



TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 2025 – 6:30 P.M.
PIERSON TOWN CENTER**

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7 **1. Call meeting to order**
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9 Mayor Gray Leonhard called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. and asked Town Clerk Yvonne
10 Braddock to take the roll call.
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12 **2. Roll call**
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14 PRESENT:

15 Mayor Gray Leonhard
16 Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund
17 Councilmember Jimmy Anderson
18 Councilmember Linnie Richardson
19 Councilmember Brandy Peterson
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21 Deputy Clerk Ryan Smith was also in attendance.
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23 **3. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**
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25 Councilmember Linnie Richardson gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge
26 of Allegiance.
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28 **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
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- 30 a. Regular meeting, July 15, 2025
31 b. Special Meeting July 22, 2025
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33 Mayor Gray Leonhard read the title and asked if there were any additions or deletions, if not
34 he would entertain a motion for approval.
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36 **Council Member Linnie Richardson made a motion to approve the above listed minutes**
37 **as written; seconded by Vice Mayor Robert Grennlund. All agreed, motion carries.**
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40 **5. NEW BUSINESS**
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- 42 a. Ordinance 2025-08 1st Reading
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44 Town Attorney Scott Simpson read the ordinance title and Mayor Gray Leonhard asked the
45 council if they had anything to say. Deputy Clerk Ryan Smith stated the ordinance is for water
46 rate increase update original ordinance from 1998; you will also be able to set water rates by

47 resolution and not ordinance. Section II and III are the same so section III has been removed
48 completely. Resident Karen Johnson of Minshew Road asked about water tower expense and
49 said that she already pays too much money for water and gets less the before. Deputy Clerk
50 Smith stated that new wells are coming on cost for Clearwater Solutions to maintain the wells
51 and there has been no pay increase since 2018. Resident Karen Pittman of East Washington
52 Ave asked about surplus in water, other than reserve. Mayor Gray Leonhard stated that
53 reserves are still there. Mark Clark of Blackburn RD new system is it going to be 3x the cost,
54 Deputy Clerk Smith stated no. Council member Brandy Peterson asked when last rate increase
55 was and prior to that never an increase. Deputy Clerk Ryan Smith went into prior rate was
56 \$15.00 for 2,000 gallons and it's been 5 years since 1st rate increase and per CPI we are to
57 increase rates annually. Mayor Gray Leonhard said he would entertain a motion.

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59 **Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund made a motion to approve the ordinance 2025-08 as**
60 **written; seconded by Council Member Brandy Peterson. All agreed, roll call taken and**
61 **motion carries.**

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63 b. Ordinance 2025-09 1st reading

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65 Town Attorney Scott Simpson read the ordinance title and Mayor Gray Leonhard turned over
66 discussion to Town Planner Mark Karet. Town Planner Mark Karet started off with that this
67 takes over an existing ordinance about flood plain from 2014 that was to be moved to the land
68 development code. Now that they are doing this, they have updated the verbiage from FEMA.
69 This was taken to the Planning and Zoning Commission and approved to be brought to the
70 Town Council. Mayor Gray Leonhard said he received a large packet from FEMA on Flood
71 plain and flood insurance and asked Town Planner if they had a choice in this matter. Town
72 Planner Mark Karet stated that they do not have a choice that it is state mandated. Mayor Gray
73 Leonhard asked the council and audience if they had anything to say. Mayor Gray Leonhard
74 said he would entertain a motion.

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76 **Council Member Linnie Richardson made a motion to approve the ordinance 2025-09**
77 **as written; seconded by Council Member Jimmy Anderson. All agreed, roll call vote**
78 **taken and motion carries.**

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80 c. Solid Waste Contract and RFP Discussion -Deputy Clerk Ryan Smith

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82 Deputy Clerk Ryan Smith started off with the issue residents have been having and that we
83 have reached out to GFL numerous times as well as residents and it was to no avail. They
84 notified us that they were out of stickers or some residents have paid and we have a few that
85 have automatic fund withdrawal and have never received a sticker. We were informed that
86 they created a list and were going to pick anyone who paid, and drivers were still only looking
87 for stickers. Our Utility Clerk Marci Nichols waited for her trash, and they were ready to drive
88 by, and she yelled out to them and asked why they didn't pick hers up and that she was on the
89 list, the driver checked her list, and her name was in fact on the list. I was assured by Skip
90 McCall that they would pick everyone up and they still didn't. I want to start a request for
91 proposal, and we could possibly do it on residents' taxes and possibly get a better rate and
92 better service. Our contract with GFL is up March of 2026. The reason we are with GFL is
93 because we have no guarantees on how many residences they pick up. Town attorney Scott

94 Simpson stated that it's too late to do anything this year, but we need to notify the property
95 appraiser office of intent to add to taxes. You will just have to come up with funds from March
96 – September 31, 2026. Then you must account for new residents that move during the middle
97 of the year. I would recommend you use a company that does these assessments. It is a big
98 process and after that you will just have to repeat the process. Council Member Linnie
99 Richardson stated that GFL is making this way more difficult than it must be. Vice Mayor
100 Greenlund stated this seems to happen every three years and he was a believer in not putting
101 it on tax bills, but he believes now that it is the better option. Vice Mayor Greenlund asked
102 audience by show of hands who the trash is for to be on taxes and who is against it. More
103 hands were up for its Vice Mayor thanked audience for their participation. Mayor Gray
104 Leonhard stated the only way to get good trash service is to put it on the taxes. Resident Mark
105 Clark stated he has a commercial dumpster and always has problems with trash pickup, and
106 this will affect commercial dumpsters, and the mayor stated it is for residential pick up.
107 Resident Philip Hughes stated that trash on your taxes is a good deal.

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110 d. Scarecrow Contest October 2025 – Debby Sommers
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112 Mayor Gray Leonhard asked if Debby Somers was present, the Town Clerk Yvonne Braddock
113 stated she would not be here, and she just wanted approval for scarecrow contest. Council
114 stated yes, we always do it and it's a hit.

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116 e. Volusia County Sheriff Contract – Mayor Gray Leonhard
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118 Mayor Gray Leonhard started off I am not advocating to cancel contract with the sheriff office,
119 but \$345,000 is 1/3 of our budget. Our budget is only 1 million and that leaves us 600,000 to
120 run the town. During the May meeting I was to look at my phone and I received a text from
121 Mike Chitwood stating he doesn't need 180 days so that he can cancel in 30 days. We were
122 cancelling the current contract to renegotiate a new contract for less money. Since that day he
123 stated we are trying to defund the sheriff office. He sent letters to the residents of northwest
124 Volusia County. He stated our meeting was in March and it was May 6, 2025. Council
125 member Linnie Richardson stated he sent those letters with taxpayer's dollars at .74 apiece.
126 Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund stated his thoughts was we needed to lower the amount of
127 service either every other day or 8-hour days or 1 day on 1 day off. Deputy Clerk Ryan Smith
128 read the letter sent to Brian Henderson and then stated that 2 days' letter we received the letter
129 he sent to the residents. Councilmember Brandy Peterson read a statement she had on her
130 phone stating she does not support a contract for enhanced service with the Volusia Sheriff
131 office. Applause ensued from audience. Council member Linnie Richardson stated that no
132 media showed up and she would have liked to set the record straight. I have filed 3 affidavits
133 that have never been made to the state's office, I called to confirm. I agree with Council
134 member Brandy Peterson. Applause ensued. Mayor Gray Leonhard stated it feels like being
135 bullied by the mafia. Deputy Ryan Smith, our officer, backs up the zone officer that handles
136 unincorporated and we are paying for enhanced services. Born and raised in Seville, response
137 time has always been longer. We will still receive standard service that we pay for on our
138 taxes. Legally on the contract we had to give 180 days' notice to renegotiate the contract. If
139 you want to know more about the budget we will be having a hearing meeting on Sept 8,
140 2025. 68% of taxes would go to the budget and 33% of budget would go to the sheriff office.

Resident Paul Martel came up to the podium and stated that you have heard the audience and they are backing the council. Use a paper and pen to write Ron Desantis. Chief Chitwood doesn't believe in Pierson. Resident Karen Johnson stated that he uses the budget to pay for the employees and their families health insurance, 1,000 bonuses but can't help little Pierson out. James Powers came up to podium and stated he ran against Mike Chitwood in last election, and he wants to commend Pierson and Council for standing their ground. I have a pocket of phone numbers and will help in any way he can. Resident Keith from Blackburn Road spoke up. Resident Heather from Frederick St came to podium and stated she didn't want the riff raff to come to Pierson; I am fearful we will turn out like DeLeon Springs. I love Pierson and my family goes back to the 1800's here. I would also like to see the money go to playground equipment at the park for the littles of this town. Resident Karen Pittman stated we should prorate the last 3 months because she has not seen a deputy in the area. Mayor Gray Leonhard stated that contract will end in middle of November.

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. Northwest Volusia Little League – Town Attorney Scott Simpson

Scott Simpson stated that he was on vacation and waiting for council to direct him to add changes agreement. I never received email until today since they were sending it to the wrong email address. So council is okay with changes we discussed prior. Council Member Linnie Richardson stated using our agreement. Scott stated yes. Discussion started about lights for poles and how sponsor pulled out on the lights but the still want to update the poles. Council Member Brandy Peterson stated she believes that will come back on the lights this week coming.

Vice Mayor Robert Greenlund made a motion to table NWVLL to next agenda; seconded by Council Member Brandy Peterson. All agreed, motion carries.

7. OTHER BUSINESS (Mayor, Council, and Staff Reports)

Mayor Gray Leonhard asked the council if they had any other business, the council responded with a no, he asked Town Attorney Scott Simpson who replied with a no. Town Planner Mark Karet gave an update on new wells and that he will be here Thursday to meet with residents about their zoning questions. He also stated that he will be on vacation from August 18 until September 1st and he will be here for September Council meeting. In his absence Rebekah Cottle will be handling the next meeting. Deputy Ryan Smith stated that he spoke with Louis Trivett about Washington Ave culvert and he will be bringing a camera up to check it out to see if it needs sleeved or replaced.

8. GOOD AND WELFARE (Public Participation)

Resident Rick Davis said since you are discussing repairs the speed hole on 2nd Ave could use some help in front of his son's house, discussion ensued about the old manhole.

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Hearing no further business, meeting adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

Minutes prepared by:

Yvonne Braddock, Town Clerk

Minutes approved by:

Gray Leonhard, Mayor