

1 **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION WORKSHOP MEETING**  
2 **TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA**

3 **June 29, 2021**

4 The workshop meeting of the Lady Lake Town Commission was held in the Commission  
5 Chambers at Lady Lake Town Hall, 409 Fennell Blvd., Lady Lake, Florida. The meeting convened  
6 at 1 p.m.

7 **A. CALL TO ORDER**

8 Mayor Ruth Kussard

9 **B. ROLL CALL**

Commissioner (Ward)	Present
Hannan (Four)	YES
Kussard (One)	YES
Holden (Two)	YES
Vincent (Three)	YES
Rietz (Five)	YES

10 **STAFF PRESENT**

11 William Lawrence, Town Manager; C.T. Eagle, Public Works Director; Pam Winegardner, Finance  
12 Director; Thad Carroll, Growth Management Director; Tamika DeLee, Human Resource Director;  
13 Nancy Wilson, Deputy Town Clerk; and Nancy Slaton, Town Clerk

14 **C. NEW BUSINESS**

15 **1. Discussion Regarding Salary Pay Grades (Bill Lawrence)**

16 Town Manager Bill Lawrence stated part of his strategy when he became the new Town Manager  
17 was to visit the various departments and speak with those department heads and determine  
18 any issues they were facing. He stated the common theme was the salary study that was done a  
19 year prior. Mr. Lawrence stated he is concerned over his discovery that there have been morale  
20 issues with staff over salaries. He stated that the Town's staff is what makes it run as well as it  
21 does. He explained that the Town has had trouble recruiting employees to fill open positions,  
22 and trouble retaining police officers and employees in other areas as well, due to pay. He  
23 remarked that Public Works is an area where open positions are not being filled.

24 Mr. Lawrence discussed this with Finance Director Pam Winegardner and Public Works Director  
25 C. T. Eagle, and asked them to review the previous pay study, revise it to bring the minimum pay

1 to \$15 an hour, and simplify it for easier understanding. He noted this proposal adjusts the  
2 majority of the salary pay grades at the bottom level and increases the minimum wage paid to  
3 \$15 an hour; taking pay compression into consideration for fairness. Mr. Lawrence stated that  
4 staff is very appreciative that the Commission even considered taking another look at the  
5 proposed salary pay grades at this workshop. He stated if this is approved, it will still be within  
6 budget, with no millage or utility rate increase proposed.

7 Mayor Kussard asked Mr. Eagle why he was not planning to increase the water rates.

8 Mr. Eagle replied that they will not increase the rates if they can stay within budget without  
9 doing so. He noted that the rates are automatically adjusted each year by a set rate.

10 Finance Director Pam Winegardner explained that the rates will not increase due to this  
11 proposal; however, the rates are automatically adjusted per the water/sewer rate study, which  
12 is set by resolution and based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) or 5%, whichever is greater.

13 Mr. Eagle thanked the Commission for being willing to discuss the pay issue. He stated this issue  
14 has lowered morale in his department for over a year. He stated the department heads had little  
15 to no input in the previous proposal that came before the Commission after the pay study. He  
16 noted that some of his positions were even reclassified without his input. He stated he is not  
17 asking for raises, but is making sure everyone is treated fairly.

18 Mr. Eagle addressed the \$15 an hour issue, stating they are competing with jobs offered at Wal-  
19 Mart – working inside in air conditioning for \$15 an hour versus an outside job for \$12.02 an  
20 hour. He stated one of his positions has been open for over a year. Mr. Eagle reported that one of  
21 his employees started in an entry level position and advanced to a lead operator position within  
22 a three year period, then resigned after being offered an outside job at higher pay. He noted that  
23 department heads are not scheduled to get an increase in the proposed pay grade revisions. Mr.  
24 Eagle stated he believes this proposal is affordable and fair.

25 Mayor Kussard commented that the proposal shows that 21 of the Town's current employees  
26 are currently paid less than \$15 an hour. She stated she is in favor of increasing the pay and  
27 would like the Town to be able to compete with commercial employers.

28 Commissioner Hannan stated he is in agreement with this proposal.

29 Commissioner Rietz stated he is in favor of this proposal. He noted that there is a different  
30 increase for the bottom end and that it goes up from there, and feels it is fair.

31 Commissioner Holden stated he was in favor of increasing the minimum pay to \$15 an hour  
32 when the pay study was first brought before the Commission last year.

33 Commissioner Vincent stated that he is in favor of Town personnel being able to be promoted  
34 from within, and that they should be instructed on how to achieve this if they wish it.

1 Mr. Lawrence asked the Finance Director to report what the bottom line would be if the  
2 Commission approves this proposal.

3 Ms. Winegardner reported that this can be achieved within the budget by utilizing some of the  
4 CARES Act funding and by utilizing some of the funds previously budgeted for parking lot paving.

5 Mr. Eagle addressed Commissioner Vincent's comment about staff advancing from one position  
6 to another. He stated they do offer progression after staff has shown their ability, obtained their  
7 licenses and certifications, etc.

8 Ms. Winegardner stated that if the departments have more tiers within a department, it gives  
9 staff a ladder to climb, and more incentive to stay with the Town.

10 Mayor Kussard confirmed with the Finance Director that the impact to the budget will be  
11 \$148,751.20 if this proposal is approved.

12 Commissioner Rietz asked when this would be effective if the Commission approved this  
13 proposal this budget year or next budget year.

14 Ms. Winegardner stated that would be up to Commission; the CARES Act funding could be  
15 utilized this year and the budget for next year could be adjusted accordingly.

16 Commissioner Rietz asked how it is determined what pay an employee is offered within a  
17 classification pay range.

18 Mr. Eagle replied that starting pay for an employee is based on previous experience,  
19 certifications, etc. Increases are based on merit and cost of living.

20 After further discussion, the Commission directed that this proposal be included on the agenda  
21 for the July 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

22 Ms. Winegardner stated that if it is approved, the increases would be effective the first pay  
23 period starting date following approval.

24 Mr. Lawrence brought up that the Commissioners have not had a raise in the past 15 years. The  
25 Commission's current pay is \$7,200 per year. He asked the Finance Director to share a proposal  
26 in this regard.

27 Ms. Winegardner stated that according to her research, the Commission has not had a pay raise  
28 since 2007. Staff is proposing a cost of living increase for the Commissioners if they are in  
29 agreement. The increase proposed is equal to \$100 a month, or \$1,200 per year; for a total salary  
30 of \$8,400 a year. She stated the Town is in a healthy position.

31 Commissioner Hannan stated the auditor noted that the Town has more than enough funds in  
32 reserve. He asked if the Town's reserves will be reduced in the upcoming budget.

33 Ms. Winegardner stated that the unrestricted reserves will not be touched at this point.

1 Commissioner Hannan addressed the Town Manager and stated it is great to have fresh eyes  
2 looking at things in a different way. He gave Mr. Lawrence kudos for his efforts; stating he has  
3 done a great job.

4 Mayor Kussard stated she is not in favor of increasing the salary of the Commissioners after  
5 looking at what other municipalities in the county pay their Commissioners. She stated the  
6 Town is near the top of what others pay their Commissioners.

7 Commissioner Vincent stated he will not be affected because he will not be here next year, and  
8 he feels the Commissioners have earned an increase; especially since the Town is in a healthy  
9 position with reserves in place. He stated it may help to recruit others to run for Commissioner  
10 in these tough times.

11 Mayor Kussard agreed with Commissioner Vincent that it is hard to get people to run for this  
12 type of office.

13 Ms. Winegardner stated she was a financial auditor of municipalities and government entities in  
14 her past. She noted that the Town has no debt. She stated this is a result of the Commissioners  
15 and staff working together to be fiscally responsible. She stated the Commission has earned an  
16 increase.

17 Commissioner Hannan was in agreement with Commissioner Vincent's comments.

18 Mr. Lawrence stated that he will have staff include an increase for the Commissioners' salaries in  
19 next year's budget and it can be discussed further during the budget workshop.

20 Mayor Kussard asked that staff obtain a list showing what other surrounding municipalities pay  
21 their commissioners prior to the budget workshop.

22 In closing, Mr. Lawrence stated he appreciated the kind words of the Commissioners and  
23 thanked the Commission for their consideration.

24 **D. ADJOURN**

25 There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:42 p.m.

26 \_\_\_\_\_  
27 Nancy Slaton, Town Clerk

28 \_\_\_\_\_  
29 Ruth Kussard, Mayor

30 Minutes transcribed by Nancy Slaton, Town Clerk