



Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 28, 2025, 7:00 PM CDT

at Esto Town Hall, 3312 2nd Ave South, Esto, FL 32425

The data reflected in these proceedings constitute an extrapolation of information elicited from notes, observations, recording tapes, photographs, and/or videotape. Comments reflected herein are sometimes paraphrased, condensed, and/or have been edited to reflect essential subject matter addressed during the meeting. Parties interested in receiving a verbatim account of the proceedings are responsible for coordinating with the Esto Town Clerk and providing their own representative and equipment pursuant to Chapters 119 and 283, Florida Statutes.

Town Council Members in Attendance

Seat 1 - Krystal Bien (KB)
Seat 2 - Greg Wells (GW), Council President
Seat 4 - Maxie Yates (MY)
Seat 5 - Teresa Harrison (TH), Council Vice President

Town Council Members Absent

Others Present

Ben Tew (BT), Town Clerk
Billy Martin (BM), Public Works Director

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

BT- Opening prayer, Pledge of Allegiance, and called meeting to order at 7:01 PM CT.

Swearing in of New Council Members

Town Clerk BT conducted the swearing-in ceremony for newly elected council member, Krystal Bien. KB took the Oath of Office and signed the official document, which was notarized by the clerk.

Consent Agenda

- Motion to Approve: The minutes of the following meetings were approved:
 - December 17, 2024, Town Council Meeting
- KB motioned for approval of consent agenda including final agenda, previous meeting minutes, and bills to be paid. GW seconded. All in Favor -- Motion Carried.

Election of Council President & Vice President

- Nominations were opened for Council President.
 - KB nominated TH for Council President, GW seconded
 - MY nominated GW for Council President, GW Seconded
- BT called for a roll call vote for Council President.
 - KB & TH voted for TH. MY & GW voted for GW.

- A second roll call vote was called.
 - KB, TH, MY, and GW voted for GW. Greg Wells was elected 2025 Council President.
- Nominations were opened for Council Vice President.
 - GW nominated TH for Council Vice President, KB seconded
- With no other nominations TH was declared as 2025 Council Vice President.
- BT transferred chairing duties for the meeting over to GW the new Council President.

Public Comment

- No members of the public wished to address the council.

Resolutions & Ordinances

- **Ordinance 2025-01 - Tobacco Free Outdoors**
The council had planned to have the second reading of Ordinance 2025-01, which prohibits smoking and vaping in public parks, at the regularly scheduled January 21, 2025 meeting, but as that had been postponed the town attorney advised the town should readvertise Ordinance 2025-01, and have the second reading at the February 18, 2025 meeting.
- **Ordinance 2024-01 - West Florida Electric Cooperative Franchise Agreement**
The town did not discuss Ordinance 2024-01, West Florida Electric Cooperative Franchise Agreement, due to the WFEC attorney and representative not being at the meeting and the Esto town attorney not being able to attend either..

Fire Department Report

- Fire Chief Cliff Kimble was not present at the meeting to present the December Fire Department Report.
- **Approve Door Repair Expenditure** The fire station's roll-up door required replacement. The initial approved expenditure was \$930, but full payment of \$1,860 was requested. The full payment had been approved on an emergency basis by TH. KB moved to approve full payment of \$1,860. MY seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Town Clerk's Report

- **Financial and Town Billings Report**
Town Clerk BT presented the financial report, noting the major bills paid and remaining fund balances. The financial report was discussed in detail, and no action was required.
- **1st Quarter Budget Report**
The council reviewed budget status after the first quarter of FY 2024-2025.
Revenue received: 30% of projections
Expenditures: 23% of projections.
- **Backflow Valve Tests / Business Tax Receipts Update**
The council reviewed compliance updates on business tax receipts and backflow valve testing..

- **Capital Improvement Plan Program**

Discussion was held on the need for a town survey to identify community priorities. The council agreed to print a survey link on water bills.

- **Grant Updates**

BT gave the council updates on several grants the town is working on:

- Small County Outreach Program Municipalities (MSCOP) - KB moved to approve application to get 1st Avenue North repaved. MY seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- Resilient Florida Grant / Master Stormwater Plan – Update on grant activity.
- Hurricane Michael Recovery – Town will receive final reimbursement of \$3,097.25.
- FDAC Local Government Water and Wastewater Treatment Facility Energy Efficiency Program - KB made a motion authorizing the grant application. TH seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Works Report

- Public Works Director Billy Martin provided updates on:
- **Leaking Tank Water Line** - Davis Plumbing was planned to come out and replace the line, but the winter weather event prevented that.
- **Leaking water lines at the Hwy 79 & Hwy 2 intersection** - The town's water system has two leaks in the lines around the Hwy 79 - Hwy 2 Intersection.
- **Water Line along John Clark Road** - The County is widening, replacing the bridge and repaving John Clark Road. The town's water line along that stretch of road is not up to standard and when the road is repaved the town's water line will be underneath the newly paved road if a maintenance issue occurs.
- **Water Tank Cleaning & Inspection** - The town is required by FDEP every 5 years to get our water tanks cleaned and inspected. The last tank cleaning and inspection was in 2020. The town clerk contacted 2 firms and got quotes. The council discussed the need to prepare for this expense and maintenance. The issues was tabled until the expected money from the Hurricane Michael recovery is deposited.
- **New Vehicle & Disposal of Older Vehicles** - The town received a donated 2015 Ford Explorer from the Holmes County Sheriff's Office. The council discussed getting a tow hitch and safety flashers for the new vehicle and if whether the towns older vehicles need to be disposed of. The town clerk was directed to send a formal thank you letter to the Holmes County Sheriff and get a quote for the addons for the new Ford Explorer.
- **Other Discussion** – The Public Works Director and Council also discussed the issue of properties in town not being kept in line with the town's code/nuisance ordinance. Some properties have excessive trash, health and sanitation issues, a creating damage to the town's roads, or burning debris.

Park Department

- **Farmers Market** - Town Clerk, BT discussed progress on setting up a farmers market starting in March or April.

Two-Toed Tom Festival

- **Two-Toed Tom Festival Planning Meeting**

2024 Festival organizer, Ben Tew gave the council an update on planning for 2025 Two-Toed Tom Festival after the first planning meeting on Sunday, January 26, 2025. BT requested permission to hold a second planning meeting at the John Clark Park Community Center on Sunday, February 23, 2025. The Council approved the request.

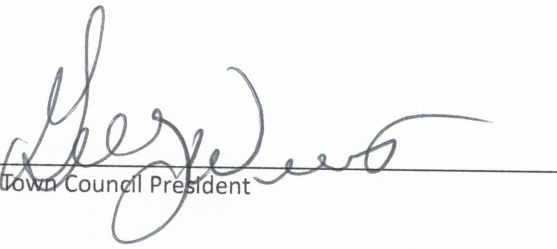
Council Member Items

- **Seat 1 - Council Member Krystal Bien** - none
- **Seat 2 - Council Member Greg Wells** - none
- **Seat 4 - Council Member Maxie Yates** - none
- **Seat 5 - Council Member Teresa Harrison** - none

Adjourn

GW adjourned the meeting at 8:40 PM CT.

Meeting minutes typed and prepared by Ben Tew, Town Clerk.



Esto Town Council President