

**MINUTES
CITY COMMISSION / CRA
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2026
7:00 PM
CITY HALL**

Call to Order: Mayor Fuller called the City Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers, 120 E. Pomelo Street, Lake Alfred, FL. 33850.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance: Aaron Nangle of the First United Methodist Church of Lake Alfred provided the invocation, and Mayor Fuller led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Linda Bourgeois, City Clerk

City Commissioners in attendance: Mayor Mac Fuller, Vice Mayor Nancy Daley, Commissioner Brent Eden, Commissioner Jack Dearmin, and Commissioner Ronnie Robinson Jr.

Staff in attendance: City Manager Ryan Leavengood, City Attorney Seth Claytor, Human Resources Director Margarita Martin, Parks and Recreation Director Emily Deal, Police Chief Art Bodenheimer, Assistant to the City Manager Brenn Hines, Fire Chief Darius Livingston, Grant and Outreach Manager Aubrey Fuller, Fire Marshall/Deputy Fire Chief Thomas Murphy, and Deputy City Clerk/Executive Assistant to the City Manager Lita O'Neill.

The City Manager announced the following:

1. Amy Parrish was recognized for her first place in the Daughters of the American Revolution Essay History Contest for High School from the Lake Wales Chapter.
2. The Fruitland Park Community Reunion Event recap was given.
3. The ribbon cutting for Raise the Bar and Grill will be held on Saturday, February 28, 2026, at noon.
4. The next City Commission meeting will be held on Monday, March 2, 2026.
5. The Heritage Day Festival will be held on Saturday, March 7, 2026, from 10 AM to 2 PM on E. Pomelo Street.
6. TEDx will be hosted by Dr. Jessica Pryce on Saturday, February 21, 2026, at 12:30 p.m. at MacKay Gardens and Lakeside Preserve. This is a ticketed event, and registration is required.

City Attorney Claytor said he remained grateful to represent the great City of Lake Alfred.

Presentation: Fire Department

Fire Chief Livingston presented and discussed the history of the vehicle bases used for outfitting brush trucks in the fire service. He shared that the City currently has an F350 that incurs maintenance costs due to its lack of use. He spoke about exhaust fumes, the increased cancer risk among firefighters, and the new Tesla brush truck as a multi-use vehicle. The new truck will

contribute to good causes by providing educational opportunities for our youth, supporting cancer prevention initiatives, and being less expensive than a traditional fuel vehicle.

Shawn White and Carson Bassett of Chemical Containers and Warrior Brush Trucks were in attendance. They shared that they have been in the spray business for over 40 years, with about 6 years of experience specifically with brush trucks. The government agencies they worked with were numerous, including municipalities, counties, and state agencies.

Fire Chief Livingston discussed the progression from generator power to electrical power when using the jaws of life to extricate people from a vehicle crash. A demonstration was shown to the City Commission first using generator power and now using the battery-powered version.

Mayor Fuller opened the floor to public comments and questions.

David Kincaid of W. Pierce Street said as an engineer, he decided to dig deeper into the data and said the data would speak for itself. He commended the city for its modernization and shared that he had conducted an analysis of five types of alternative vehicles. He reviewed specific data in the report, saying he analyzed it by six categories, and said electric vehicles were a viable platform for what the city was doing.

Sherri Parker of 450 S. Glencruiten Avenue said she was in favor of electric vehicles, that the city saved money, and that she was happy with the city's decision. She concluded that the vehicle's funding came from the Public Safety fund, which is funded through the School Zone Speed Enforcement program.

David Joseph of 864 Griffon Avenue asked about the cost of replacement for the battery-powered extrication tool. City staff shared that the cost of a new tool is over \$40,000. The City's tool was grant-funded. He suggested that the city has a backup plan. He then asked about the city ordinances and lakefront maintenance.

A brief discussion ensued regarding the Grassy Lake common areas and the different regulatory agencies. Vice Mayor Daley suggested the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission as an additional resource.

Recognition of Citizens

Tammy Langley of 1108 Griffon Avenue shared that she recently moved to Lake Alfred. She spoke about the retention pond near her house, the water accumulation on her street, and the storm drain flowing eastward into the lake. Her concerns were about where the water would go when Publix was built and plastic bags.

Kim Bodnar of 341 Ceder Glenn Drive said that since she moved here, the city has a new Polk County Government Center and is now getting a Publix. She spoke about small towns that are now growing into larger cities, such as Lakeland, Bartow, or Davenport. She wanted to know how big Lake Alfred planned to grow. She asked why the city was getting a Publix when there were others within a 15-minute drive.

The Mayor said he understood and shared his experience, and the Vice Mayor spoke about property rights and how we could maintain sustainable growth through the Unified Land Development Code. The city manager also spoke about property rights and the uniqueness of the City of Lake Alfred, given its many surrounding wetlands.

Kim Bodnar then asked who was responsible for the roads, and it was shared that CR557 was Polk County's responsibility and that US Highway 17/92 was the State of Florida's responsibility.

A brief discussion ensued about the signalization and roadway improvements planned for the Eden Hills area.

Commissioner Eden further explained that the City Commission can only determine whether the property is consistent with the Unified Land Development Code, the Comprehensive Plan, and other applicable state laws.

Kim Bodnar thanked the City Commission.

Rob Parrish of 1626 Newfoundland Road said he loves Lake Alfred's small-town feel. He shared that he wanted a place where his children could live near them when they were ready to move out of the house. He would love the opportunity for them to live here and said it comes down to how well we manage the growth. He expressed his appreciation for the City Commission and thanked them.

Tammy Langley of 1108 Griffon Avenue spoke about the trash along Old Lake Alfred Road and suggested littering fines and a campaign to keep Lake Alfred clean.

Special Recognition

Amy Parrish read her American History Essay written for the Daughters of the American Revolution. She placed first in the High School category and received an award from the Lake Wales Chapter on February 10, 2026. Her essay was about a patriot named Peter Francisco, who was one of the most unsung heroes of the Revolutionary War. Peter was a six-and-a-half-foot-tall man known both as the "Virginia Giant" and the "Giant of the Revolution." Without him, the Americans would have lost two crucial battles, perhaps the War, and with it our freedom.

Mayor Fuller presented the Consent Agenda.

Consent Agenda:

- 1.) City Commission Meeting Minutes for February 2, 2026
- 2.) City Commission Announcements
- 3.) Purchase: City Hall Digital Sign Replacement
- 4.) Purchase and Sales Agreement: Lock Street

The City Clerk inserted the analysis for items three and four. 3.) The current sign was approved for purchase on February 20, 2017, for \$30,714.94 and has met the end of its lifecycle. The sign has been repaired several times, but still has intermittent issues. The proposal is for a new digital sign to replace the marquee in front of City Hall, which currently displays City events and public notices to citizens. The new digital sign will display graphics and cycle through multiple messages, with the animated capabilities included with the new software. The digital screen will be the same size as the existing one. Cypress Signs is a single source for the Watchfire sign, and they provided two quotes based on the pixel size.

- Cypress Signs: \$36,885 – 8mm
- Cypress Signs: \$32,852 – 10mm

The city recommends the smaller pixel size (8mm) for the clarity it would provide, and the minimal price difference compared to the larger pixel size (10mm) quoted for \$36,885. Funding is available in general operations and facility maintenance to accommodate the expense.

4.) The City of Lake Alfred is a project participant in the Southeast Wellfield Project and has committed to receive 1 million gallons per day in alternate water supply through the project. The primary water main is located along US 27 and will connect to various cities along the ridge including the City of Winter Haven. The project design is to wheel our water through the City of Winter Haven's utility system through an interconnect we have with them on Lock Street. In order to facilitate the reception of this water into our system the City needs to build a receiving station (which is effectively a water plant) as close to the interconnect with the City of Winter Haven as possible.

On February 17, 2025, the City Commission authorized the purchase and sales agreement for a parcel of land on Lock Street that is across the street from the interconnect. During the initial due diligence, a title issue was discovered from an old plat. This issue has since been resolved to the satisfaction of the City. The owner has tentatively agreed to a purchase price of \$250,000. Recently, the property was appraised at \$120k; it is part of a larger commercial property with frontage on US 17/92. Additionally, the property is ideally located near the interconnect and has sufficient acreage for the receiving station. This will significantly reduce the length and cost of the main water line required to connect the receiving station to the interconnect.

The expenses associated with the receiving station have been included in the FY 25/26 Budget and the 5-year Capital Improvement Program. The City has received \$500,000 in Heartland Grant funds, through the Polk County Water Cooperative and the State of Florida, for the property purchase and design costs associated with the receiving station. The City and the Cooperative will continue advocating for additional grant funding to cover the receiving station's construction costs. The end goal is to secure sufficient grant funding to fully cover the property, design, and construction costs for the receiving station through the Water Cooperative.

Staff recommends approval of the Purchase and Sales Agreement for the Lock Street property in the amount of \$250,000, plus survey costs and doc stamps, for a total of approximately \$256,875.

Mayor Fuller opened the floor to public comments and, seeing no one, he closed it.

Vice Mayor Daley moved to approve the Consent Agenda. **Commissioner Eden** seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Mayor Fuller presented the first item of business for consideration.

1.) Public Hearing: Ordinance 1574-26: Tree-O Groves Annexation

The City Attorney read the title of Ordinance 1574-26 into the record.

The city manager presented the analysis. Pursuant to Florida Statutes Chapter 171, the city may consider the annexation of unincorporated areas of a county that are contiguous to the municipality, compact, and will not create an enclave. The applicant has submitted to the City voluntary annexation petitions under Chapter 171.044 to request the annexation of one (1) parcel into the city limits of Lake Alfred.

This is a triangular area of approximately 0.036± acres, northwest of White Road, and southwest of Arbuthnot Lane. This parcel was included in a prospective development and was a ministerial clean-up.

The action currently before the City Commission is only on the annexation of the property into the City. If approved, establishing Future Land Use and Zoning designations would be considered in future action items presented to the Planning and Zoning Board and City Commission. If approved on the first reading, the proposed Ordinance will be presented for the second and final reading on March 2, 2026.

The staff recommended approval of Ordinance 1574-26 on the first reading.

Mayor Fuller opened the public hearing and, seeing no one, closed it.

Clarification was provided on the map regarding the parcel's location.

Commissioner Robinson moved to approve the Tree-O Groves Annexation on the first reading. **Commissioner Dearmin** seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Mayor Fuller presented the next item of business for consideration.

2.) Resolution 02-26: Tree-O Groves Property Acceptance and Conveyance

The City Attorney read the title of Resolution 02-26 into the record.

The city manager presented the analysis. The City of Lake Alfred is accepting the conveyance of real property from Tree-O Groves, Inc. for one (1) unimproved parcel totaling approximately 4.3496 +/- acres.

The Special Warranty Deed was recorded on January 21, 2026, in Official Records Book 13853, Pages 1751-1752, public records of Polk County, Florida. The proposed resolution officially accepts the conveyance of the property.

The property being accepted is a key link between two prospective developments and is needed to facilitate a future road connection in accordance with the City's Transportation Master Plan. The City is accepting ownership of the property now while engaged with the current property owner, so that it isn't sold or transferred to a third party.

Mayor Fuller opened the floor to public comments and, seeing no one, he closed it.

Vice Mayor Daley asked whether this parcel was partially a wetland, and city staff said yes; if it were ever developed, it would require design, permits, and mitigation.

Commissioner Eden moved to approve Resolution 02-26. **Commissioner Dearmin** seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Mayor Fuller presented the next item of business for consideration.

3.) Bid Award: Haines Blvd. Downtown Project Water Line Relocation

The city manager presented the analysis. The City's Community Redevelopment Agency has a project in the current FY 25/26 budget to renovate and upgrade the streetscaping on Haines Blvd (e.g. pavers, lighting, landscaping, etc.). In scoping out and preparing for the project, it was determined that much of the current landscaping is rootbound in areas that are too compact and will need to be relocated as a part of the project. In planning for the removal, it was discovered that the existing landscaping is directly over the water main on Haines Blvd and that its root systems are entangled with the water main.

The proposed project will replace the existing 6-inch water main along Haines Boulevard. The water main being replaced was installed more than 50 years ago and is eligible for replacement. Proactively replacing the water main of water breaks in advance of the downtown project will reduce the risk of service disruptions, emergency repairs, and project delays.

Additionally, part of the project involves installing valves at either end of the project length, which allow isolation of this portion of the water system. This is beneficial as it will allow this portion of the main to be isolated if there is ever a need for future repairs without having to shut off much larger sections of the system in order to isolate the area (especially in the center of town, which has the oldest pipes closest to the original water plant).

The following bids were submitted:

Odum Contracting	\$115,887
Tri-Sure Corporation	\$117,000
Con-Sure, Inc.	\$117,700

The city has budgeted \$650,000 to be placed into enterprise reserves in the current FY 25/26, and the project cost will be tentatively offset by this amount.

The staff recommendation is to approve the bid award to Odum Contracting in the amount of \$115,887 for the Haines Boulevard Waterline Replacement Project.

Mayor Fuller opened the floor to public comments.

Tammy Langlely of 1108 Griffon Avenue asked whether there would be any detours during construction, and city staff said there would not, since the waterline is not in the roadway.

Mayor Fuller closed the floor to public comments.

Commissioner Eden asked whether the city would run the new water line before decommissioning the existing line, and city staff responded that it would.

A brief discussion ensued about minimal disruptions to businesses and providing notice.

Commissioner Eden moved to approve the bid award to Odom Contracting in the amount of \$115,887 and further authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute a construction agreement with Odom Contracting. **Commissioner Dearmin** seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Department Updates:

Human Resources and the City Clerk/ADA Coordinator/Special Projects Director presented on their 2025 Department Updates.

Human Resources Overview

Introduced new Human Resources Admin Jessica Zoeller

2025 focus areas:

- Compliance & risk mitigation
- Recruitment & retention
- Training & development
- Organizational culture

Recruitment and Hiring Improvements

Training and Employee Development

Compliance and Policy Modernization

Benefits and Employee Support

Culture and Clifton Strengths Initiative

Looking ahead in 2026

- Recruitment Challenges
- Expand Training Programs
- Supervisor Development and Succession Planning
- Ongoing Policy Modernization

City Clerk Overview

Introduced Deputy City Clerk/Executive Assistant to the City Manager, Lita O'Neill

Provided an overview of the 2025 Accomplishments

- Records Management
- Signature Verification
- Social Media
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Florida Association of City Clerks
- International Institute of Municipal Clerks

ADA Accomplishments

- Gardner House Entrance Ramp
- Lavender N' Lace Sidewalk Project
- Police Department Entrance Ramp, Automatic Door, and Handrails
- ADA Swing at Central Park
- Lake Alfred Historical Society Handrails
- Fire Department Intercom

2025 Special Projects

- Buena Vista Lift Station
- New John Deaton Water Plant started
- CR557 Pipe Project Completed
- Bank Renovation – City Services Center completion in March
- Public Safety Roofs

Vice Mayor Daley requested a crosswalk in front of City Hall and a small sidewalk project at the corner of Ramona Avenue and Cummings Street, which leads to the school.

The City Commission thanked both directors for their presentations.

At 9:14 PM, Mayor Fuller recessed the City Commission Meeting.

At 9:14 PM, Chair Fuller called the Community Redevelopment Agency Meeting to order.

Roll Call: Linda Bourgeois, City Clerk

CRA Board Members in attendance: Chair Mac Fuller, Vice Chair Nancy Z. Daley, Board Member Brent Eden, Board Member Jack Dearmin, and Board Member Robinson.

Staff in attendance: City Manager Ryan Leavengood, City Attorney Seth Claytor, Human Resources Director Margarita Martin, Parks and Recreation Director Emily Deal, Police Chief Art Bodenheimer, Assistant to the City Manager Brenn Hines, Fire Chief Darius Livingston, Grant and Outreach Manager Aubrey Fuller, Fire Marshall/Deputy Fire Chief Thomas Murphy, and Deputy City Clerk/Executive Assistant to the City Manager Lita O'Neill.

Chair Fuller introduced the consent agenda.

Consent Agenda:

- 1.) Community Redevelopment Meeting Minutes for November 3, 2025
- 2.) CRA Annual Report

Pursuant to Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, a Community Redevelopment Agency is required to file an annual report with the county or municipality that created the agency and publish the report on the agency's website. The report must include the following information:

The most recent complete audit report of the redevelopment trust fund as required in s. 163.387(8), and the performance data for each plan authorized, administered, or overseen by the community redevelopment agency as of December 31 of the reporting year.

This report includes:

1. The total number of projects started and completed and the estimated cost for each project.
2. Total expenditures from the redevelopment trust fund.
3. Original assessed real property values within the community redevelopment agency's area of authority as of the day the agency was created.
4. Total assessed real property values of the property within the boundaries of the Community Redevelopment Agency as of January 1 of the reporting year.
5. Total amount expended for affordable housing for low-income and middle-income residents.

Chair Fuller opened the floor to public comments and, seeing no one, closed it.

Board Member Dearmin moved to approve the CRA Consent Agenda, which was seconded by **Board Member Eden**. The motion was unanimously approved.

Chair Fuller introduced the first item of business.

1.) Bid Award: Haines Blvd. Downtown Streetscape Project

The city manager presented the analysis. The Downtown Streetscape Project includes installing new brick pavers, decorative light poles, relocating and replacing existing trees, and adding new benches and trash receptacles along the downtown corridor. This CRA project will integrate the beautification component of all three projects, including the waterline relocation and curbing reconstruction. The curbing reconstruction project will be brought forward for consideration at a future city commission meeting as a complete street project.

This project aims to create a more cohesive, pedestrian-friendly environment that supports downtown businesses and enhances the corridor's overall appearance.

The following bids were submitted:

1. Whitehead Construction	Bid Not Responsive
2. Henkelman Construction	Bid Not Responsive
3. JCR Construction Services	\$230,860

The proposed project was included in the current CRA FY 25/26 Budget, with \$275,000 allocated to complete it.

Staff Recommendation: Approve the bid award to JCR Construction Services in the amount of \$230,860 for the Haines Boulevard Downtown Project.

Chair Fuller opened the floor to public comments.

Tammy Langley of 1108 Griffon Avenue asked if the project would involve both sides of the street and if there was city parking downtown, and city staff responded yes to both questions.

Chair Fuller closed the floor to public comments.

Board Member Dearmin commented that he was proud of the City of Lake Alfred and that the project was excellent. He asked why there were no other bids.

Assistant to the City Manager Brenn Hines said that this was a multifaceted project and that the city has high standards.

Board Member Eden spoke about the growth in CRA funds over the past seven years and expressed excitement about the project coming to fruition.

Board Member Robinson moved to approve the bid award to JCR Construction Services and further authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute a Construction Agreement with JCR Construction Services, which was seconded by **Board Member Eden**. The motion was unanimously approved.

At 9:23 PM, Chair Fuller adjourned the Community Redevelopment Agency Meeting.

At 9:23 PM, Mayor Fuller called the City Commission meeting back to order.

Roll Call: Linda Bourgeois, City Clerk

City Commissioners in attendance: Mayor Mac Fuller, Vice Mayor Nancy Daley, Commissioner Brent Eden, Commissioner Jack Dearmin, and Commissioner Ronnie Robinson Jr.

Staff in attendance: City Manager Ryan Leavengood, City Attorney Seth Claytor, Human Resources Director Margarita Martin, Parks and Recreation Director Emily Deal, Police Chief Art Bodenheimer, Assistant to the City Manager Brenn Hines, Fire Chief Darius Livingston, Grant and Outreach Manager Aubrey Fuller, Fire Marshall/Deputy Fire Chief Thomas Murphy, and Deputy City Clerk/Executive Assistant to the City Manager Lita O'Neill.

Recognition of Citizens

Milton Ingle said he had a question about the gas line installation along CR557. The city staff responded that it was to extend their service area due to the new growth.

Police Chief Bodenheimer said that they are now coming down Lake Mattie Road to tie into CR559. He believes it is to allow more people access to natural gas rather than electricity.

Milton continued by asking what was being done about people blocking sidewalks and parking on the wrong side of the road in Eden Hills. Chief Bodenheimer said the city was working to strengthen the municipal code and signage, and the police department was conducting community education meetings to raise awareness.

City Commission Questions and Comments

Commissioner Dearmin thanked everyone for attending the meeting and said that, in his job, he is honored to meet people from all over the world. This is a testament to what we do. He shared that he attended the Black History Month event, saying it was very educational and that there was a great turnout. Thank you.

Mayor Fuller said he hoped everyone had a great Valentine's Day. He is looking forward to the TEDx Event this weekend and has attended the event in Fruitland Park. He was honored to read the Black History Month proclamation. He shared that Las Comrades would be hosting a Cinco de Mayo event on Saturday, May 2, 2026, and celebrating their one-year anniversary. He thanked everyone for their prayers, notes, text messages, and phone calls regarding his wife's recent surgery, sharing that it was a success, and she said thank you and hello. He thanked the audience, David Kincaid, for his research, and welcomed everyone to attend the City Commission meetings. Thank you.

Vice Mayor Daley said she would love to attend the TEDx event this weekend; however, she cannot be in two places at once. She spoke about the State House's planned vote on property tax reform, encouraged everyone to email Josie Tomkow, and provided the email address. She continued and announced that two Discovery High School basketball coaches were recognized as coaches of the year for the 25/263A District 6. Additionally, two Discovery High School students were named student-athletes of the year within the same district. Thank you.

Commissioner Robinson, Jr. said these were busy times, which put a little stress on everyone. He is glad to see the city of Lake Alfred moving forward and helping each other get through issues. He commended the City Manager for his responsiveness and support. He continued by speaking about the well-designed and orchestrated Olympic Season, noting that 40+ Americans won medals. He encouraged everyone not to give up, and that just one step forward will get you a long

way. He thanked Mr. Kincaid for the free engineering analysis, thanked all of the city staff, and was super excited about the upcoming TEDx event. Thank you.

Commissioner Eden thanked both Chiefs, the first responders, and city staff. He thanked both department directors for their presentations and praised Amy Parrish for her American History Essay. He addressed the City Manager and Fire Chief, saying they did not have to put on the Fire Department presentation today, but was very appreciative that they did. He requested that the flyer be posted to the public for informational purposes. He expressed concerns about the turnover rate in 2025 and told the Human Resources Director that if any tools were needed to be successful, the City Commission was here for you.

A brief discussion ensued regarding employee turnover in 2025, and Director Martin clarified that it was not due to salaries; some departures were due to personal reasons, summer camp counselors, temporary part-time positions, and illnesses.

Commissioner Eden said he doesn't want the City of Lake Alfred to be a training ground for larger cities, and it was explained that the city is very competitive with them and conducts a salary study each year. Lake Alfred has a good reputation with excellent employees. Thank you.

Without further discussion, the City Commission meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Bourgeois".

Linda Bourgeois, BAS, MMC, City Clerk