charged to tap because it could not be done without boring into the road. City Attorney Buhr reiterated that the code states that residents are required to incur the costs for connecting to the City water/sewer. City Manager Thompson said that the City would have to pay for the piping upgrade on the street so that the fire hydrant can be put in and make sure there is enough water for the hydrant. He said that is why there was a waiver on the original ordinance. City Attorney Buhr said that it was the Commission's decision but to be careful. Mayor Jones asked why wouldn't the City upgrade if it should be upgraded which City Manager Thompson agreed. Commissioner Lunn asked if the City can be held liable since there is not one there now if there were a fire. Vice-Mayor Fite wanted to know where the fire hydrant would be located. City Manager Thompson said it would go in front of their property. He said there would not be enough pressure to hold it in the 2" pipes and would have to be upgraded to a 6" pipe. Mayor Jones understood what City Attorney Buhr was saying but City Attorney Buhr did say this was a slippery slope as the City would have to justify why it was being done for one person and not another. He did ask Mr. Strickland if this was a residence; Mr. Strickland stated it was a single-family home on 2.5 acres. He also said there would be an irrigation system. Mayor Jones let Mr. Strickland know that the questions were not intended to be mean since the Commission cannot do things for some residents and not others which Mr. Strickland understood. City Attorney Buhr did clarify that waivers can be made for situations such as well prohibitions when you do not need to have potable water such as irrigation. He said that water should be connected to the City. City Manager Thompson said that grinder stations were cheaper than septic tanks. Vice-Mayor Fite asked if City Manager Thompson and City Attorney Buhr had a chance to talk about it. City Attorney Buhr stated that he was not aware of this situation at all. Vice-Mayor Fite made a motion that until both the City Manager and City Attorney have a conversation about this to bring information back to the Commission. It was seconded by Commissioner Durastanti; roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

I. Shannon Rasnake – Waiver of Vacation Fee

Shannon Rasnake said that this was about 4057 Dixiana Dr. Her parents who own this property are being charged \$45 per month (vacation fee) to not have water at their house. They live in Michigan and vacation in Florida. Every month they incur the fee for non-usage. City Manager Thompson said that the City does not charge for non-usage. The City still provides water, fixes issues with the water on the City's side and run the garbage truck through there. When an account is on vacation, services are still available to the resident. Ms. Resnake said her parents are not opposed to paying something but wanted a reduced amount, such as \$10 or \$15 per month. City Attorney Buhr said that the fee could not be waived. He explained that there is a cost associated with the treatment plant. The City is charging the minimum charge and is required for insurance, operators and 24/7 monitoring. The vacation of \$45 is the least amount to charge to pay the fixed costs. This is charged to everyone. City Manager Thompson said it would be unfair to waive the costs for her parents and not for others as there are many residents who are only her during the

winter and City Attorney Buhr said it would be illegal because if her parents do not pay theirs it would fall on the rest of the residents.

J. Personnel

City Manager Thompson said this item would not be discussed.

5. Mayor

Mayor Jones addressed the City having 2 City Managers and 1 Interim in four years, less than five. He said 3 of them have stated unpleasantness with their duties. The headcount for City staff has dropped but the budget has increased. He read some items from the City Charter regarding duties and responsibilities as the City moves forward. Section 2.08: Limitations and Prohibitions: A) The Commission shall not in any manner dictate or give orders to any non-appointed employee of the City in carrying out their official duties as an employee of the City. The Commission may make investigations into the affairs of the City and make formal recommendations to the City Manager for providing a modern, efficient, and economical governmental city. B) No commissioner shall individually or give orders to any officer or employee of the City whether appointed or not in carrying out their official duties as an employee of the City. Violation of this prohibition shall be grounds for forfeiture of office. The Mayor implored everyone to read and study what form of government the City has, which is a Council-Manager and knowing roles and duties. The City Manager has the role to administrate the City and the employees. In doing so, the City Manager should not feel unpleasant or uncomfortable doing their job. The Commission is not to dictate but learn the statutes and laws of the Charter of the City, Florida Statutes and Constitution of the United States. He hopes everyone understands moving forward the merry-go-round will cease. He thanked everyone in their roles and that will miss City Manager Thompson. He greatly appreciates everything Mr. Thompson has brought since he started because he took unfinished business from those who preceded him and brought some things to pass. He said the community has already spoken and that Mr. Thompson was a visible and present City Manager. He said that everyone is learning because the laws and statutes are constantly changing. The Commission must remain in the know. He encouraged City Manager Thompson to soar and be great; he thanked him and all the City employees. He loves the atmosphere of the Christmas parade and what followed.

6. Commissioners

Commissioner Durastanti said he will miss City Manager Thompson and that he has time to change his mind. He also wished him a Merry Christmas. He thanked City Manager Thompson and appreciated the City employees. Vice-Mayor Fite wished City Manager Thompson well in his future endeavors. He appreciated City Manager Thompson getting projects that had been sitting on the shelf to fruition. He feels there are good things happening in Bowling Green. He was looking forward to Mr. Thompson being part of it and he will be missed. He also brought information from the Florida League on what is coming up and legislative priorities. A serious concern is Form 6 versus Form 1 Financial Disclosure for the Local Elected and it is getting pushed by the Ethics Committee. There is also a sample Ordinance and would like each city to adopt in support. He asked City Attorney Buhr to review and revise as needed. City Attorney Buhr asked if it was Resolution and not Ordinance which Vice-Mayor confirmed was Resolution. He wished Adam a Merry Christmas and good luck. Commissioner Lunn said he has seen a lot of talking City Managers but said Mr. Thompson was a real doer. He appreciated that City Manager Thompson got things done. He said City Manager Thompson got the pavilion

built then moved, got a new garbage truck for the City, and now has new water meters being installed soon. Mayor Jones stated he got the Community Center completed. Vice-Mayor Fite said that County Manager Lawrence McNaul came to Bowling Green before the meeting to tell City Manager Thompson good-bye and complimented what he has done. Commissioner Arreola said he was looking forward to working with City Manager Thompson and said it was not too late to change his mind. He also wished him luck and said he would be welcomed back. He complimented the parade and thanked Chiquita Robinson for her hard work.

7. City Attorney

City Attorney Buhr said he tried to talk City Manager Thompson out of leaving to no avail. He is sorry to see him leave and wished him well. He commented on something Mayor Jones stated earlier by saying Bowling Green is a Commission-Manager style government. The Commission does the legislative and grand policy while the City Manager implements the policy (with other policies) and oversees management of employees. The two roles are meant to be separated. He has given brief seminars to some commissions at the request of City Managers who felt it was needed. He welcomed anyone to contact him with any issues. He warned the Commission not to interfere with the City Manager's administrative tasks.

8. Recreation

Chiquita Robinson, Recreation Supervisor, wanted to thank everyone who had helped with the parade. She was happy and surprised with the turnout. She thanked the office staff and City Manager Thompson for their assistance. She said that she is already planning events for 2023 and have two left, Black History on the third Saturday in February which she stated was not just for Black History but everyone in Bowling Green. She also stated that Cinco de Mayo will be on May 6th. She said she has a lot of people ready to help and encouraged everyone to call the City if they have any ideas or help. She thanked the Mayor and the Commission. Her only concern was the soccer field at Centanino Park and had to call for help. City Manager Thompson will discuss during his time.

9. City Manager

City Manager Thompson started with the soccer field at Centanino Park. One of his projects was setting up the soccer field because it is a fantastic use of it. It gets used more than Pyatt Park. There are two separate individuals with soccer leagues who want to use it regularly and the City Manager is all for it. He put in the budget to build a bathroom out there. The problem is one of the leagues is charging money to use the City's field without the City's authorization. City Manager Thompson has spoken to the person in charge of this league and said he could not charge without written permission from the City. He stated that no league should charge money to use the City's property, but he was out on Saturday doing it which caused a problem. He ordered signs to put out at the park that no league can use the field without written permission from the City. Leagues will be run off if they do not comply and they should never charge for using the City park. City Attorney Buhr stated that the leagues should provide indemnification and insurance. City Manager Thompson said he would take care of that as this is something new for the City and would work on it. The league that was charging is no allowed to use it until an agreement is in place. The park can used if needed.

He also stressed that the City has made great strides and felt great things are coming. It will not be just the job of the City Manager but the support of the residents. He said that the residents that showed up and had a great time despite the money spent. Bowling Green

had been getting away from community involvement and he has been stating that everyone is the community. Vice-Mayor Fite said that Bowling Green is a family which City Manager Thompson agreed with. City Manager Thompson said that when Hurricane Ian came through, the first thing he wanted was Interim City Clerk to send a Facebook post stressing everyone come together and help each other clean up. He complimented Jaime Blas who came with his tractor and did not ask for anything except a little gas. He helped all the residents clean up. He stated that it is not the Commission or even the City Manager that does it but the residents of Bowling Green. He said if the residents do not get involved then they should relocate. He was excited by the response of the Christmas parade and last year's Trunk or Treat. Community involvement will be the only thing that will grow the City. He told the public that he cannot fix what he does not know what is broken. He invited the residents to come in during the weekday to tell City Hall what needs to be done even if it is impossible to do. He did say that he will miss the residents of Bowling Green. He reiterated that the City has a grant to revitalize the vision. He encouraged the residents to vote during election time. He will miss everyone, and it is the best job he has ever had. He repeated all the upcoming changes that could be possible if the residents allow it to happen. He ended with wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and will still be around until his last day. Vice-Mayor Fite asked that a letter be written to the City of Hawthorne for donating items to Bowling Green during Hurricane Ian to be signed by the Commission and the City Manager. City Manager Thompson wanted everyone to use the Community Center. It has been rented almost every weekend since it opened. He felt it was his greatest accomplishment.

10. Police Chief

Chief Scheel said he hoped City Manager Thompson would stay until he retired. He stated that Mr. Thompson did more in the last year than any other City Manager he served under. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

11. Interim City Clerk

Interim City Clerk Kinzel thanked City Manager Thompson for giving her the chance to service in the City Clerk position. She appreciated him for giving her a job and said he will be deeply missed. She wished in good luck in his next endeavor.

12. Public

Mayor Jones reminded the public to state their name and address if they choose to speak and will be limited to three minutes.

John Raymond (3690 W Gandy Blvd Tampa) said he enjoyed working with City Manager Thompson. He stated that he works with affordable housing development and because of Hurricane Ian, funds have been distributed across the state in various forms. Florida Housing has some that are specific to counties (Hardee, Desoto, and Charlotte) heavily impacted by the hurricane. There is a funding cycle coming up in June to develop housing in these counties where the opportunity to submit for those funds will available. There will be about 5-7 projected that will get funded. They are looking to submit an offer to purchase a city-owned property related to this. City Manager Thompson said he would be available to everyone regarding this as it was submitted to him from Mr. Raymond and in response to City Attorney Buhr and Mayor Jones request that Mr. Thompson keep the new City Manager apprised of this. Mr. Raymond answered Mayor Jones' question of when the application deadline is (January 25th). According to Vice-Mayor Fite, the property will have to be bid out which City Attorney Buhr said yes. This is the property next to Avion Palms.

City Manager Thompson said that this was bid prior. City Attorney Buhr said it should go out to bid now. Commissioner Durastanti made the motion to bid out the property with a second from Vice-Mayor Fite. City Manager Thompson asked how long it would have to be out for bid which City Attorney Buhr said whatever is reasonable. It would need to be published for about 2 weeks and put on January's meeting agenda. The bids can be opened at the January 10th meeting. Mr. Raymond asked if a signed contract would be signed at that time. City Attorney Buhr said that it would be to be worked out. Vice-Mayor Fite asked if the bids would be opened at the meeting or prior to; City Attorney Buhr said it could be either. He said it could be done the week of January 10th. The only other bid was the individual who came to a prior Commission meeting to set up an RV park like Avion Palms, but the bid was lower than the Commission was willing to accept. City Attorney recommended by end of January 9th so the City Manager and Commission can review it. City Manager Thompson has been wanting to sell it. Roll call vote, all in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Jones adjourned the meeting.

N'Kosi Jones, Mayor

Katherin Kinzel, Interim City Clerk

City of Bowling Green

Special Meeting Minutes

December 15, 2022

Present: Mayor Jones, Vice-Mayor Fite, Commissioner Lunn, Commissioner Durastanti, Commissioner Arreola, City Manager Thompson, Police Chief Scheel, and Interim City Clerk Kinzel. No members of the public were present except Jim Kelly from the Herald Advocate and Bowling Green resident, but the meeting was advertised.

Call to order – The meeting was called to order by Vice-Mayor Fite.

No prayer or pledge was given.

(Mayor Jones was late due to family tragedy. Commissioner Lunn came in at the start of George Sterner's interview.)

There were over 40 candidates that applied for the City Manager position. From that, three were selected to interview with the Commission.

At interview time All the Commissioners introduced themselves and gave an overview of their backgrounds. They also reviewed their role as Commissioners. Each of the candidates were asked the same 12 questions (attached for reference). Each Commissioner asked about 3 questions each. Each of the candidates were asked follow-up questions by the Commission and City Manager Thompson.

Pamela Durrance (Avon Park) who appeared in person was first to be interviewed by the Commission. She answered each question asked by the Commission.

Angela Wiggins did not show for her interview appointment.

George Sterner (Port Saint Lucie) joined via Google Meet for his interview. Mr. Sterner was asked the same questions as Mrs. Durrance and answered each of them.

Upon completion of the interviews, the Commission discussed which candidate they wanted to extend the job offer to. Although Mr. Sterner had more government experience, they decided on Mrs. Durrance. They felt her demeanor and attitude fit what the City was looking for. City Manager Thompson will contact Mrs. Durrance with the offer of the City Manager position.

Meeting adjourned.

N'Kosi Jones, Mayor

Katherin Kinzel, Interim City Clerk

City of Bowling Green

Date _____

City Manager interviews

Interviewer _____

1. Tell us about yourself and what interests you in the City Manager position?
2. Do you have any experience with public speaking? If so, what is your preferred method of delivery?
3. What is your experience with managing budgets? Which methods do you use to determine resource allocation?
4. Provide an example of a time when you had to implement a controversial policy decision. How did you handle the public's reaction?
5. If you were given free rein to implement any changes to the city's operations, what would they be?
6. What are some of the most important qualities for a successful city manager?
7. How would you help create a working relationship between the city council and the city manager's office?

8. Provide an example of a time when you had to implement a controversial policy decision. How did you handle the public's reaction?

9. What do you think you bring to this job that others might not?

10. In this job every day is different, and even though you have a to-do list for the day, a telephone call or e-mail can change everything. How do you take care of the unexpected and still get your other work done?

11. What do you see as the threats and opportunities facing our city?

12. Thank you for your time today. Before we conclude, do you have any additional information regarding your qualifications for this position?

13. Do you have questions you would like to ask the council members present today?