

CITY OF CLEWISTON
Regular Commission Meeting
July 15, 2024

The Clewiston City Commission held its regular meeting in the City Hall Commission Chambers on Monday, July 15, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor James Pittman. Mayor Pittman gave the invocation and the audience joined in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioners Present: Mayor James Pittman, Vice Mayor Greg Thompson, Commissioner Barbara Edmonds and Commissioner Mali Gardner. Commissioner Hillary Hyslope was absent. Vice Mayor Greg Thompson attended the beginning of the meeting via telephone and joined the meeting in person at 5:30 p.m.

Personnel Present: Interim City Manager Danny Williams, Finance Director Randy Maxson, Assistant Utilities Director Lynne Mila, IT Administrator Justin Lucas, Police Chief Tom Lewis, Community Development Director/Fire Chief Travis Reese, Recreation/HR Director Ashly Sergeant, Program Director Tim Pruitt, Consulting Engineer David Trouteaud and City Attorney Dylan Brandenburg.

Visitors Present: John Vanni, Neale Montgomery, Michael Rosen, Cary Wall, Lisa Walker, Roly Gonzalez, Roly Gonzalez, Jr., Janet Taylor, Tammy Bunting and Chuck Svirk.

Additions/Deletions/Changes and Approval of the Agenda – There were no additions, deletions or changes to the agenda.

Public Comments – Mr. Roly Gonzalez, of 305 Via del Aqua, apologized to Manager Williams and Police Chief Lewis for interrupting their time last night because of a resident complaining about his campaign signs. He mentioned that Commissioners Gardner and Hyslope were on the radio March 18, 2024 and Commissioner Hyslope stated that morale of the city was really low. He stated that he feels the residents make it low. He then stated that he feels he is being harassed by the city for having his 4x8 political signs on his vehicle. He explained that he received permission to put the signs up and then received a call with an undated apology letter and copy of the city's policy regarding political signs that was approved in 2016. He wants to get this cleared up today. Mayor Pittman suggested that he meet with Manager Williams and City Attorney Brandenburg after tonight's meeting to look at the city's ordinance. Mr. Gonzalez thanked the commission for their time. Commissioner Gardner clarified that on March 18, she was not on the radio; she was here at the City Commission Meeting and any comments that she makes are public comments and if the radio station deems to use any comment that she makes, it is for the public record.

1. Consent Agenda

- A. *Resolution No. 2024-041 – Designation of Voting Delegate for the Florida League of Cities' Annual Conference*
- B. *Resolution No. 2024-042 – Renewal Agreement for Disaster Debris Monitoring Services with Thompson Consulting Services.*
- C. *Resolution No. 2024-043 – Renewal Agreement for Disaster Debris Monitoring Services with Tetra Tech, Inc.*

Commissioner Gardner made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Edmonds, to approve the Consent Agenda. Vote 4 yeas, 0 nays (Commissioner Hyslope was absent.)

Manager Williams stated the representatives of the Glades/Lakes Area Teen Summit are running late. He asked Consulting Engineer David Trouteaud to comment on the Ventura project and other city projects. Engineer Trouteaud reported that Tetra Tech's survey is done for the Ventura project and they are planning to get their 60% plans around the end of August and at that time, they will come back to the Commission. He next reported on the C-21 Bridge project. He stated the contractor is working through the parking lot modifications and towards seal coating, which should be happening soon. He next reported on the Francisco project. He reminded the Commission that this is a SCOP agreement and the signed agreement that was approved by the City was sent to

DOT and we're waiting on the fully executed document from them. He stated that we anticipate an agreement with Stantec for the next meeting that will be underneath the SCOP agreement. He then reported the Phase 5 Landscaping project was out to bid. The bid had to be re-advertised because we didn't get any bidders the first time. The bid opening is scheduled for July 25 and because we sent the bid package out to 25-30 bidders, we're getting a little bit more positive response this time. He stated that Phase 6 of the design would be next and we're talking to utility providers to make sure we're clear of them.

The public hearing for Ordinance No. 2024-03 (Agenda Item No. 3) was held next.

2. PRESENTATION – Glades/Lakes Area Teen Summit – This agenda item was presented after Agenda Item No. 3.

Ms. Tammy Bunting stated that a Glades Teen Summit is being organized by the commissioners, mayors, citizens and faith based organizations out of the Glades for August 2 through August 4. They are looking to do something to bring the teens from the Belle Glade, South Bay and Clewiston communities together and want to get the support of the community. She reviewed the presentation and commented on the summit goals and activities. Ms. Janet Taylor came forward and asked the commission to encourage teens from the Clewiston community to register for the summit.

The public hearing for Ordinance No. 2024-06 (Agenda Item No. 4) was held next.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

3. Ordinance No. 2024-03 – PUBLIC HEARING - Final Reading – 5:05 p.m. - Ordinance No. 2024-03 amends the Clewiston Code of Ordinances, § 50-7, Storage on Private Property.

Mayor Pittman read Ordinance No. 2024-03 by title, opened the public hearing and asked for public comments. There were no public comments. Commissioner Gardner stated that she had not received any comments from the public on this and asked if there were any additional comments received from anyone. Director Reese stated that the P & Z Board looked at this ordinance extensively. They recommended removing the 60 foot requirement for having a travel trailer on your property and asked the Commission what they feel should be the correct number allowed in the front yard or front yard at all. The ordinance presented tonight removes the 60-foot required setback. He also stated that it is the commission's discretion if they would like to put a number of trailers you can have in your front yard or leave it. The City's current ordinance requires them to be stored in the back yard. Attorney Brandenburg stated that you could table the final reading of this ordinance to another designated date and time or you could vote it down. After further discussion, Commissioner Gardner and Mayor Pittman expressed they feel a joint workshop with the P&Z Board is needed for further review and discussion. Mayor Pittman closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Edmonds made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Thompson, to table the final reading of Ordinance No. 2024-03 to the October 21, 2024 Commission Meeting. Vote 4 yeas, 0 nays (Commissioner Hyslope was absent.)

After the vote, Commissioner Gardner mentioned that a workshop would be scheduled before the October 21, 2024 Commission Meeting.

Agenda Item No. 2 was presented next.

4. Ordinance No. 2024-06 – PUBLIC HEARING - Final Reading – 5:05 p.m. - Ordinance No. 2024-06 amends the Clewiston Code of Ordinances, Chapter 74, Utilities, Article I. – In General; Creating Section 74-14. – Meter Tampering.

Mayor Pittman read Ordinance No. 2024-06 by title, opened the public hearing and asked for public comments. There were no public comments. Mayor Pittman closed the public hearing.

Vice Mayor Thompson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gardner, to approve Ordinance No. 2024-06. Vote 4 yeas, 0 nays (Commissioner Hyslope was absent.)

5. **Ordinance No. 2024-07 – PUBLIC HEARING - Final Reading – 5:05 p.m.** - Ordinance No. 2024-07 amends the Clewiston Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Administration, Article III – Purchasing Procedures; Section 2-78. – Purchasing Thresholds.

Mayor Pittman read Ordinance No. 2024-07 by title, opened the public hearing and asked for public comments. There were no public comments. Commissioner Edmonds stated that she is in favor of this ordinance but feels the Commission should be made aware of any large purchases. Manager Williams assured the Commission that they would be informed of any large purchases. He explained that this ordinance does not apply to capital items; it would only apply to day-to-day and emergency repairs. Commissioner Gardner stated that the ordinance states that commission approval would be required for the award of all contracts, material, equipment, work or services in excess of \$25,000 for non-budgeted items. Mayor Pittman closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Gardner made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Thompson, to approve Ordinance No. 2024-07. Vote 4 yeas, 0 nays (Commissioner Hyslope was absent.)

ORDINANCES

6. **Ordinance No. 2024-08 – First Reading** - Ordinance No. 2024-08 provides for the annexation of additional territory owned by Hendry County School Board to be included within the city boundaries in accordance with Articles VII Section 2(c) of the Constitution of the State of Florida and Section 171.044, Florida Statutes, as amended.

Mayor Pittman read Ordinance No. 2024-08 by title. Attorney Brandenburg swore in all applicants and anyone planning to give testimony related to the applications for agenda item numbers 6-11. He then asked that if any of the commissioners has had any ex parte communications or had conducted any site visits in conjunction with the annexation to disclose that at this time. No disclosures by any of the commissioners were made. Director Reese reported that there is no financial impact to the city at this time other than the cost of the applications and advertising which costs are borne solely by the applicants. He confirmed that the city will provide water and sewer to the annexed property and he believed two of the three applicants are ready to develop the property and stated that it would be an incentive for the city to have the property annexed especially if it will be providing electric, water and sewer services. Director Reese and Manager Williams confirmed the city has the capacity to support the annexation. Vice Mayor Thompson stated that he wanted to make sure that if this property is developed soon, the city has the capability of supporting it and the costs would be put on the developer and not the city. Director Reese stated that we have impact fees specifically for that reason so that the citizens do not pay for an expansion that they do not need. He then commented on the annexation of the U.S. Sugar property. He stated that U.S. Sugar has a master plan, comprehensive plan addition to add an employment hub, and rezone request for tonight to move quickly. Commissioner Gardner noted that the original master plan of Clewiston was done in the 20's and this will be the first expansion of the city limits in our boundaries. She feels it is a very exciting time for the city and is wonderful that we are expanding our city limits and incorporating more land into our tax base. Director Reese confirmed that water, sewer and electric for the residential and commercial areas have been calculated into all of the projects on the north and south side of the highway. He stated that Mike Rosen has worked with each one of the applicants and pointed out that the Hendry County School Board and Kelly Tractor will keep the underlying zoning and comprehensive land use designations of Hendry County until we decide to change those when the applicant comes to us. Mr. Rosen came forward and stated that he's been in contact with Hendry County School Board Chair Mike Swindle and the Kelly Tractor brothers and they are all well aware of what's happening with the annexations and they realize that there are tax ramifications they will be paying in the future to be part of the city. They also understand that as development happens, they will be using city utilities and paying those fees in addition to impact fees. After hearing no further comments, Mayor Pittman declared the public hearing for Ordinance No. 2024-08 closed.

Commissioner Gardner made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Thompson, to approve Ordinance No. 2024-08 on first reading and set the public hearing for August 19, 2024. Vote 4 yeas, 0 nays (Commissioner Hyslope was absent.)

7. **Ordinance No. 2024-09 – First Reading** - Ordinance No. 2024-09 provides for the annexation of additional territory owned by Kelly Tractor Co. to be included within the city boundaries in accordance with Articles VII Section 2(c) of the Constitution of the State of Florida and Section 171.044, Florida Statutes, as amended.

Mayor Pittman read Ordinance No. 2024-09 by title and declared the public hearing open. Attorney Brandenburg again asked for disclosures from the commissioners if any have had any ex parte communications or have conducted any site visits in conjunction with the annexation. No disclosures by any of the commissioners were made. After hearing no comments by the public or the commission, Mayor Pittman declared the public hearing closed.

Vice Mayor Thompson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gardner, to approve Ordinance No. 2024-09 on first reading and set the public hearing for August 19, 2024. Vote 4 yeas, 0 nays (Commissioner Hyslope was absent.)

8. **Ordinance No. 2024-10 – First Reading** - Ordinance No. 2024-10 provides for the annexation of additional territory owned by United States Sugar Corporation to be included within the city boundaries in accordance with Articles VII Section 2(c) of the Constitution of the State of Florida and Section 171.044, Florida Statutes, as amended.

Mayor Pittman read Ordinance No. 2024-10 by title and declared the public hearing open. Attorney Brandenburg again asked for disclosures from the commissioners if any have had any ex parte communications or have conducted any site visits in conjunction with the annexation. Commissioner Gardner stated that she believes she spoke to Mr. Rosen years ago about the north and south developments but doesn't remember if he had mentioned anything about the annexation. After hearing no further comments, Mayor Pittman declared the public hearing closed.

Commissioner Gardner made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Edmonds, to approve Ordinance No. 2024-10 on first reading and set the public hearing for August 19, 2024. Vote 4 yeas, 0 nays (Commissioner Hyslope was absent.)

9. **Ordinance No. 2024-11 – First Reading** - Ordinance No. 2024-11 adopts an amendment to the City's Comprehensive Development Plan in accordance with the mandates set forth in Section 163.3184, Florida Statutes, pursuant to a privately initiated application, which provides for an amendment to the City Future Land Use Map creating the Employment Hub District and re-designating five (5) parcels of real property comprising approximately 477 ± acres, more or less in size, currently designated Hendry County "Multi-Use", as "Employment Hub District", such parcels of land are located North of US27 and directly West of the prior existing city boundary.

Mayor Pittman read Ordinance No. 2024-11 by title, declared the public hearing open and asked for comments from the public and commission. Commissioner Gardner asked for clarification regarding the conflicting maps in the agenda packet for agenda items 9 and 10. Director Reese stated the correct map will be attached as Exhibit B for the final reading. Ms. Neale Montgomery came forward to comment on the significance of an Employment Hub District and explained that as they heard before, the two parcels are going to stay with county zoning and future land use and that is because the Florida Statute says when you annex in to a city, you come in with county or unincorporated areas zoning and land use. Employment hub is a city category that mirrors the same kinds of uses as the current mixed use commercial future land use category so there is a tax amendment to adopt the category and a map amendment to put it on this property. Mayor Pittman asked if we will have to adopt an ordinance for the new district. Director Reese confirmed that another ordinance would eventually be needed to lay out what can and can't be done within that district and we will

work with the property owner on that before the property is sold. He added that it is not unusual to create the district first with the comprehensive plan. Ms. Montgomery and Mr. Rosen commented further on how the employment hub category allows the mix of industrial and commercial retail or office so that needs can be met in one area without having to drive outside the corridor. Mr. Rosen stated there is no residential involved, it is strictly commercial retail and industrial and was designed to support future businesses that will be coming into this area. He also pointed out that the development will not all be done at one time; it will be done in phases.

After further discussion, Attorney Brandenburg called for disclosures from the Commission of any ex parte communications or site visits in conjunction with this comp plan amendment. There were no disclosures from the commission. Mr. John Vanni came forward and clarified that the uses are not changing from what they are now; it is a name change when you pull it into the city. After hearing no further comments, Mayor Pittman declared the public hearing closed.

Commissioner Gardner made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Thompson, to approve Ordinance No. 2024-11 on first reading and set the public hearing for August 19, 2024. Vote 4 yeas, 0 nays (Commissioner Hyslope was absent.)

- 10. Ordinance No. 2024-12 – First Reading** - Ordinance No. 2024-12 provides for the rezoning of certain real property within the corporate limits of the City of Clewiston, which property consists of five parcels of land lying in Sections 7 and 8, Township 43 South, Range 34 East, Hendry County, Florida; provides that these parcels of real property shall be assigned the city zoning designation of PUD “Planned Unit Development District – Clewiston 440”; provides that the zoning map of the City of Clewiston be amended to reflect the proper designation these parcels; provides that a master concept plan for the project is hereby approved in accordance with Section 110-457 of the City of Clewiston Zoning Code.

Mayor Pittman read Ordinance No. 2024-12 by title and declared the public hearing open. Attorney Brandenburg called for the disclosure of any ex parte communications or site visits in conjunction with this rezoning from the commission at this time. There were no disclosures from the commission. After hearing no comments, Mayor Pittman declared the public hearing closed.

Commissioner Gardner made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Thompson, to approve Ordinance No. 2024-12 on first reading and set the public hearing for August 19, 2024. Vote 4 yeas, 0 nays (Commissioner Hyslope was absent.)

- 11. Ordinance No. 2024-13 – First Reading** - Ordinance No. 2024-13 abandons and vacates the City’s interest in a portion of the Okeechobee Avenue Right of Way, located North of Block 24 of the General Plan of Clewiston, as revised, subject to utility & access easement(s) to be maintained along the entire length of the existing easement.

Mayor Pittman read Ordinance No. 2024-13 by title and declared the public hearing open. Attorney Brandenburg called for the disclosure of any ex parte communications or any site visits in conjunction with this application from the commission at this time. There were no disclosures from the commission. Commissioner Gardner stated that after looking at the original John Nolen plan of the city, it looked like this area was for something else. She believes it was supposed to be a hotel and boat basin. Approval of this ordinance will bring this property into alignment with the other property to the east and west of it. Manager Williams noted that the utilities would not be affected. Director Reese stated that staff sees no need to retain the property other than for utility easements. After hearing no further comments, Mayor Pittman declared the public hearing closed.

Commissioner Gardner made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Edmonds, to approve Ordinance No. 2024-13 on first reading and set the public hearing for August 19, 2024. Vote 4 yeas, 0 nays (Commissioner Hyslope was absent.)

RESOLUTIONS

- 12. Resolution No. 2024-040** – Resolution No. 2024-040 approves the Agreement between the City of Clewiston and United States Sugar Corporation (“US Sugar”) for joint funding of construction for the municipal golf course irrigation improvements.

Mayor Pittman read Resolution No. 2024-040 by title. On behalf of the city commission, Mayor Pittman thanked U.S. Sugar for their generous support on the golf course project.

Commissioner Gardner made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Edmonds, to approve Resolution No. 2024-040. Vote 4 yeas, 0 nays (Commissioner Hyslope was absent.)

After the vote, Vice Mayor Thompson stated for the record, that this should have been approved before the work was done. Manager Williams confirmed the work was complete.

- 13. Resolution No. 2024-044** – Resolution No. 2024-044 approves the Continuing Agreement for Professional Services Work Order No. 2020-028 between the City of Clewiston and Johnson Engineering, Inc. for the design, permitting, bidding, and construction administration services for the Della Tobias Water Main Improvement Project.

Mayor Pittman read Resolution No. 2024-044 by title and stated that this project was 100% grant funded.

Vice Mayor Thompson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gardner, to approve Resolution No. 2024-044. Vote 4 yeas, 0 nays (Commissioner Hyslope was absent.)

- 14. Resolution No. 2024-045** – Resolution 2024-045 adopts a schedule of revised development and construction permit fees for services provided and regularly charged as specified by the City Code; and provides for an effective date.

Mayor Pittman read Resolution No. 2024-045 by title. Director Reese confirmed that we are updating the fees from 2015. He stated the International Building Code and the Construction Journal for building construction costs takes each section of each state into consideration when the fee charts are created. He stated that 90% of the building departments use a chart like this and explained that you can’t just pick a cost, you have to pick the cost from a date certain and it is recommended to make a move to what they’re currently being charged by the contractor. Mayor Pittman stated for the public’s knowledge, that this is not what your contractor is going to charge you, this is the cost based on the permit fee, not what you are going to actually pay. Director Reese further explained that the International Building Code collects data from all building departments nationwide and they come up with an average construction cost and they publish that in the construction journal every 6 months and that state statute through the Florida Building Code and if you choose to use this chart, this is what you must use. He noted that it could also be calculated different ways but this is a more uniform way to do it. He then mentioned that we need to get the fees for land use and zoning in line with what is actually being paid.

Commissioner Edmonds made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gardner, to approve Resolution No. 2024-045. Vote 4 yeas, 0 nays (Commissioner Hyslope was absent.)

- 15. Resolution No. 2024-046** – Resolution No. 2024-046 appoints Danny Williams as City Manager and authorizes the Mayor to execute an agreement for city manager services between the City of Clewiston and Danny Williams.

Mayor Pittman read Resolution No. 2024-046 by title. Attorney Brandenburg stated that he put together the agreement, which was based off the prior manager’s agreement aside from a few formatting changes, and provided it to Mr. Williams for him to review. He noted that it stated that an annual review of the manager’s performance will be done by the Commission. He asked the Commission if they wanted to make any changes to the required annual review because that was an item of discussion during the last manager’s tenure. Vice Mayor

Thompson stated that he feels it is normal language in city manager contracts and is needed to hold them accountable and benchmark where they are at and where they are going.

Vice Mayor Thompson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gardner, to approve Resolution No. 2024-046. Vote 4 yeas, 0 nays (Commissioner Hyslope was absent.)

Vice Mayor Thompson encouraged Manager Williams to reach out and start his ICMA certification as soon as possible. He feels it would be helpful for him and the city as a whole.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

16. Short Term Rentals Discussion – Dylan Brandenburg

Attorney Brandenburg stated that the Commission, at a prior meeting, requested some information regarding short term rentals. He put together a brief memo from the history of the regulation of this type of use and has provided a couple of examples of some typical short term vacation rental ordinance provisions from other jurisdictions. He stated there was a recent change with regard to the rentals that specifically authorizes local governments to create registration programs and perform inspections of these uses. He stated that this is just a presentation of information open to discussion. Commissioner Gardner stated that she has heard concerns from folks in neighborhoods that have heard things like Airbnb. She doesn't know of any issues and doesn't know if it is happening here, but feels it is something that needs to be discussed. Vice Mayor Thompson stated that we don't know how many we have but every time session is in, they take a strike at this and try to take it out of the city's hands. Manager Williams stated that he doesn't see it being a problem because they are going to abide by our laws. Commissioner Gardner stated that you have rental inspections on yearly leases to safeguard everybody involved in the rental of a residential property but we don't even know what short term rentals we have or how often they are rented. She noted that our hotels have to pay the tourism development tax and these short term rentals fall under that. She knows there is quite a few short term rentals in certain unincorporated areas of the county and feels this is something that should be discussed at a workshop. She feels the same standards of our rental program should apply. Mayor Pittman stated that he thinks the registration is a good idea. He knows there are some VRBOs in LaBelle within the city limits but doesn't know how they're regulated or if they even are. He stated it is a business and asked if those owners are required to have an occupational license. Attorney Brandenburg stated they are required to register with the Department of Business Regulation and pay an applicable state tax. As of right now, he doesn't know if any of these would meet the criteria for paying a local government. Mayor Pittman stated that he thinks it is something to be discussed at a workshop and look at LaBelle and some of the other smaller communities. Vice Mayor Thompson stated the Southwest Florida League of Cities is on top of this issue and he will try to bring back something from the meeting at the end of this month. He added that we need to know what is going on in our city. Commissioner Gardner agreed that a workshop was needed and staff needed to be aware, especially the Police Department, if there are any issues that they have been called to on. Attorney Brandenburg stated he doesn't know the last time the BTR rate schedule was revised but it might be an opportunity to look at it as a whole because he knows there have been cases in recent history of people challenging BTR taxes of being excessive.

Mr. Chuck Svirk came forward and addressed the Commission. He stated that he has been coming to this area for 3 years and is interested in developing glamping and short term rentals in this area. He stated they have a lot of Airbnb's on Lake Michigan and everybody is getting sued now because there has not been good regulation. He is not in favor of more regulation but feels the lack of it really will hurt the ability bring more industry here. He then mentioned that a feasibility study was done for all of Florida and quite a few locations around the US and the Clewiston area came back as number one. He feels this area is something really unique with the natural amenities. He also mentioned that he was happy that Mr. Williams was chosen as the City Manager; he's received more response from the city in the last two months than he has in the previous three years.

17. Old Business

18. **Departmental Monthly Activity Reports** - Presented for information only.
19. **Comments from Interim City Manager** – Manager Williams announced that the CPAC group will be moving to the old police station building, which is currently being remodeled. He confirmed that the back half of the building is rented by the Fire Department. Mayor Pittman asked for the public, who is paying for the renovation and will they be paying rent once it is done. Manager Williams confirmed that the CPAC group is paying for everything and the rent is being negotiated. Currently, they are not paying rent, only utilities. Mayor Pittman noted that it is a worthwhile group to have in our city for the youth. Vice Mayor Thompson suggested that we assist them in finding grants, if there is a way.
20. **Comments from City Attorney** - Attorney Brandenburg reported the trial counsel for the Clewiston Commons case had informed him that a potential settlement agreement was reached which would resolve the case. It had not yet been signed but it was a low level amount for the settlement. He believed the amount was \$25,000. He stated the City's insurance carrier had the authority to accept that option without the Commission's consent; it would be a settlement from the City's insurance carrier to the plaintiffs. Commissioner Gardner expressed that she would be happy because she knows that a lot of staff's time has been expended on this issue. She stated the property is a blight on the community; it has not improved in any way. Vice Mayor Thompson agreed. Commissioner Gardner asked Attorney Brandenburg to talk to staff about this. Vice Mayor Thompson stated that the amount of settlement is a relief with the amount of litigation that has been put into this. Attorney Brandenburg agreed that it was favorable.
21. **Comments from the City Commission** – Commissioner Edmonds stated that she is excited about hearing that this area was number one in the study that was done by Mr. Lewis. She is excited that anybody would be looking to come to Clewiston; we are desperate for expansion and for restaurants and businesses. She then mentioned that she would like to see the few businesses we have on US 27 clean up their property. She feels the corridor is not so friendly and doesn't look so sweet. She added that she is excited to have Mr. Williams as our City Manager.

Vice Mayor Thompson stated he is excited about the new properties being annexed into the City and knows there was some concern in the public about changing the City Manager. He assured everyone that the City hasn't stopped for one second. He feels the best possible man was chosen for the job; he has filled some significant positions since he has been the interim, mainly in the Finance and Parks & Recreation departments. He doesn't believe the city has been better off in decades. He added that Manager Williams is currently working to fill some other positions and he looks forward to see who will be chosen. Mayor Pittman agreed.

Commissioner Gardner stated that she is also excited about the projects especially the annexations happening to expand our borders. Her hope is that jobs will be created and businesses will come into that area. She agreed with Commissioner Edmonds' comments about the look of our corridor. She stated the Commission has talked about the Main Street Corridor Plan and our redevelopment, which takes buy in from the businesses on Highway 27. She has confidence that we can do much better in our bigger plazas. She feels we may need to consider our trash can size requirements because the trash cans are overflowing and trash is being scattered everywhere. She then congratulated Manager Williams and stated that he had definitely proven himself not only as Utilities Director but as Interim City Manager. She offered her support to help him and his team get these things done that are envisioned for the community. Manager Williams stated that he has a great staff. Commissioner Gardner stated that she feels redevelopment is critical; we have an expansion outside the city limits for the first time but we have so much land within the city that, in her opinion, needs to be developed, especially the blighted areas.

Mayor Pittman echoed those comments and thanked Manager Williams for the things he has already done. He stated that he has heard many good comments from citizens about the new staff and feels things are going to get better and better.

Manager Williams stated the budget workshop scheduled after this meeting tonight will need to be cancelled because it was not advertised.

Adjournment

Mayor Pittman declared the meeting adjourned with unanimous consensus of the members present at 6:47 p.m.

James Pittman, Mayor

Mary K. Combass, City Clerk