

# MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION WORKSHOP TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

**October 3, 2022**

The Workshop of the Lady Lake Town Commission was held in the Commission Chambers at Lady Lake Town Hall, 409 Fennell Blvd., Lady Lake, Florida, with Mayor Jim Rietz presiding. The meeting convened at 5:04 pm.

## CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jim Rietz

## ROLL CALL

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

## STAFF PRESENT

Bill Lawrence, Town Manager; Nancy Wilson, Town Clerk; Mike Burske, Parks & Recreation Director

## A. NEW BUSINESS

### Discussion regarding the Lady Lake Chamber of Commerce lease agreement

Commissioner Hannan asked Mike Burske to come forward at which time he clapped and congratulated Mr. Burske on the good job he did detailing the Chamber of Commerce's activities and contributions to the town. The Commissioner said his only problem with the information provided was with the profit and loss statement that showed very few details; he would like to see a balanced budget in the future.

Commissioner Kussard said that she asked for the workshop to determine if the lease agreement should be changed. She met with Leslie and Janet from the Chamber to discuss her concerns and then talked to Mr. Burske to get a better idea of what the Chamber does for Lady Lake. We should not expect to make a profit on events, but more accountability is important so

that our losses are not so high. Mr. Burske works hard to put on events with the business community, but we have received no money for any of the events for which we have paid thousands of dollars to sponsor. Commissioner Kussard would also like to see a more detailed accounting of the events and when money is made, she would like some of it to be used to defray the costs incurred by the Town.

Commissioner Holden said he agrees completely with what Commissioner Kussard just said. He added that maintaining the building they are utilizing is very expensive.

Commissioner Freeman agreed with both Commissioners Kussard and Holden. He was very surprised when he heard that the Chamber only pays the town \$10 per year for rent, does not pay any utilities and keeps all the profits. He wonders if it would be more cost effective to pay our employees 1.5 times their hourly rate to help with the events instead of partnering with the Chamber. He feels the Chamber should find a way to support itself. Commissioner Freeman said it is only fair to the taxpayers of Lady Lake that we spend our money responsibly. He said his experience with Chambers of Commerce is not that they help with town events but that they bring commerce to the town. They should be reaching out to Costco and Trader Joes to find out how to attract them to Lady Lake.

Mayor Rietz said if we did not have the Chamber, we could not have our events. Mr. Burske gets a lot of help from the Chamber members before and during events. Mayor Rietz then said the expenditures are for the community and the residents and that is what we are paying for.

Town Manager Lawrence said that when the lease came up for renewal, he was surprised by the arrangement the town had with the Chamber and how much we support them. He asked Mike Burske about the value we are getting in return. We pay over \$30,000 per year for events, and he wants some accountability. Mr. Burske said he could not hold the events without the Chamber's help and without it, the town would need to hire an events coordinator that would cost about \$100,000 per year. After getting more details about what the Chamber does for the town, he concluded that it is in the town's best interest to work with the Lady Lake Chamber of Commerce.

Mayor Rietz asked if the Chamber has had losses over the last four or five years. The response was that there have been some lean years, but in those cases, funds were carried over from the previous year in order to stay afloat; they almost went bankrupt in 2014 but got by on savings. They are revamping their budget.

Mayor Rietz stated that the Chamber has done a lot for the town for which a value cannot be determined. He would like to renew the lease for two years.

Commissioner Hannan said that the Chamber is going to be here forever so he would be in favor of a five-year lease.

**There was consensus among the Commission to keep the two-year lease agreement at \$10 per year.**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no comments from the public.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

s/ Nancy Wilson, Town Clerk

s/ Jim Rietz, Mayor