



**CITY OF OKEECHOBEE, FLORIDA
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
JUNE 17, 2026
OFFICIAL MINUTES**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Hoover called the regular meeting of the Planning Board for the City of Okeechobee to order on Wednesday, June 17, 2026, at 6:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers, located at 55 Southeast 3rd Avenue, Room 200, Okeechobee, Florida. The invocation was offered by Phil Baughman followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. ATTENDANCE

Board Secretary Tammy Parker called the roll. Members physically present to establish a quorum: Chairperson Dawn Hoover, Vice Chairperson Karyne Brass, Board Members Phil Baughman, Mac Jonassaint, Douglas McCoy, and Alternate Board Members Dora Roberts and Patty Burnette were present. Board Members Carl Berlin and Jim Shaw were absent. Council Member Jim Shaw's absence was with consent. Chairperson Hoover moved Alternate Board Members Roberts and Burnette to voting positions.

III. AGENDA AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

- A.** There were no modifications to the published agenda.
- B.** Motion by Member Baughman, seconded by Jonassaint to adopt the agenda as presented. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**
- C.** No comment cards were received for public participation for issues not on the agenda.
- D.** Board Secretary Tammy Parker administered the Oath to the parties intending to speak, Ben Smith and Roxann Read.

IV. MINUTES

- A.** Motion by Vice Chairperson Brass, seconded by Member Baughman to dispense with the reading and approve the November 20, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes [as presented in **Exhibit 1**]. **Motion Carried Unanimously.**

V. CHAIRPERSON HOOVER OPENED THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:05 P.M.

- A. Proposed Land Development Regulations (LDR) Text Amendment Application No. 25-001-TA, privately initiated by Edison Real Estate Partners, LLC, to amend regulations for Chapter 66-1 – Definitions; Chapter 90 – Zoning, Article III – Districts and District Regulations, Division 13. Residential Planned Unit Development (PUD-R) District; and Chapter 90 – Zoning, Article III – Districts and District Regulations, Division 14 applicable to all Multi-Use Planned Unit Development (PUD-M) and (PUD-R). (Exhibit 2)**

- 1. City Planning Consultant Ben Smith of Morris-Depew Associates, Inc., reviewed the Planning Staff Report and reminded the Board this is the first proposed zoning change since the workshop with City Council in October of 2025, where Council Members expressed the need for more flexibility in future planning and development. He further explained the current codes do not provide flexibility for less conventional development. The language in the Future Land Use (FLU) Mixed Use is narrow and specific, and the LDRs do not allow flexibility in developments. The proposed change would allow flexibility for use and would be beneficial for both the City and developer.

He continued, stating since submittal of the application, the applicant, their representatives and City staff have coordinated all the proposed changes to the regulations for Chapter 66-1 – Definitions; Chapter 90 – Division 13, PUD-R District; and Chapter 90 – Division 14 applicable to all PUD-M and PUD-R. City staff now fully supports the changes, finding the requested text amendment is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan and the findings required for granting a change in the LDRs.

- 2. On behalf of the applicant, Ms. Roxann Read of WGI, Inc., presented a PowerPoint overview describing the Planned Unit Development (PUD) changes and a future project planned within an area that includes the Blue

V. PUBLIC HEARING ITEM A CONTINUED

Heron Golf and Country Club properties. This project is pending recommendation for approval by the Planning Board and approval by City Council of the PUD changes. PowerPoint shown at meeting has been added to Exhibit 2.

3. Discussion among the Board Members included the effects on the existing Blue Heron Golf Course property owners and residents and the existing Blue Heron Homeowners Association. Concerns discussed were potential drainage issues for the Blue Heron property owners, whether the homeowner's association was active, and changes in the types of development potentially allowed if the PUD changes were approved and the effects on the existing residents. City Administrator Gary Ritter addressed the Board clarifying the application before the Board was for a modification to the flexibility of PUDs as a whole as described in the City's Code of Ordinances, Zoning Chapter 90, Division 13 PUD-R and Division 14 PUD-M and PUD-R. He stated that while the request included the area of the Blue Heron Golf and Country Club, the application was a request for any areas city-wide with a current zoning designation as PUD-M and PUD-R.
 4. Board member Phil Baughman stated he agreed flexibility is needed within PUD's but addressed specific concerns regarding the effect of these changes on the existing residents within the Blue Heron properties such as whether the Blue Heron Homeowners Association remained active, current road infrastructure and potential stormwater drainage issues. Other potential issues discussed amongst the Board included changes to lot sizes, buffer requirements and who would be responsible for maintenance of the stormwater system.
 5. Board Member Jonassaint expressed concerns regarding who would benefit from the changes by questioning whether the proposed changes specifically benefit the applicant or if they would be beneficial to the community as a whole.
 6. Planner Smith reiterated this is the first step to potential changes being presented to the City Council. He reminded the Board that prior to any development affecting the Blue Heron properties, an application and site plan must be presented to the Technical Review Committee which would require, a master concept, traffic studies, and stormwater management system among other things. Depending on the specifics of the proposed project in the area, it could potentially be before the Planning Board where any regulatory requirements or conditions could be addressed.
 7. No Ex-Parte disclosures were offered.
 8. Motion by Vice Chairperson Brass, seconded by Member Baughman to recommend approval to the City Council for Proposed Land Development Regulations Text Amendment Application No. 25-001-TA, as presented in Exhibit 2, which includes the Planning Consultants findings and recommendation for approval to amend regulations for Chapter 66-1 – Definitions; Chapter 90 – Zoning, Article III – Districts and District Regulations, Division 13. PUD-R District; and Chapter 90 – Zoning, Article III – Districts and District Regulations, Division 14 applicable to all PUD-M and PUD-R. **The Motion Carried with a vote of 6 votes in the affirmative and 1 vote against by Alternate Board Member Dora Roberts.** The recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration at a Public Hearing tentatively scheduled for July 21, 2026.
- B. Proposed Land Development Regulations Text Amendment Application No. 26-001-TA initiated by the City of Okeechobee, is limited to Chapter 90 – Zoning, Article III – Districts and District Regulations, Division 12, PUD-M District of the City's Land Development Code. (Exhibit 3)**

V. PUBLIC HEARING ITEM B CONTINUED

1. Planner Smith reviewed the Planning Staff Report and noted the application was being presented on behalf of the City of Okeechobee and proposed to amend Chapter 90 – Zoning, Article III – Districts and District Regulations, Division 12, PUD-M District concurrently with the proposed amendment to PUD Divisions 13 and 14 brought forth by a private applicant to ensure that all PUD developments were consistent.

He further explained the changes requested by the City Council and would allow more oversight and flexibility by the City for Mixed-Use developments such as additional accessory uses, recreational facilities, open spaces or agricultural activities with more streamlined development standards.

2. Vice Chairperson Karyne Brass questioned the reason for the removal of pollutant regulations within the Comprehensive Plan. Planner Smith explained the language was somewhat burdensome since other agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency, South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and others regulated pollutants. It was additionally noted that the City adopted it's own stormwater regulations that parallel those of SFWMD.
3. Motion by Vice Chairperson Brass, seconded by Member Baughman to recommend approval to the City Council for Proposed LDR Text Amendment Application No. 26-001-TA initiated by the City of Okeechobee, is limited to Chapter 90 – Zoning, Article III – Districts and District Regulations, Division 12, PUD-M District of the City's LDRs. **Motion Carried Unanimously.** The recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration at a Public Hearing tentatively scheduled for July 21, 2026.

C. **Proposed Text Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan FLU Policy 2.1(c) Application No. 26-001-CPA in conjunction with the companion text amendments to the Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) zoning districts and the Commercial Future Land Use (FLU) is intended to streamline, clarify, and modernize the City's policies and codes for PUDs. (Exhibit 4)**

1. Planner Smith reviewed the Planning Staff Report explaining the necessity of the text amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and update to the FLU Map due to the text amendment changes to the LDRs in conjunction with the previously discussed applications 25-001-TA and 26-001-TA.

Planner Smith referenced the Land Use Workshop held by the City Council in October 2025 where Staff was directed to prepare amendments to the policies and regulations for PUDs and the Commercial FLU category. He further explained that the proposed changes were limited to FLU Policy 2.1 which describes the City's FLU categories were intended to streamline, clarify, and modernize the City's policies and codes for PUDs by providing for more flexibility as originally intended.

2. Board members and City staff individually discussed the major changes listed in bullet form on page 1 of the Staff Report related to FLU Policy 2.1(c). The removal of the table showing aggregate acreage requirements within the Mixed-Use FLU Map Category was discussed in detail. Vice Chairperson Brass expressed concern with removing the table and potential risks of reducing the City's desired commercial land use acreage. City Planner Smith explained the table was not needed since FLU Policy 2.1(c)5 was straight forward and specifically stated the Commercial future land use and Mixed - Use FLU 'shall not be reduced to less than 395 acres' and Mixed-Use, and the current total is 397.94 acres.

3. Motion by Vice Chairperson Brass, seconded by Member Jonassaint to recommend approval to the City Council for Proposed Text Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan FLU Policy 2.1(c) Application No. 26-001-CPA in conjunction with the companion text amendments to the PUD zoning districts and the Commercial FLU is intended to streamline, clarify, and modernize the City's policies and codes for PUDs. **Motion Carried Unanimously.** The recommendation will be forwarded to the City Council for consideration at a Public Hearing tentatively scheduled for July 21, 2026.

CHAIRPERSON HOOVER CLOSED THE PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:26 P.M.

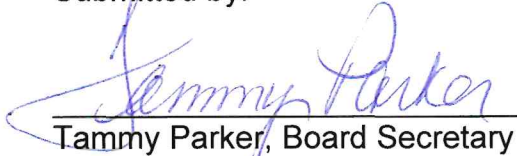
VI. CITY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

City Administrator Gary Ritter noted they had each met new General Services Director Tammy Parker and that this would be his last Planning Board meeting before his retirement. He thanked the Board and stated it had been his pleasure to work with each of them, but he was leaving them in good hands with incoming City Administrator Denise Whitehead.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Hoover adjourned the meeting at 7:27 P.M.

Submitted by:



Tammy Parker, Board Secretary

Please take notice and be advised that when a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Planning Board with respect to any matter considered at this proceeding, he/she may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. General Services' media are for the sole purpose of backup for official records of General Services.