

The City Council in and for the citizens of the City of Lake City, Florida, met in Special Session, on September 15, 2021 beginning at 9:00 A.M., in the City Council Chambers, located at City Hall 205 North Marion Avenue, Lake City, Florida. Members of the public also viewed the meeting live on our YouTube Channel.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION –Mayor Stephen Witt

ROLL CALL

Mayor/Council Member
City Council

Stephen M. Witt
Jake Hill, Jr.
Eugene Jefferson
C. Todd Sampson
Frederick Koberlein, Jr.
Chief Argatha Gilmore
Audrey Sikes

City Attorney
Sergeant-at-Arms
City Clerk

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Sampson made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Jefferson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

Glenel Bowden felt the City owed a debt of gratitude, and should show appreciation for the job Interim City Manager Ami Mitchell Fields did while in the position.

Greg Burnsed, an employee of the City of Lake City Police Department addressed Council and stated he would like to explain the nature and steps of his complaint on Mrs. Fields. City Attorney Fred Koberlein Jr. reminded Mr. Burnsed this was still an active investigation and advised him not to speak on the subject unless he was formally withdrawing his complaint. Mr. Burnsed officially withdrew his complaint on all employees, i.e. IT personnel and Interim City Manager Ami Mitchell Fields. Mr. Burnsed advised there was no direction in the employee handbook as to filing a complaint on the City Manager and his intention was to file a complaint and it was not the intention of Chief Gilmore. He stated this issue was resolved on September 14, 2021 with the help of FDLE.

Sylvester Warren felt the City owed a debt of gratitude to Mrs. Fields.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion and Possible Action - Resignation of Interim City Manager Ami Fields (Council Member Todd Sampson, Council Member Eugene Jefferson and Mayor Stephen M. Witt)

Mr. Sampson made a motion to accept the resignation of Interim City Manager Ami Fields. Mr. Jefferson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

Mr. Sampson	Aye
Mr. Jefferson	Aye
Mr. Hill	Nay
Mayor Witt	Aye

2. Discussion and Possible Action – Appointment of Interim City Manager (Fred Koberlein)

Mr. Koberlein reported the City Charter requires the City Council to appoint a City Manager for an indefinite amount of time and there are three elements the appointee should meet. They should hold a Bachelor’s Degree from an accredited University or College, ten years’ experience in municipal or corporate management structure with senior administrative experience, and any equivalent combination of the first two requirements.

Mayor Witt stated whomever was chosen needed an extensive background check performed and the Council needed to receive up to date resumes and applications. He stated he spoke with Mike Williams who showed interest in the position on an interim basis. Mayor Witt provided a brief history on Mr. Williams and stated this appointment would only be for a couple of months. Mayor Witt stated Mike Williams would be his recommendation.

Mr. Sampson inquired on a timeframe from the company on how the search is going.

Mayor Witt expressed the company will contact each applicant individually, take their applications, and narrow it down to six candidates, and then to two. It would be advertised with the Florida League of Cities and Nationally.

Mayor Witt suggested Wendell Johnson stepping in for the time being. Mr. Hill stated he would not be in support of Mr. Johnson coming back. He would be in support of Paul Dyal stepping in as interim. Mr. Hill stated Mr. Dyal worked alongside with Mrs. Fields and could manage things until a permanent City Manager was hired.

Utility Director Paul Dyal addressed Council and stated he would accept the position.

Mr. Jefferson suggested going outside of the City due to internal morale with employees.

Mayor Witt stated the Range Riders would be another option. He reported he contacted them at Mr. Sampson’s request. He stated he left a message with them the day before.

Mr. Koberlein reminded the members, the Range Riders were a group of retired City Managers and City Counselors. They must be willing to travel and stay overnight.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Glenel Bowden expressed the need for the public to be able to see the resumes for the City Manager ahead of time. He showed support for Paul Dyal stepping in as Interim City Manager.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Sylvester Warren expressed support for Paul Dyal stepping in as Interim City Manager.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Stew Lilker encouraged members to support Paul Dyal to continue to meet with Snowcap.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Vanessa George commented on Mr. Williams not being present to speak with Council on stepping in as Interim City Manager.

Mr. Sampson made a motion to appoint Mike Williams as the Interim City Manager pending his background check and resume. The motion provides authority for Mr. Williams to go ahead and take office and is contingent on the background and resume being approved. The motion authorizes the Lake City Police Department or the County Human Resource Department to conduct the background investigation. Mr. Jefferson seconded the motion. A roll call was taken and the motion passed.

Mr. Sampson	Aye
Mr. Jefferson	Aye
Mr. Hill	Nay
Mayor Witt	Aye

Per Attorney Koberlein the appointment is contingent upon Mr. Williams accepting the position. Formal acceptance and negotiation of terms of his employment will need to be on the agenda for Monday night or a Special Meeting.

Mr. Koberlein asked to go back to the question regarding an update on the search firm. He reported he did not know when the notice to proceed was issued for the City Manager search. However, the Council must have the work completed within 90 days of that notice date. He encouraged the members to speak with the search firm when contacted to provide their vision.

COMMENTS BY COUNCIL – None

ADJOURNMENT

All matters having been handled, the meeting adjourned at 9:37 AM on a motion made and duly seconded.

Stephen M. Witt, Mayor/Council Member

Audrey Sikes, MMC City Clerk