



**Minutes**  
**City Commission**  
**May 28, 2026 6:30 p.m.**

**Regular Meeting of the City of Winter Garden City Commission was called to order by Mayor Rees at 6:30 PM at City Hall, 300 West Plant Street, Winter Garden, Florida. An Opening Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were given.**

**Present:**

Mayor John Rees  
Commissioner District 1 - Lisa L. Bennett  
Commissioner District 2 - Iliana R. Jones  
Commissioner District 3 - Chloe Johnson  
Commissioner District 4 - Colin Sharman

**Also Present:**

Assistant City Manager - Steve Pash  
City Attorney - A Kurt Ardaman  
City Clerk - Ronisha Martin

**1. Approval of Minutes**

A. Regular Meeting Minutes – May 14, 2026

**Motion by Commissioner Bennett to approve the regular meeting minutes of May 14, 2026. Seconded by Commissioner Johnson and carried unanimously 5-0.**

**2. PRESENTATION**

A. **Proclamation 26:06**: Proclaiming June 2026 as Faith and Family Month was read and presented by Mayor Rees and City Commission.

**3. SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCES**

A. **ORDINANCE 26-12**: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WINTER GARDEN, FLORIDA REZONING APPROXIMATELY 337.25 ± ACRES OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY GENERALLY LOCATED EAST OF FLYNN COURT, WEST OF AVALON ROAD, NORTH OF MARSH ROAD, AND SOUTH OF JOHNS LAKE, AT 17729 MARSH ROAD AND 1400, 1401, AND 1756 WILLIAMS ROAD, FROM NO ZONING (NZ) TO URBAN VILLAGE PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (UVPUD); PROVIDING FOR CERTAIN UVPUD REQUIREMENTS AND DESCRIBING THE DEVELOPMENT AS THE JOHNS LAKE URBAN VILLAGE PUD; PROVIDING FOR NON-SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE  
City Attorney Kurt Ardaman read Ordinance 26-12 by title only. Planning Director Kelly Carson stated that the request is to rezone approximately 337.25 acres, known as the McKinnon Property or Johns Lake Urban Village Planned Unit Development (UVPUD), from No Zoning (NZ) to an Urban Village Planned Unit Development. She explained that the property is located within the City's Joint Planning Area (JPA) with Orange County

and has an Urban Village Future Land Use designation allowing up to four dwelling units per acre.

Ms. Carson stated the proposed development includes 613 residential units, parks, trails, open space, and a special district area with low-density uses. She noted the development is designed to preserve the existing tree canopy and natural features through a transect plan, which provides flexibility in lot layouts based on future environmental studies. Ms. Carson further stated the project would be developed in phases of no more than 50 units at a time. In response to community concerns, the developer agreed to dedicate the previously identified elementary school site to the City for a future public park.

Ms. Carson explained the special district area is intended to preserve natural features through a low-density bed-and-breakfast concept consisting of cottages, an event venue, a boardwalk, a reservation-only restaurant, and lake access by dock. She added that the development would include traffic-calming measures, enhanced landscaping, and streetscape improvements throughout the community.

Ms. Carson also provided an overview of the traffic impact analysis, noting the development is expected to generate approximately 5,411 daily trips, including 408 a.m. peak-hour trips and 538 p.m. peak-hour trips. She stated trip generation was reduced following the removal of the previously proposed elementary school site. Ms. Carson further stated that no certificates of occupancy would be issued until New Independence Parkway is open and operational. She noted required roadway improvements include upgrades to Williams Road, construction of a roundabout at Marsh Road and Williams Road, roadway connections, right-of-way dedications, and contributions toward additional traffic improvements identified in the study. Ms. Carson stated the City does not support widening Marsh Road due to limited right-of-way, concerns regarding induced traffic demand, and preserving the existing character of the corridor. She noted future regional roadway projects, including New Independence Parkway, Schofield Road, and SR-516, are anticipated to reduce traffic volumes over time.

Ms. Carson addressed community concerns related to traffic, stormwater, lake quality, docks, park access, and the previously proposed school site. She stated staff worked with the developer to address those concerns, including replacing the school site with a future City park. Ms. Carson noted the proposed density equates to approximately 1.82 dwelling units per acre, which is below the maximum density permitted under the future land use designation and comparable to surrounding developments. She also noted additional revisions made following prior meetings, including updates to transportation conditions and accessory dwelling unit regulations for consistency with City code. Ms.

Carson stated Commissioner Sharman requested conditions requiring that no certificates of occupancy be issued until New Independence Parkway is complete or January 1, 2028, whichever occurs sooner, as well as installation of a sound wall and landscape buffer near Waterside on Johns Lake. Ms. Carson further explained the traffic analysis accounted for the proposed use mix and stated the roadway improvements are intended to mitigate traffic impacts. She noted all development obligations are incorporated into the UVPUD ordinance and that additional environmental review would occur during future preliminary plat and engineering reviews through the transect plan process. Staff recommended approval of Ordinance 26-12, finding the proposal consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Regulations, and Joint Planning Agreement.

Mayor Rees thanked Ms. Carson for her presentation and recognized City Attorney Kurt Ardaman to speak.

Mr. Ardaman stated the City Commission is required to base its decision on information presented during the public hearing process. He explained commissioners received numerous emails, letters, and public comments regarding the proposed Johns Lake UVPUD, including additional correspondence submitted prior to the meeting. Mr. Ardaman stated he would summarize the correspondence publicly as part of the record so the comments could be heard by the Commission, staff, applicant, and members of the public.

Mr. Ardaman summarized correspondence and public comments received from multiple residents expressing concerns related to traffic congestion, roadway capacity, emergency access, evacuation concerns, stormwater impacts, environmental impacts to Johns Lake, school concurrency, roadway right-of-way dedications, and compatibility with the rural character of the area. Mr. Ardaman also addressed comments regarding the City's traffic consultant report and stated some concerns were based on assumptions that roadway improvements would not occur and that the previously proposed school site remained part of the project. He stated staff and the City's traffic engineer believe the transportation improvements and conditions included in the UVPUD ordinance adequately address the project's traffic impacts and satisfy the City's approval criteria.

Mr. Ardaman also addressed allegations regarding procedural violations, ordinance revisions, ex parte communications, and potential conflicts of interest. He clarified that the ordinance was drafted by City staff and explained that a PUD is a negotiated zoning process that allows the City to impose additional requirements beyond standard zoning classifications. Regarding ex parte communications, Mr. Ardaman stated the purpose of

publicly summarizing correspondence received by commissioners was to disclose those communications as part of the public record and provide all parties an opportunity to hear and respond during the hearing process. Additional comments were summarized regarding proportionality concerns associated with the Ambersweet Road right-of-way dedication and statements reserving legal rights to challenge the approval if adopted.

Following Mr. Ardaman's summary, **Mayor Rees and all City Commissioners** disclosed ex parte communications related to the proposed development, including conversations and correspondence received regarding the application and surrounding area.

Mayor Rees then invited the applicant to speak. Heather Isaacs of Isaacs Strategy Solutions, LLC, spoke on behalf of the applicant and stated the applicant agreed with staff's recommendation for approval of Ordinance 26-12 and appreciated staff's review of the application. She noted the applicant was available to answer questions following public comment.

Mayor Rees commented on existing traffic volumes along Marsh Road and discussed the impact of regional traffic originating from Lake County. Discussion included the need to explore long-term regional traffic solutions and methods to reduce through-traffic affecting Winter Garden residents.

Mayor Rees opened the public hearing.

The following public made statements and voiced concerns regarding this development:

Sarah Matin	14265 Sunridge Boulevard	Winter Garden, FL 34787
James Gillman	7159 Hiawassee Overlook Drive*	Orlando, FL 32835
Sean Brazil	Bal Harbour Drive	Winter Garden, FL 34787
Dale Kelch	16995 Tradewind Point	Winter Garden, FL 34787
Tyrone Young	8125 Mosaic Lane	Winter Garden, FL 34787
Diane Buechler	1425 Priory Circle	Winter Garden, FL 34787
London Dewey	17413 Davenport Road*	Winter Garden, FL 34787
Rick Stuebing	54 Live Oak Road*	Winter Garden, FL 34787
Laurie Forrester	16050 Sandhill Road*	Winter Garden, FL 34787
Frank Symphorien	17555 Seidner Road*	Winter Garden, FL 34787
Bob Buchanan	148 Roper Drive	Winter Garden, FL 34787
Dave Stewart	16631 Meredrew Lane*	Clermont, FL 34711
Kelly Miller	295 Northeast Ivanhoe Blvd*	Orlando, FL 32804
Adam Garcia	16785 Broadwater Ave	Winter Garden, FL 34787
Gen Billedeau	17565 Davenport Road*	Winter Garden, FL 34787
John Columbier	16863 Sanctuary Drive	Winter Garden, FL 34787

\*Unincorporated Orange County.

Public comments focused primarily on traffic congestion along Marsh Road, Avalon Road, Williams Road, Davenport Road, and surrounding roadways. Residents discussed roadway capacity, cumulative impacts from surrounding developments, construction traffic, pedestrian safety, and long-term infrastructure planning. Additional comments addressed accessory dwelling units (ADUs), multigenerational housing impacts, environmental concerns, preservation of the rural character of the area, proposed hotel uses, and compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods. Questions were also raised regarding the public records process and the sharing of citizen comments with the developer during project review. Several residents requested the ordinance be postponed or denied until additional traffic analysis could be completed and roadway concerns were further addressed. Conversely, several residents expressed support for the lower-density design, preservation of trees and green space, dedication of public park, and the developer's connection to the community.

Nathaniel Slade, 713 Chase Oaks Court, Winter Garden, Florida, requested clarification regarding a potential conflict of interest involving Commissioner Bennett's role as vice president of Windsor Realty Group.

**Commissioner Bennett** responded that serving as a real estate broker and Vice President of Windsor Realty Group does not create a conflict of interest related to the proposed development. She explained that serving on the commission is a part-time position, real estate is her profession, and she has no financial interest, business arrangement, or involvement with the developer or project.

During public comment, Ms. Carson clarified that the traffic impact analysis included surrounding approved developments and future projected growth conditions. She further clarified that the entire 13.65-acre parcel previously identified as a potential school site would instead be dedicated as a public park. Ms. Carson also discussed conditions prohibiting certificates of occupancy until completion of the New Independence Parkway extension or January 1, 2028, whichever occurs sooner. City Attorney Ardaman also clarified that communications between the City and the developer are public records and explained that the City shares citizen comments with the applicant so concerns raised during the public process can be addressed during project review. He further explained the City may require the developer to mitigate impacts created by the project but cannot require the developer to correct existing roadway deficiencies unrelated to the development.

Mayor Rees, hearing and seeing no other requests for public comment, closed the public hearing.

**Commissioner Sharman** inquired about the property's future land use designation, potential development rights, traffic impacts, and the City's ability to require roadway improvements. He expressed concerns regarding existing traffic conditions in the area and discussed the need to explore long-term transportation solutions, including potential traffic signal improvements and other measures to address regional traffic impacts affecting residents.

City Attorney Ardaman explained that the property's Future Land Use designation permits up to four dwelling units per acre, while the proposed development is less dense than the maximum density permitted. He further explained that state law permits the City to require a developer to mitigate traffic impacts created by a project but does not allow the City to require a developer to correct existing transportation deficiencies unrelated to the development. Mr. Ardaman also stated that if the application were denied, the applicant could revise the proposal and return with a different development plan and may pursue legal remedies available through the quasi-judicial process.

**Assistant City Manager for Public Services Steve Pash** provided an overview of roadway jurisdiction along Avalon Road and noted the City recently assumed ownership of portions of Avalon Road south of State Road 50 to Tilden Road, while sections farther south remain under Orange County jurisdiction. Mr. Pash stated the City currently has no planned roadway widening projects due to funding limitations.

Discussion ensued regarding existing traffic conditions, future transportation improvements, regional growth impacts, private property rights, and balancing future development with infrastructure capacity and environmental preservation. Additional comments included support for the proposed lower-density development, preservation of trees and waterways, dedication of a public park, and recognition of the developer's connection to the community. Discussion also acknowledged the challenges of accommodating growth while addressing transportation needs and preserving community character.

**Motion by Commissioner Sharman to adopt Ordinance 26-12 with staff conditions. Seconded by Commissioner Johnson and carried unanimously 5-0.**

- B. **ORDINANCE 26-13**: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WINTER GARDEN, FLORIDA PROVIDING FOR THE ANNEXATION OF CERTAIN ADDITIONAL LANDS GENERALLY DESCRIBED AS APPROXIMATELY 0.44 ± ACRES LOCATED AT WEST COLONIAL DRIVE, WEST OF BEULAH ROAD, EAST OF 9TH STREET, SOUTH OF WEST COLONIAL DRIVE, AND NORTH OF MAGNOLIA STREET INTO THE CITY OF WINTER GARDEN, FLORIDA; REDEFINING THE CITY BOUNDARIES TO GIVE THE CITY JURISDICTION OVER SAID PROPERTY; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE
- C. **ORDINANCE 26-14**: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WINTER GARDEN, FLORIDA AMENDING THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP OF THE WINTER GARDEN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BY CHANGING THE LAND USE DESIGNATION OF REAL PROPERTY GENERALLY DESCRIBED AS APPROXIMATELY 0.44 ± ACRES LOCATED AT WEST COLONIAL DRIVE, WEST OF BEULAH ROAD, EAST OF 9TH STREET, SOUTH OF WEST COLONIAL DRIVE, AND NORTH OF MAGNOLIA STREET FROM ORANGE COUNTY COMMERCIAL TO CITY COMMERCIAL; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE
- D. **ORDINANCE 26-15**: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WINTER GARDEN, FLORIDA REZONING APPROXIMATELY 0.44 ± ACRES LOCATED AT WEST COLONIAL DRIVE, WEST OF BEULAH ROAD, EAST OF 9TH STREET, SOUTH OF WEST COLONIAL DRIVE, AND NORTH OF MAGNOLIA STREET FROM ORANGE COUNTY C-3 WHOLESALE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT TO CITY C-2 ARTERIAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

Planning Director Kelly Carson stated that the applicant is requesting annexation of property located on West Colonial Drive into the City, assignment of a Commercial Future Land Use designation, and rezoning to C-2. Ms. Carson noted the applicant intends to request approval to construct a digital billboard on the property in exchange for the removal of two existing billboards located at 1101 East Plant Street and 14899 West Colonial Drive. She further stated the billboard request would require a Special Exception Permit and a separate billboard agreement subject to City Commission approval at a later date. Staff recommended approval.

Mayor Rees opened the public hearing.

Nathaniel Slade, 713 Chase Oaks Court, Winter Garden, FL, inquired about the type of advertisements proposed for the billboard. Ms. Carson responded that the request is associated with OutFront Media and noted the City's billboard reduction program allows one new digital billboard in exchange for the removal of two existing billboards within the City.

Mayor Rees, hearing and seeing no other requests for public comment, closed the public hearing.

**Motion by Commissioner Johnson to adopt Ordinances 26-13, 26-14 and 26-15. Seconded by Commissioner Sharman and carried unanimously 5-0.**

- E. **ORDINANCE 26-16**: AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WINTER GARDEN, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 118 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, AMENDING SECTIONS 118-729, 118-731, 118-773, 118-774 AND 118-775 RELATING TO SPECIAL EXCEPTION USES AND PROHIBITED USES IN THE I-1 (LIGHT INDUSTRIAL AND WAREHOUSING) AND I-2 (GENERAL INDUSTRIAL) DISTRICTS; PROVIDING FOR ADDITIONAL USES DETERMINED TO BE SIMILAR IN TYPE AND INTENSITY AND COMPATIBLE WITH PERMITTED USES AND CLARIFYING PROHIBITED USES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

City Attorney Kurt Aradaman read ordinance 26-16 by title only. Planning Director Kelly Carson stated the proposed ordinance provides updates to special exceptions and prohibited uses within the I-1 zoning districts to provide greater flexibility for compatible industrial uses while clarifying prohibited uses. Ms. Carson noted the changes are intended to support economic development opportunities and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community. Staff recommended approval.

Mayor Rees opened the public hearing; hearing and seeing none, he closed the public hearing.

**Motion by Commissioner Sharman to adopt Ordinance 26-16. Seconded by Commissioner Jones and carried unanimously 5-0.**

#### **4. REGULAR BUSINESS**

- A. Recommendation to approve SPECIAL EVENT – Juneteenth Community Celebration 1203 East Plant (City Park) on Saturday, June 20, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Planning Director Kelly Carson stated that the City is requesting permission to hold a Juneteenth community celebration and gave the location, date, and time. She described the event and its activities. Staff recommended approval.

**Motion by Commissioner Johnson to approve SPECIAL EVENT for the Juneteenth Community Celebration at 1203 East Plant (City Park) on Saturday, June 20, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Bennett and carried unanimously 5-0.**

5. **Matters From Public** - There were no items.
6. **Matters From City Attorney** -There were no items
7. **Matters From City Manager** - There were no items.

**8. Matters From Mayor and Commissioners**

**Commissioner Sharman** stated that Avalon Road remains a significant concern for residents and emphasized the importance of exploring creative and cost-effective solutions to address traffic congestion. He spoke of potential intersection improvements and alternative funding mechanisms, including special assessments, as possible options to help address future transportation needs.

**Commissioner Johnson** expressed appreciation to staff for their efforts and preparation for the meeting.

**Commissioner Jones** thanked staff, first responder, and all those involved in preparing for and supporting the meeting.

**Commissioner Bennett** thanked staff for their work and expressed appreciation to City Attorney Ardaman for providing explanations throughout the meeting.

**Mayor Rees** thanked staff for their efforts in supporting the Memorial Day event honoring veterans and asked that his appreciation be shared with all employees involved. He also commended David Gregory and his post for organizing a meaningful and successful event honoring fallen service members.

**9. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

APPROVED:

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/S/  
Mayor John Rees

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
/S/  
City Clerk Ronisha Martin