



TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES

**THURSDAY, June 3, 2025 – 11:00 A.M.
PIERSON TOWN CENTER**

6
7 **1. Call meeting to order**
8

9 Mayor Gray Leonhard called the meeting to order at 11:00 A.M. and asked Town Clerk
10 Yvonne Braddock to take the roll call.
11

12 **2. Roll call**
13

14 PRESENT:

15 Mayor Gray Leonhard
16 Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund
17 Councilmember Jimmy Anderson
18 Councilmember Linnie Richardson
19 Councilmember Brandy Peterson
20

21 Deputy Clerk Ryan Smith was also in not in attendance.
22

23 **3. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**
24

25 Councilmember Linnie Richardson gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge
26 of Allegiance.
27

28 **4. NEW BUSINESS**
29

30 a. Volusia Sheriff's Office contract discussion on contract
31

32 Vice Mayor Robert F. Greenlund started off by saying Town of Pierson is a very rural area
33 with 31% being agricultural we have a very low tax base. With the Fire District we cannot
34 go over the millage rate of 10. Our budget is one million dollars, and we have terrible roads
35 that need to be fixed and if we had money that we spent on the sheriff's office we could
36 pave Shaw Lake RD. We need to find a way to lower our costs and save the town some
37 money. Councilmember Richardson stated that citizen's already pay 141,000 out of the
38 taxes to the sheriff fund.
39

40 Councilmember Linnie R. Richardson asked why the contract says 2 officers for 12-hour
41 shifts is that right.
42

43 Chief Deputy Brian Henderson stated he is very familiar with Pierson living and growing up
44 in Volusia County. Yes, we have 2 officers assigned to Pierson for 12-hour shifts.
45 Councilmember Brandy Peterson said then we should have 24-hr coverage. Chief Deputy
46 Brian Henderson stated its one twelve hours shift every day Sunday through Saturday.

47 Discussion continued and Chief Deputy Brian Henderson stated it's your interpretation of
48 how you read the contract and that at the time both attorneys reviewed it. Today we are
49 moving forward with contract discussions.

50

51 Town Attorney Scott Simpson Can we change the scope of contract negotiations; we need to
52 work towards a change. Let's sit down and talk about the sheriff contract and renegotiate,
53 that's why we started the termination of the old contract because it is not working for the
54 town of Pierson and that's why we sent the letter. Council member Brandy Peterson said
55 during the meeting we received a text message from the sheriff that it was not very nice.
56 Chief Brian Henderson stated that we have a good relationship with the Town of Pierson,
57 and it would have been a common courtesy to let Mike Chitwood know what was going on.
58 We are to find out if we can do something to help or make it work or not work. Pierson has
59 been in this situation before, and we have tried to work with you prior.

60

61 Town Attorney Scott Simpson stated it's down to dollars and cents and what town can afford.
62 Can we cut down on hours per day.

63

64 Chief Deputy Brian Henderson stated that this will have a cascading effect in scheduling for
65 all involved.

66

67 Councilmember Brandy Peterson if deputy is called out of town for an emergency during his
68 12-hr shift shouldn't we get accredit for the time he is not here. Discussion continued about
69 the times the sheriff was called out of town.

70

71 Chief Deputy Brian Henderson said so I understand the contract has to change.

72

73 Mayor Gray Leonhard stated that we pay 340,000 and taxpayers pay 141,000 so roughly that
74 486,000 dollars being paid and that's 1/3 of our million-dollar budget.

75

76 Chief Deputy Brian Henderson everything is increasing employee FRS, healthcare I hear you,
77 give your attorney direction to discuss negotiations with us.

78

79 Town attorney Scott Simpson said that if we didn't keep the contract, we would still have
80 service because of what's paid out of the taxes. Chief Deputy Brain Henderson stated it would
81 not be a fast service. Town attorney Scoot Simpson said so the Town is paying for enhanced
82 services 2 deputies 12 hour shifts 7 days a week.

83

84 Mau stated he had two issues to clarify, 2 sheriffs on 12-hour shifts for 7 days a week, if you
85 had your own Sherriff department you would have to hire a minimum od two sheriffs to cover
86 all 7 days.

87

88 Vice Mayor Robert F. Greenlund stated we had our own sheriff department, and we don't
89 want to have our own.

90

91 Mau said even if you had your own sheriff office you would still be paying Volusia County
92 under the general fund on your taxes. When you became incorporated as your own

93 municipality you agreed to enhanced sheriff services. If you were not incorporated, you would
94 be like DeLeon Springs.
95
96 Mayor Gray Leonhard said the City of Daytona has their own sheriff office and they get the
97 same service without enhanced contracts. The point I am trying to make is why do we have
98 to pay for enhanced services.
99
100 Chief Brian Henderson yes, we are not the primary sheriff office and no its not enhanced
101 service for them its Volusia County wide.
102
103 Councilmember Brandy Peterson I believe we understand now
104
105 Chief Deputy Brian Henderson asked the Council what your proposal is to cut costs so we
106 can go back and see if that option will work.
107
108 Councilmember Brady Peterson brought up substation and thought that the public could go
109 there to get information or file a complaint.
110
111 Chief Deputy Brian Henderson said I see that you have problems with the current contract,
112 we are following the contract that the council at the time agreed to.
113
114 Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund said that he has been on council for 24 years and he is the last
115 remaining from the old council. We have a great relationship with the Volusia County Sheriff
116 office and that is why I spoke with Mike Chitwood, we believed we had to cancel the contract
117 to negotiate a new one.
118
119 Mayor Gray Leonhard We just want to renegotiate an new contract and try to save taxpayer
120 money.
121
122 Councilmember Linnie Richardson stated we do whatever is advised by our Town Attorney
123 Scott Simpson.
124
125 Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund stated that we just do have a tax base like other cities, and we
126 don't have a lot of ways to regenerate revenue. It is getting hard to make ends meet.
127
128 Chief deputy Brian Henderson so we should investigate reducing time in Pierson to cut costs,
129 just know quality of service and expectations will be different.
130
131 Councilmember Linnie Richardson stated in a note from Mike Chitwood he stated the noise
132 violation that was me and I contacted him because we were not getting anywhere with officers
133 on duty. Chief Brian Henderson asked why the captain was not notified and that you can pick
134 up the phone or email him about the situation.
135
136 Chief Deputy Brian Henderson, so I understand you are unhappy with the level of service, I
137 am getting it loud and clear.
138

139 Mayor Gray Leonhard, I am not upset with the Sheriff office, and I do not want to jeopardize
140 our friendship we are just stretched to the limits.

141
142 Councilmember Linnie Richardson stated if we do an 8-hour shift that would save 100,000
143 off the bill.

144
145 Councilmember Brandy Peterson, what with the refund for tickets for 3 or 4 tickets a month,
146 we have a lot of speeding issues in Pierson. What is your normal tax base school, kids. Chief
147 Deputy Brian Henderson stated that is the number one complaint everywhere and second is
148 drugs.

149
150 Councilmember Brandy Peterson, I want your service we just need to meet in the middle, and
151 we are still under contract.

152
153 Twon attorney Scott Simpson we need to sit down as a group and discuss this possibly in
154 another workshop. Vice Mayor Greenlund said we just need to try and cut cost.

155
156 Chief Deputy Brian Henderson so can you give attorney direction to discuss contract with us,
157 Councilmember Richardson said yes. Town attorney Scott Simpson said go through Town
158 Clerk and when solution is found then I can get involved otherwise it will cost town a lot of
159 money.

160
161 Mayor Gray Leonhard explained that with the Sunshine law we just can't go have a cup of
162 coffee and discuss town business. Chief Deputy Brian Henderson stated that he is very aware
163 of sunshine law. Mayor Gray Leonhard stated that's why we brought it up at the meeting. We
164 had no other way to do it.

165
166 The council thanked them for coming to the meeting and working with the town. The mayor
167 asked if anyone had anything else.

168
169

170 **5. ADJOURNED**

171

172 **Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:09 P.M.**

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174 Minutes prepared by:

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178 Yvonne Braddock, Town Clerk

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Minutes approved by:

Gray Leonhard, Mayor