



# Meeting Minutes

*Tuesday, May 20, 2025, 7:00 PM CT*

*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 3 - Heather Huckaby (HH)  
Seat 5 - Teresa Harrison (TH), Council Vice President

## **Town Council Members Absent**

Seat 4 - Maxie Yates (MY)

## **Others Present**

Ben Tew (BT), Town Clerk  
Billy Martin (BM), Public Works Director *\*attended via phone*  
Cliff Kimble (CK), EVFD Fire Chief  
Michelle Blankenship (MB), Town Attorney

## **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

TH - Opening prayer

GW - Pledge of Allegiance, and called meeting to order at 7:02 PM CT.

## **Consent Agenda**

- KB motioned to approve the consent agenda, including the final agenda, April 15, 2025 Town Council Meeting Minutes, and bills to be paid. TH seconded. All in Favor – Motion Carried.

## **Public Comment**

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

## **Resolutions & Ordinances**

- **Ordinance 2025-03 – Public Property Damage Ordinance (Second Reading)**  
BT presented the ordinance for final adoption. TH motioned to approve. KB seconded. All in Favor – Motion Carried.

- **Ordinance 2025-04 – Business Tax Ordinance Update (Second Reading)**

BT presented the ordinance for final adoption. TH motioned to approve. KB seconded. All in Favor – Motion Carried.

## **Special Agenda Items**

- **Tornado Impact and Community Response Discussion**

BT and BM provided updates on the May 10 tornado that struck the town. The council discussed response efforts, including generator failure at the water plant. BM reported a repair quote of \$1,100 for the generator.

KB motioned to withdraw \$8,000 from the town's Certificate of Deposit at People's Bank of Graceville for repairs and expenses, with the remainder reinvested. TH seconded. All in Favor – Motion Carried.

- **Lawsuit Regarding Former Town Alleyway**

MB and the Council discussed the private lawsuit filed by April Cartwright Gray regarding a previously abandoned alleyway. The Town is not named as a defendant, though the council is referenced in the suit. GW expressed concerns about the validity of the 2020 alleyway transfer. The Summers family, present at the meeting, asked for guidance. KB shared personal experience.

## **Fire Department Report**

- Fire Chief CK presented the April activity report: Motor Vehicle Accidents–6, Brush Fires–1, Structure Fires–1, Medical Calls–3, Vehicle Fires–1, Hazmat–1.
- 3,400 gallons of town water were used.
- EVFD incurred a \$2,277.36 repair expense for the Tanker and Attack trucks. KB motioned to approve. TH seconded. All in Favor – Motion Carried.
- CK also discussed the failing Fire Department office air conditioner. Council had no objection to pursuing a more affordable window unit solution.

## **Town Clerk's Report**

- **Financial and Town Billings Report**

BT reported \$10,061 in checks signed for May. Major outstanding bills included \$11,945 (FMIT Insurance) and \$11,818 (audits). State payments of \$9,421 and WFEC payment of \$1,788 received.

Water billing update: 18 delinquent accounts totaling \$1,074. Final notices delivered May 19; disconnections scheduled May 20.

- **Grants Update**

BT announced the Town submitted a \$949,692 CDBG Neighborhood Revitalization grant application on May 15. The project includes water plant improvements, water line replacements, and park improvements if funds allow. The application is under review by the Florida Department of Commerce.



- **Capital Improvement Plan**

BT reviewed categories and goals for a future Capital Improvement Plan, including water system upgrades, public safety, civic infrastructure, and recreation.

## **Public Works Report**

BM presented a quote of \$1,500 from Palmer Electric to repair the leaking water tank line, which has disabled the SCADA system. An additional \$1,500 quote was provided for SCADA system restoration.

KB motioned to approve both expenses from the previously authorized CD withdrawal. HH seconded. All in Favor – Motion Carried.

## **Two-Toed Tom Festival Update**

- BT provided updates on the September 13 event.

## **Council Member Items**

- **Seat 1 - Council Member Krystal Bien**

KB motioned that the town begin saving 5% of General Fund and Water Works revenues monthly for emergency use. TH seconded. All in Favor – Motion Carried.

- **Seat 2 - Council Member Greg Wells**

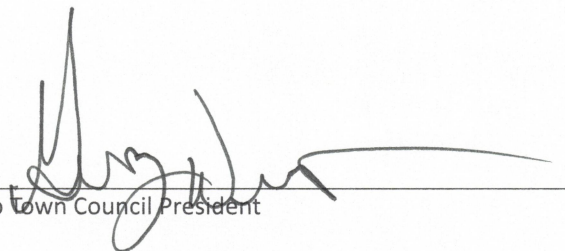
GW had planned to discuss withdrawing funds from the town's CD, but the discussion was held earlier in the meeting.

- **Seat 3 - Council Member Heather Huckaby** - none
- **Seat 5 - Council Member Teresa Harrison** - none

## **Adjourn**

GW adjourned the meeting at 8:12 PM CT.

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



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Esto Town Council President