



Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 6:00 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 2 - Greg Wells (GW)
Seat 4 - Joshua Davenport (JD)
Seat 5 - Donna Davis (DD)

Town Council Members Absent

Seat 1 - Vacant
Seat 3 - Vacant

Others Present

Ben Tew (BT), Town Clerk
Billy Martin (BM), Public Works Director
Cliff Kimble (CK), Fire Chief
Michelle Blankenship (MB), Town Attorney

Jack Davis, Jesus in the Park
David Towery, New Smyrna Assembly of God
Nate Nolin, Attorney
April Gray, Esto Resident

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was given by Pastor Kelly Windham of the Esto Church of Christ, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Council President Greg Wells called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM CT.

Consent Agenda

JD motioned to approve the consent agenda, including approval of the agenda, the January 20, 2026 Town Council Meeting Minutes, and bills to be paid. DD seconded. All in Favor — Motion Carried.

Public Comment

- Jack Davis addressed the Council on behalf of the Jesus in the Park organization, which meets at John Clark Park each Sunday. Mr. Davis shared that the group is planning a large worship event with food trucks on Saturday, March 21, 2026, and inquired whether the restrooms on the south side of the park would be repaired by that date. GW stated that the Town is awaiting work from Walton Construction and encouraged Mr. Davis to contact Holmes County Commissioner Earl Stafford, who heads the company. The Council expressed no objection to the event being held.

- David Towery, Youth Outreach Minister for New Smyrna Assembly of God Church, addressed the Council regarding a proposed youth fishing tournament to be held at John Clark Park on April 25, 2026. Mr. Towery stated that the church would provide fishing poles and supplies, stock the pond, remove lily pads quarterly, and conduct a park cleanup prior to the event. He further expressed interest in adopting the pond for long-term youth fishing use and holding the tournament annually. Mr. Towery requested the Town's support and assistance with advertising the event. The Council expressed strong support for the proposal.

Ordinances & Resolutions

- **Ordinance 2026-01 – Unopened Rights-of-Way Abandonment** – The Council considered Ordinance 2026-01 regarding the abandonment of certain platted but unopened streets and alleys associated with the Sherrer and Summers properties. Attorney Nate Nolin and resident April Gray advised the Council that the legal description contained an error originating from the original survey. Town Attorney MB concurred. It was further noted that concerns existed regarding the proposed abandonment of the north-south alley between John Clark Road and 1st Avenue North.

MB advised that addressing these issues would require the ordinance to be revised and presented again for first reading. JD motioned to table Ordinance 2026-01 until the legal description and related concerns could be clarified. DD seconded. All in Favor — Motion Carried.

- **Ordinance 2026-02 – Rescinding Local Planning Authority (Second Reading)** – The Council considered Ordinance 2026-02, rescinding the Town's designation of itself as the Local Planning Agency and returning those responsibilities to Holmes County. JD motioned to adopt Ordinance 2026-02 on second reading. DD seconded. All in Favor — Motion Carried. Ordinance 2026-02 was adopted.

MB recommended that the Town consider entering into an interlocal agreement with Holmes County to clearly define planning duties and responsibilities.

- **Resolution 2026-03 — Approval of MSCOP Application** – The Council considered Resolution 2026-03 authorizing submission of a Municipal Small County Outreach Program (MSCOP) application for improvements to 1st Avenue North. DD motioned to adopt Resolution 2026-03. JD seconded. All in Favor — Motion Carried.

Other Agenda Items

- **CDBG Procurement Re-Vote** – The Council reviewed updated RFQ evaluation materials prepared by SERCAP to address Florida Commerce procurement documentation requirements. Following review, JD motioned to re-award Andy Easton & Associates as Grant Administrator, contingent upon Florida Commerce approval. DD seconded. All in Favor — Motion Carried.

DD then motioned to re-award Alday-Howell Engineering, Inc. as Grant Engineer, contingent upon Florida Commerce approval. JD seconded. All in Favor — Motion Carried.

- **CDBG Engineer's Contract** – Following the re-vote, JD motioned to approve execution of the CDBG Engineering Agreement with Alday-Howell Engineering, Inc., contingent upon Florida Commerce procurement approval. DD seconded. All in Favor — Motion Carried.
- **RFQ 2026-004 — Bookkeeping & Accounting Services** – The Council reviewed proposals submitted in response to RFQ 2026-004. After discussion regarding cost and budget feasibility, DD motioned to reject all proposals as not financially feasible. JD seconded. All in Favor — Motion Carried.
- **RFQ 2026-001 — Continuing Engineering Services** – The Council reviewed the proposed Continuing Engineering Services Agreement with Alday-Howell Engineering, Inc. JD motioned to approve the agreement and authorize execution. DD seconded. All in Favor — Motion Carried.
- **March 2026 Meeting — Clerk Scheduling Conflict** – The Council discussed a scheduling conflict due to the Town Clerk's duties as Noma Town Clerk during a potential municipal election. JD motioned to reschedule the March Town Council Meeting from Tuesday, March 17, 2026 at 6:00 PM to Wednesday, March 18, 2026 at 6:00 PM. DD seconded. All in Favor — Motion Carried.

Fire Department Report

- Fire Chief Cliff Kimble presented activity reports for December and January.
- CK reported that the department is undergoing its ISO inspection and anticipates positive results. He also reported that the department plans to apply for an Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) for a new tanker truck.

Public Works Report

- Public Works Director Billy Martin reported on a cold asphalt patch product demonstration and recommended purchasing a pallet at an approximate cost of \$850. DD motioned to approve the purchase. JD seconded. All in Favor — Motion Carried.
- BM also reported on needed tractor repairs estimated at up to \$1,500 including delivery. JD motioned to approve the expenditure. DD seconded. All in Favor — Motion Carried.
- BM further reported that the Town's Gravely lawn mower requires repair at an estimated cost of up to \$1,800. JD motioned to approve the expenditure. DD seconded. All in Favor — Motion Carried.
- BM expressed concerns regarding communication on grant planning. BM also spoke about recent water system repairs, including a broken valve at the Noma Road well affecting use of the storage tank.

Town Clerk's Report

- **Financial Report** – The Town Clerk Ben Tew reported that \$11,025 in checks were being paid in February. No outstanding bills were reported. Account balances and major expenditures were reviewed.

- **Utility Billing Report** – Water sales totaled \$8,553 in January and \$7,593 through February 17. Six accounts were at the level for disconnection. 24 active accounts had outstanding balances totaling \$2,224.

Parks Department

- The Council discussed the disposition of unused community garden beds. DD motioned to authorize sale of the beds at \$30 per metal bed and \$40 per wooden bed, contingent upon confirmation of any health department requirements. JD seconded. All in Favor — Motion Carried.

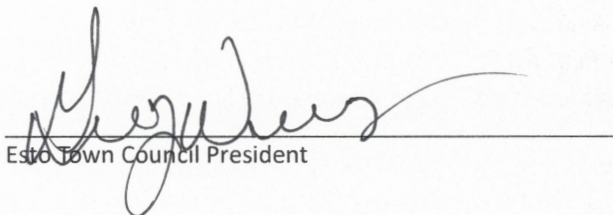
Council Member Items

- **Seat 1 - Vacant** - No items.
- **Seat 2 - Council Member Greg Wells** - GW stated that he did not want friction between the Public Works Department and the Town Clerk and emphasized that concerns should be brought to Council members.
- **Seat 3 - Vacant** - No items.
- **Seat 4 - Council Member Joshua Davenport** - JD requested an adjustment to a water bill following a pipe break. The Council directed the Clerk to apply an adjustment consistent with existing policy and ensure written water policies reflect the annual exemption.
- **Seat 5 - Council Member Donna Davis** - No items.

Adjourn

GW adjourned the meeting at 7:28 PM CT.

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



Este Town Council President