MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE STUART CITY COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 28, 2026
AT 5:30 PM
COMMISSION CHAMBERS
121 SW FLAGLER AVE.
STUART, FLORIDA 34994

CITY COMMISSION

Mayor Eula R. Clarke
Commissioner Laura Giobbi
Commissioner Merritt Matheson
Commissioner Sean Reed
Commissioner Campbell Rich

ADMINISTRATIVE

City Manager, Michael J. Mortell
City Attorney, Lee J. Baggett
City Clerk, Mary R. Kindel

ROLL CALL

5:30 PM

PRESENT: Mayor Clarke, Commissioner Matheson, Commissioner Reed, Commissioner Rich
ABSENT: Commissioner Giobbi

INVOCATION

Pastor James Harp of Stuart Alliance Church delivered the Invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COMMENTS BY CITY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Rich

- Welcomed Mr. Michael Mortell back to the City of Stuart as City Manager.

Mayor Clarke

- Commented that she has contacted the Police Department to look into vandalism of City property and asked the public to report anything they witness.
- Announced the passing of Ronald Corbin, a tribute and memorial will be held on Sunday, October 4, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. at the Lyric Theatre.
- Requested to move Item #8, the Polk Hotel, up on the agenda, just after the approval of

the consent calendar.

COMMENTS BY CITY MANAGER

City Manager Mortell

- Reported that the Commission adopted the Final Budget via Resolution No. 69-2026 on September 14, 2026, and that due to the Millage Rate adjustment, the numbers included in the Final Budget Resolution were not reflected correctly. The Resolution has been revised to Resolution No. 69-2026(A) to provide the corrected budget numbers.
- Commented on the impact of Amendment 3, if passed in November, would not affect the budget until FY28.
- Provided a brief history of the current City of Stuart-owned building leases, will be brought back as an agenda item in the future.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

5:42 PM MOTION: Approve moving Item #8 to proceed Item #2 in the agenda.
MOVED BY: Campbell Rich
SECONDED BY: Merritt Matheson
Motion approved unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC (Non-Agenda Related) (3 Minutes Max.)

1. David Kehlman - Stuart; Thanked Mike for meeting with him today and stated the maintenance of the creeks needs to be addressed.
2. Warren Driscoll- Stuart; Asking to amend Appendix A to ensure the towing rates reflect the same rates as Martin County.
3. Joan Seaman - Stuart; Commented on the community and how great it is, thanked Jessica for de-escalating her complaint. Stated how upset she is about the noise from music at the Guy Davis park. Questioned the ability to do a decibel check.
4. Rod Peterson - Stuart; Expressed his concern about the Stypmann drainage project and other flooded areas.
5. Albert Brinkley - Stuart; Commented that he grew up in the area he currently lives in, and reported the floods that occur in his area.
6. Lewis Leonard - Stuart; Commented on the flood that occurs on his property.
7. Michael Ponte - Jensen Beach; President of Martin County Realtor Assoc., spoke about the Zoning in Progress (ZIP) that took place in 2024 and asked for an investigation.
8. Walter Oden - Sag Harbor; Requested to repeal Ordinance 2539-2024 (ZIP), and address the legal issue, and bring it back at the next commission meeting.
9. Caryn Hall Yost-Rudge - Stuart; Spoke about her case and read into the record sections of Minutes from SCM 01/20/2009.
10. Kodey Johnson - Stuart; Introduced East Stuart Heritage Initiatives and what they stand for, spoke on different events they are holding. Asked the City to partner with his group.
11. Janine Alexander - Gainesville; Spoke on her case and provided a subpoena that was served to Mike.
12. Kim Coffey - Riviera Beach; Made a statement that he served papers to Mr. Mortell and his wife on behalf of Janine Alexander.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR

1. APPROVAL OF 09/09/2026 SCM - TENTATIVE MILLAGE & TENTATIVE BUDGET, 09/14/2026 SCM - FINAL MILLAGE & FINAL BUDGET, 09/14/2026 CCM MINUTES

END OF CONSENT CALENDAR

6:14 PM MOTION: Approve.
MOVED BY: Campbell Rich
SECONDED BY: Merritt Matheson
Motion approved unanimously.

ORDINANCE SECOND READING

8. POLK STREET HOTELS, INC. (AKA FAIRFIELD INN HOTEL) AMENDMENT TO THE OFFICIAL ZONING ATLAS (REZONE) (QUASI-JUDICIAL) (RC):

   ORDINANCE No. 2537-2026; AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE CITY'S OFFICIAL ZONING MAP TO REZONE A 0.33-ACRE PARCEL WHICH IS LOCATED AT 255 SW 6TH STREET FROM THE URBAN WATERFRONT ZONING DESIGNATION TO THE URBAN HIGHWAY ZONING DESIGNATION; PROVIDING DIRECTIONS TO THE CITY CLERK; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF ALL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Lee Baggett, City Attorney, provided the history of the item and clarification pertaining to the vote of the original Second Reading. The Minutes of the February 10, 2025, CCM reflected a scrivener's error of a passed motion with a 3/1 vote; however, the names of all Commissioners were listed, noting that the actual vote passed with a 3/2 vote. Mr. Baggett read Section 11.01.09(j)(6) Land Development Code and stated it must be followed in order to move forward with the item to include the specific reasons for denial; this Second Reading is considered a "re-do" of the reading.

Commissioners provided their exparte communication.

City Attorney Baggett swore in four (4) people — Jodi Kugler, Development Director, Jared Gaylord, Applicant Representative, Nimesh Patel, Owner, and Vishal Patel, Owner.

Jodi Kugler, Development Director, presented public notice, project location, future land use, existing zoning, proposed zoning, public hearing at the LPA and CRB, and staff recommendation. .

Jared Gaylord, Applicant Representative, presented the surrounding neighborhood, aerial photos, photos of the property, survey, unity of title, existing City of Stuart zoning map, Urban Highway and Urban Waterfront description, timeline, and provided a brief

description of the rezoning standards.

Commissioners discussion included the height, the shoreline, maintenance of mangroves, stormwater management and zoning requirements.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Ryan Strom - Stuart; Stated he was a Board Member for the Local Planning Agency for 18 years and was on the Board when this item passed; recommends the City pass this Ordinance.

Ms. Kugler stated for the record that a letter was received from Nik Schroth in support of this project.

6:56 PM MOTION: Approve.
MOVED BY: Campbell Rich
SECONDED BY: Merritt Matheson
VOTE: Motion passed 3/1.
YES: Eula Clarke, Campbell Rich, Merritt Matheson
NO: Sean Reed

COMMISSION ACTION

2. WRF HEADWORKS REHABILITATION PHASE 2 - ITB 2026-105 (RC):

RESOLUTION No. 61-2026; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA APPROVING THE AWARD OF ITB 2026-105 (055002), CITY OF STUART WRF HEADWORKS REHAB PHASE 2 PROJECT TO LAWRENCE LEE CONSTRUCTION SERVICES, INC. AS THE LOWEST, MOST RESPONSIVE AND RESPONSIBLE BIDDER WITH A TOTAL UNIT PRICE OF $3,032,000; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

City Attorney Baggett provided a timeline of the item and described how they selected the contractor.

Commissioner Reed asked if this is the same contractor that did Phase 1. [Mr. Kunen, Utilities and Engineering Director, replied it is not.]

7:02 PM MOTION: Approve.
MOVED BY: Campbell Rich
SECONDED BY: Merritt Matheson
Motion approved unanimously.

3. INTERIM CITY MANAGER APPOINTMENT AND AIHC INCREASE FOR J CHRULSKI (RC):

RESOLUTION No. 71-2026; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA APPOINTING JAMES CHRULSKI, COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR, AS INTERIM CITY MANAGER; AUTHORIZING AN INCREASE IN COMPENSATION TO THE DEPARTMENT

DIRECTOR ACTING IN A HIGHER CAPACITY AS INTERIM CITY MANAGER; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

City Attorney Baggett provided an explanation of the item.

7:07 PM MOTION: Approve.
MOVED BY: Merritt Matheson
SECONDED BY: Campbell Rich
VOTE: Motion passed 3/1.
YES: Eula Clarke, Campbell Rich, Merritt Matheson
NO: Sean Reed

4. ROAD CLOSURE FOR THE ANNUAL VNA STUART CHRISTMAS PARADE (RC):

RESOLUTION No. 76-2026; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA, APPROVING A ROAD CLOSURE FOR THE ANNUAL VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION'S STUART CHRISTMAS PARADE ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2026, BEGINNING AT THE S.E. MONTEREY ROAD TRAVELING WEST ON S.E. OCEAN BLVD TO GEORGIA AVE INTERSECTION; AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER OF THE CITY OF STUART TO SIGN THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PERMIT FOR THE TEMPORARY CLOSING OF A STATE ROAD; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

7:09 PM MOTION: Approve.
MOVED BY: Campbell Rich
SECONDED BY: Merritt Matheson
Motion approved unanimously.

5. PAYMENTUS CONTRACT AMENDMENT (RC):

RESOLUTION No. 78-2026; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA, APPROVING A CONTRACT AMENDMENT WITH PAYMENTUS CORPORATION FOR ACCEPTING ONLINE PAYMENTS; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Brief Commission discussion took place on online services, the transition period, and utility billing.

7:10 PM MOTION: Approve.
MOVED BY: Campbell Rich
SECONDED BY: Merritt Matheson
VOTE: Motion passed 3/1.
YES: Eula Clarke, Campbell Rich, Merritt Matheson
NO: Sean Reed

6. NON-EXCLUSIVE LICENSE & LICENSE AGREEMENT TO THE STUART MAIN STREET ASSOCIATION, INC. (RC):

RESOLUTION No. 80-2026; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING A NON-EXCLUSIVE LICENSE AND LICENSE AGREEMENT TO THE STUART MAIN STREET

ASSOCIATION, INC. A DESIGNATED 501(c) ORGANIZATION, FOR THE OPERATION OF A WEEKLY OUTDOOR MARKET PLACE FOR SALES TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

City Manager Mortell, provided a brief history on the item. Commissioners' discussion included revenue, how many and what type of vendors, and more circulation of notices of events throughout the City.

7:21 PM MOTION: Approve.
MOVED BY: Merritt Matheson
SECONDED BY: Campbell Rich
Motion approved unanimously.

7. ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMITTEE FOR THE PURPOSE OF RANKING ENVIRONMENTAL LANDS FOR ACQUISITION (RC):

   RESOLUTION No. 82-2026; A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF STUART, FLORIDA AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL LANDS ACQUSITION COMMITTEEE; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Ruth Holmes, Environmental Attorney, gave a detailed explanation of the Environmental Lands Acquisition within Martin County. Stated she looked at other local governments and created the committee's criteria based on what she saw fit for the City. The seven-member committee is to consist of 7 appointees; one from each Commissioner, one at large member, recommended an Environmental Scientist, and one at large member recommended as a current Licensed Florida Realtor. Ms. Holmes further explained the role of the committee being to screen properties for acquisition with certain criteria and provided various committee name options, and explained the initiative.

Commissioner discussion included the necessity of the committee and added language in the Resolution to ensure that properties under litigation not be considered.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Caryn Hall Yost-Rudge - Stuart; Commented that she is concerned about a property on Palm City Road being added to the listing.

7:49 PM MOTION: Approve Resolution No. 82-2026 with use of the SALT Acronym to describe the program "Stuart's Sustainable Acquisitions of Lands for Tomorrow."
7:52 PM MOTION AMENDED: Add that properties under current litigation would not be considered.
MOVED BY: Merritt Matheson
SECONDED BY: Sean Reed
Motion approved unanimously.

ORDINANCE FIRST READING

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

9. BACKYARD CHICKENS QUESTIONNAIRE

Jim Chrulski, Community Services Director, presented the survey and City Manager Mortell provided the history of the item.

Commissioners' discussion included, who should receive the questionnaire, the cost of door hangers, the use of utility account numbers, adding a question, "Would you be willing to participate in a pilot program?", narrowing other questions, and making it a two-phase survey.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Amber DiAngelo - Palm City; Commented on the pilot program; in favor of the chickens.
2. Caryn Hall Yost-Rudge - Stuart; Suggested neighborhood community policing the chickens.
3. Bonnie Moser - Stuart; Spoke on a personal story, survey looks good, thinks it's a great idea about asking your neighbor (questioned what is a neighbor), in support of the pilot program.

City Manager Mortell confirmed the final survey will be brought back at the October 26th CCM meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

8:30 PM

Mary R. Kindel, City Clerk

Eula R. Clarke, Mayor

Minutes to be approved at the Regular Commission Meeting this 12th day of October, 2026.