

# Bus: There are specific safety rules to follow to keep students safe

Continued from page 2A

to be given these seats if a bus does not have seat belts in every seat. The law exempts the state, counties, school districts and bus operators from liability if a passenger refuses to wear their safety belt or if the safety belt is not put on correctly.

## What are the penalties for school bus violations?

Florida law charges a minimum fine of \$100 for failure to stop for a school bus and the maximum penalty is loss of your license for up to two years as well as larger fines. Wireless device use near a school bus is also prohibited and has

a base fine of \$60. This is a state that uses points, so both of these offenses will assess points against the license of anyone who disobeys these important laws.

## Do school bus drivers have to have a CDL in Florida?

School bus drivers in Florida will need a school bus endorsement to drive students as part of their job. Any bus that is designed to carry 16 or more passengers including the driver requires that a driver have an active CDL (Commercial Drivers License) in good standing as well as the "P" endorsement for passengers. School bus drivers

also have to have an "S" endorsement to be able to be hired to drive children to and from school.

## How far must you live from school in Florida to get a bus?

By law in Florida, school buses must be provided for students who live two or more miles from the school. The law is different in some cases for children who are in special needs programs like the Exceptional Education program. These students will have different bus-related and transportation requirements in place to ensure that their unique needs are met when they are being taken to school. Students who live

two or more miles from school may be picked up at a common drop-off and pick-up location as buses cannot always traverse rural roads in safety.

## Do Florida school bus drivers have to stop at railroad crossings?

Florida school bus drivers must stop no less than 15 feet from any railroad crossing that they encounter whether they have students on board or not. They will need to look both ways and open the doors to listen at the crossing before it is considered safe to continue driving. The driver shall not shift gear while traversing the tracks. This law is to prevent the injury or death of school bus drivers and children due to malfunctioning train track crossings and other safety issues related to train tracks.

## What is the 5-and-5 rule?

This rule helps remind children about bus safety in Florida. You should always remember to stay five

giant steps away from the street when waiting for the bus and you should take five giant steps toward the sidewalk when exiting the bus. This small reminder can help kids to stay back away from the bus tires and the street while waiting for the bus and while exiting the bus.

Children often do not realize that they are not visible to the bus driver or other traffic when they stand too close to the bus. This rule can help them to remember to stay where they are visible to traffic and the bus driver.

## What is the most dangerous area around a school bus?

The most dangerous area around a school bus is the 10 feet in front of the bus and the 10 feet behind the bus.

The area in front of the front bumper and the right wheel is the most dangerous location as children cannot be seen by the driver of the bus in most cases

and are not visible to traffic in this location either. At all times, children should stay away from the wheels of the bus and should not stand too close to it to avoid being obscured by the bus from other traffic and from the line of sight of the bus driver.

## Are bus drivers in Florida allowed to discipline kids?

School bus drivers are instructed to discuss with children the responsibilities of riding the school bus. They are allowed to pull the bus over and to talk with children who are being fractious or breaking the school bus safety rules. School bus drivers are trained to front-load expectations, lay out the expectations that they are seeking in a contract and to foster relationships with their student passengers that will create trust. Positive reinforcement and positive interactions are key to happy students when riding the bus.

## PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE ANNEXATION CITY OF APOPKA

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Florida Statutes 171.044, the Apopka Code of Ordinances, Part III, Land Development Code, Article II, Section 2.5.1.A, that **JONATHAN HUELS** has made an application to the City of Apopka City Council for an **ANNEXATION** of a property located east of Ocoee Apopka Road, north of Keene Road, specifically, 2309 Ocoee Apopka Road, approximately 5.7 +/- acres. This application relates to the following described property:

### ORDINANCE NO. 2944

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF APOPKA, FLORIDA, TO EXTEND ITS TERRITORIAL AND MUNICIPAL LIMITS TO ANNEX PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTE 171.044 THE HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED LANDS SITUATED AND BEING IN ORANGE COUNTY, FLORIDA, OWNED BY RONNIE B. AND WANDA R. PHILLIPS; LOCATED EAST OF OCOEE APOPKA ROAD AND NORTH OF KEENE ROAD, SPECIFICALLY, 2309 OCOEE APOPKA ROAD; PROVIDING FOR DIRECTIONS TO THE CITY CLERK, SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**



Parcel Identification Number: 20-21-28-0000-00-028  
Contains: 5.7 +/- acres

NOTICE is given that public hearings for Ordinance No. 2944 will be held by the City of Apopka City Council at its regularly scheduled meetings in the City Council Chambers of the Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida on **Wednesday, July 6, 2022 beginning at 1:30 p.m.**, and on **Wednesday, July 27, 2022 beginning at 7:00 p.m.** or as soon thereafter as possible.

Affected parties and the public may appear at the above listed hearings to speak. The proposed Annexation can be inspected at the Apopka Community Development Department located at Apopka City Hall on weekdays between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. City Hall address shown below. Please be advised that, under State law, if you decide to appeal a decision made with respect to this matter, you will need a record of the proceedings and may need to ensure that a verbatim record is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), persons with disabilities needing assistance to participate in any of these proceedings should contact the City Clerk's Office at 120 East Main Street, Apopka FL 32703, telephone 407-703-1704, no less than 48 hours prior to the proceeding. Apopka Planning Commission Community Development Department

June 17, 2022

Publish: The Apopka Chief

171483

## Byrd: Two finalists are in the running

Continued from page 2A

viewing those responses, the board unanimously selected two finalists to move forward: Dr. Maria Vazquez and Dr. Peter Licata.

Both of these candidates showed vast knowledge in leadership positions and are highly qualified to lead our large district. The public is able to view the applications, written answers, and video responses from both these candidates on [ocps.net](http://ocps.net) by clicking on the Superintendent Search tab.

Next week, both candidates will be interviewed

by the school board during a public meeting on Tuesday, June 21. Dr. Vazquez will be interviewed at 1 p.m. and Dr. Licata will be interviewed at 3 p.m. The interviews will be broadcast on the district's YouTube channel for the public to view.

Later that evening, we will host a community meet-and-greet held at the school board building downtown for the public to come and casually meet and chat with both candidates.

The next day on June 22, each school board member will have private

meetings with both candidates to ask more follow-up questions and get to know the candidates better.

The following week on June 28 the new superintendent of Orange County Public Schools will be selected by the school board at our regularly scheduled meeting at 4:45 p.m.

It is an exciting time and I can personally tell you that I am excited by both of these fantastic finalists who have been selected. I encourage you to explore the Superintendent Search section of the district website and tune into the interviews next week.

## Hayden: Not happy here? Leave!

Continued from page 2A

Are there terrible people in the world?

Yes, there are, but that does not give us the right to divide a nation into separate groups.

In the 1960s, it was called segregation and it was wrong then and so it is now. I live in a multi-cultural, multi-racial neighborhood and I love it! We take care of each other, our kids play outside together, we share our good fortunes with each other, our different holidays are enjoyed together, and, most of all, we love one another. Why?

Because we are neighbors! We *choose* to live here, not merely exist, but to live! Two key words here: choose and together!

Come on, Americans, make up your mind. Are you going to be the solution, or the problem? Just like my neighborhood, it is your choice. If the freedom of being American, in a democratic republic form of government bound by our Constitution does not appeal to you, then take your sorry behinds and move to one of the socialist, communist countries that everyone else is leaving to come here.

As a matter of fact, we could just swap those seeking this nation's blessings for those seeking to destroy this nation and for what we Americans stand.

If you are not willing to share the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. or that of President Abraham Lincoln, of a nation that, having differing cultures, races, creeds, but bound by love for one another by the name of Americans, then you have the freedom of leaving.

By going, you will become a part of those who have touched our lives – for the better!

**Everybody has an opinion. Why not share yours?**

**Send a letter to the Editor online [www.theapokkachief.com](http://www.theapokkachief.com)**

## ALL ABOUT APOPKA

### The Apopka Chief

Established 1923  
(USPS 545-440)

The Apopka Chief is published every Friday and entered as Periodicals, postage paid at Apopka Post Office, under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879. The Apopka Chief newspaper is published by Foliage Enterprises, Inc., every Friday at 400 North Park Avenue, Apopka, Fla., 32712-3417. An annual subscription is \$25 in Orange County and \$30 outside Orange County. Phone 407-886-2777. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Apopka Chief, P.O. Box 880, Apopka, Fla., 32704-0880.

The Apopka Chief is a consistent award-winning community weekly newspaper and a member of the Florida Press Association. The newspaper won the group's award as its best newspaper in 1982, 1987, and 1988, the only three-time winner. Letters to the editor are welcome, but must be signed and include a daytime telephone number, address, or email address for verification. Management reserves the right to edit letters.

[www.theapokkachief.com](http://www.theapokkachief.com), [news@theapokkachief.com](mailto:news@theapokkachief.com)



### City of Apopka Telephone Numbers

City Hall	407-703-1700
Mayor's Office	407-703-1701
City Administrator	407-703-1649
City Clerk	407-703-1704
Community Devel.	407-703-1712
Code Enforcement	407-703-1738
Finance Dept.	407-703-1725
Fire (non-emerg.)	407-703-1756
Parks and Rec. Dept.	407-703-1741
Police Chief	407-703-1769
Police (non-emerg.)	407-703-1771
Job Line	407-703-1743
Solid Waste Collect.	407-703-1731
Street Maintenance	407-703-1731
Utility Billing	407-703-1727
Medical, fire emergency	911

The city of Apopka was chartered in 1882. It is located at 28°30 north latitude and is 150 feet above sea level. Its population is about 48,000 and its total area is more than 30 sq. mi. [www.apopka.net](http://www.apopka.net)

### Orange County Telephone Numbers

Animal Services	407-836-3111
Auto/Boat Tags	850-617-2000
Building Dept.	407-836-8550
County Mayor	407-836-7370
County Commission	407-836-7350
County Attorney	407-836-7320
Clerk of the Court	407-836-2065
Elections Supervisor	407-836-2070
Fire/Rescue	407-836-3111
Solid Waste	407-836-6601
Garbage Collection	407-703-1731
Health Dept.	407-836-2600
Hunting/Fishing Lic	888-347-4356
Parks and Rec. Dept.	407-836-6200
Property Appraiser	407-836-5044
Sheriff Administrative	407-254-7000
Non-Emerg. Complaint	407-836-4357
Utilities	407-836-5515
All other departments	407-836-3111
Medical, fire emergency	911

[www.orangecountyfl.net](http://www.orangecountyfl.net)

### Other Area Numbers of Note

<b>U.S. Senators</b>	
Rick Scott (Rep.)	202-224-5274
Marco Rubio (Rep.)	407-254-2573
<b>U.S. Representative</b>	
Val Demings (Dist. 10)	321-388-9808
<b>State Representatives</b>	
	352-742-6275
Kamia Brown (Dist. 45)	850-717-5045
<b>State Senators</b>	
Randolph Bracy (Dist. 11)	407-297-2045
<b>Orange County Commissioner</b>	
Christine Moore	407-836-7350
<b>Orange County Public Schools</b>	
Pupil assignment	407-317-3233
Bus routes	407-317-3800
Superintendent	407-317-3200
School Board	407-317-3200
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	
The Apopka Chief	407-886-2777
Museum of the Apopkans	407-703-1707
Chamber of Commerce	407-886-1441

# City: This week's vote was second denial, so lawsuit likely coming

Continued from page 1A

ment, a 195-unit apartment complex covering 12.82 acres on the southeast corner of East Sixth Street and South Alabama Avenue.

Mayor Bryan Nelson, Commissioner Nick Nesta, and Commissioner Doug Bankson voted for the denial. Commissioner Alexander H. Smith and Commissioner Diane Velazquez voted to approve the time limit request.

Two-thirds of the City Council — or four affirmative votes — were required to approve Southwick Commons' request for the time limit waiver if the applicant had met one of the criteria as outlined in Section 2.4.12.D.1.b of the city's land development code.

"We are not here to re-litigate any substantive matters regarding their application," said city attorney Michael Rodriguez. "The only matter to be presented and decided upon here tonight is whether or not the applicant meets one of the four criteria to be re-heard."

Rodriguez said Southwick Commons has met the criteria set forth in the first criteria, which is that there's been a change in the relevant facts; in the second criteria, that there's additional information that might reasonably affect the decision-making of this body; and in the fourth criteria, that the final deci-

sion on the application was based on a material mistake of fact.

Since the May 4 meeting, when the City Council also voted 3-2 to deny Southwick Commons, Rebecca Wilson, the developer's attorney, had given Rodriguez two state statutes that she said should have been considered.

One was Statute 760.26, which makes it unlawful to discriminate in land use decisions or in permitting of development based on race, color, national origin, sex disability, familial status, religion or except as otherwise provided by law, the source of financing of a development or proposed development.

The second statute was Section 712.065, which requires the extinguishment of discriminatory restrictions. Letters were also provided to Rodriguez briefing him on the legal opinion on those matters.

"If we're not given the opportunity to bring this back to the council, then our next step has to be filing a lawsuit based on these statutes that we believe support our position," said Wilson, attorney for Southwick Commons.

The City Council voted the way it did on May 4 not because it's against affordable housing, but because a development agreement was already in place for the City Center, said Commissioner Doug Bankson.

"We can't have the bully factor come in that, you know, we have the right to go this way, regardless of what you've already agreed with others," Bankson said. "We are very open to the product that is produced. And if we were doing this (denying affordable housing) across the board in this city, I'd throw a fit because we do need that workforce housing and those different things. The problem is we've already made an agreement with the public about this and the standard there. The expectation is just, I didn't see it being met in the argument. So that was my criteria. Not based upon these other particular issues, though they were discussed."

On May 4, the City Council voted 3-2 to deny the request to change the development agreement regarding the development of a 195-unit apartment complex on grounds that the place goes against the original intention in the development agreement with Taurus Southern, the developer of the City Center, which had bought the nearly 13-acre parcel from the city and then sold it to Southwick.

On May 4, Southwick Commons LTD requested two amendments to the development agreement:

One was as follows: "Item #9 shall remain in full force and effect as to the amenities, which constitute 'luxury or upscale

rental or condominium dwellings' except that it is acknowledged that at least 36 units of the 195 units or 18 percent of the units must have balconies or porches. In addition, the amenities will include: community gathering area/club room; computer room/library area; gym/exercise room; leasing office; gazebo/grill area; community garden; pool; storage units inside available for lease to tenants and bicycle storage."

The second requested amendment was that the words non-subsidized and market rent be struck from one area of the document.

The city staff disagreed with this request because, "The non-subsidized, market rent requirement reflects the original DA (development agreement) approval to assure luxury or upscale rental or ownership development," according to comments in the May 4 City Council meeting agenda packet.

On July 22, 2016, the city of Apopka entered into a development agreement with Taurus Apopka City Center, LLC, to build the Apopka City Center, located at the State Road 436 and U.S. Highway 441 interchange.

On July 15, 2020, the City Council approved an amended and restated development agreement and sales and purchase agreement that included various

changes to update the Master Plan. No major changes were completed that dealt with the apartment site at that time.

Taurus Apopka City Center completed the purchase of the Southwick Commons designated site from the city of Apopka for \$1,915,500 on November 1, 2021, and afterward resold it to the Southwick Commons LTD for \$3,250,000, on November 2, 2021.

According to a letter from Orange County Mayor Jerry L. Demings, Wendover Housing Partners began the process to develop workforce housing southeast of Alabama Avenue/East Sixth Avenue before pursuing county funding. The Southwick Commons project was one of four selected applicants from a request for proposal issued through the county's Procurement Division on June 17, 2021.

Wendover received \$8.6 million in state funding for Southwick Commons and was informed of this by Florida Housing Finance Corporation on June 23, 2021.

According to Demings' letter, Wendover Housing Partners indicated to county staff that they met with the city of Apopka staff in May 2021 to discuss Southwick Commons.

On September 14, 2021, Orange County com-

missioners voted unanimously to allocate \$13.18 million toward 525 affordable homes for development by 2023 in four Orange County locations, including \$2 million going toward the \$52.8 million Southwick Commons project, according to documents accompanying the Orange County Board of County Commissioners' September 14 meeting agenda.

"The development is 100 percent affordable and 18 percent of the units (35 units) will be set aside for very low-income households," according to the September 14 meeting agenda documents.

The \$13.18 million is the first allocation from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Program, which was established by Demings's Housing for All Task Force.

The Housing for All Action Plan proposes to build 30,300 housing units in 10 years, which equals 35 percent of the total housing units of 86,100 projected for development within the same timeframe.

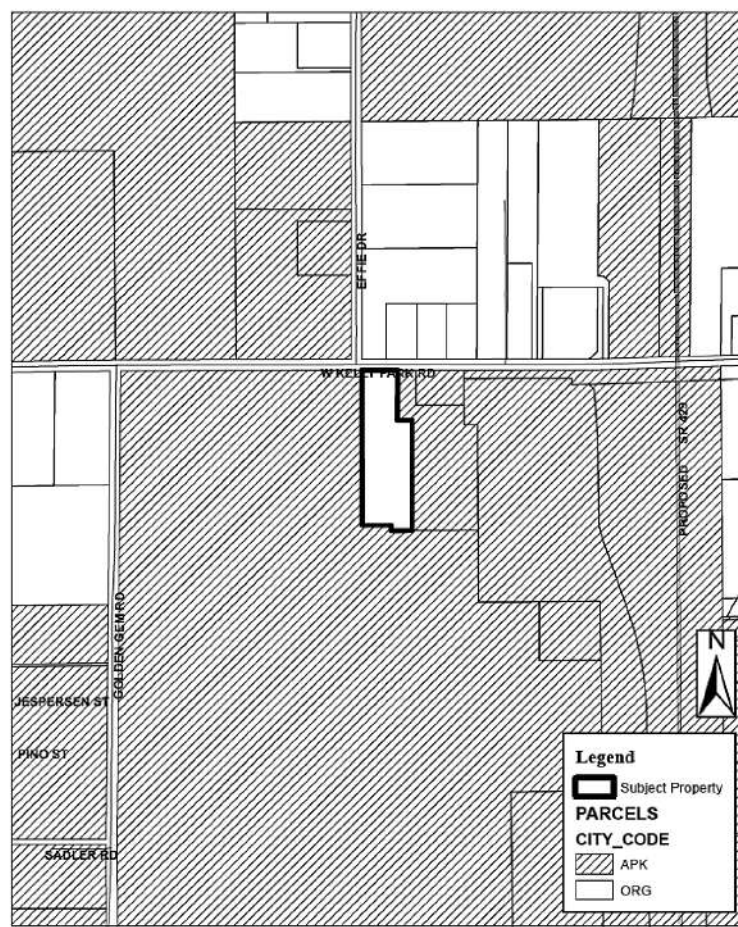
Before the Orange County award was given, the city of Apopka filled out paperwork from Wendover pertaining to availability of utilities, number of units that could be built, and transportation system and use. This paperwork was necessary to request bank funding for development.

## PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE ANNEXATION CITY OF APOPKA

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Florida Statutes 171.044, the Apopka Code of Ordinances, Part III, Land Development Code, Article II, Section 2.5.1.A, that **AMERICAN CIVIL ENGINEERING COMPANY C/O JOHN HERBERT** has made an application to the City of Apopka City Council for an **ANNEXATION** of a property located on the southwest corner of Kelly Park Road and SR 429, specifically 3612 West Kelly Park Road, approximately 4.98 +/- acres. This application relates to the following described property:

### ORDINANCE NO. 2947

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF APOPKA, FLORIDA, TO EXTEND ITS TERRITORIAL AND MUNICIPAL LIMITS TO ANNEX PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTE 171.044 THE HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED LANDS SITUATED AND BEING IN ORANGE COUNTY, FLORIDA, OWNED BY KELLY PARK STORAGE, LLC; LOCATED ON THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF KELLY PARK ROAD AND SR 429; SPECIFICALLY, 3612 WEST KELLY PARK ROAD; PROVIDING FOR DIRECTIONS TO THE CITY CLERK, SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**



Parcel Identification Number: 13-20-27-0000-00-047  
Contains: 4.98 +/- acres

NOTICE is given that public hearings for Ordinance No. 2947 will be held by the **City of Apopka City Council** at its regularly scheduled meetings in the City Council Chambers of the Apopka City Hall, 120 E. Main Street, Apopka, Florida on **Wednesday, July 6, 2022 beginning at 1:30 p.m.**, AND on **Wednesday, July 27, 2022 beginning at 7:00 p.m.** or as soon thereafter as possible.

Affected parties and the public may appear at the above listed hearings to speak. The proposed Annexation can be inspected at the Apopka Community Development Department located at Apopka City Hall on weekdays between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. City Hall address shown below. Please be advised that, under State law, if you decide to appeal a decision made with respect to this matter, you will need a record of the proceedings and may need to ensure that a verbatim record is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), persons with disabilities needing assistance to participate in any of these proceedings should contact the City Clerk's Office at 120 East Main Street, Apopka FL 32703, Telephone: 407-703-1704, no less than 48 hours prior to the proceeding.

Apopka City Council  
Apopka Planning Commission  
Community Development Department

June 17, 2022

Publish: The Apopka Chief

171484

## Trucks: Insurance will not change

Continued from page 1A

said.

### City employee insurance

The City Council voted to go along with a city evaluation committee's recommendation to reject bids for the city's group health insurance and to continue with the current provider, Public Risk Management Health Trust, a not-for-profit co-op of counties, cities, and special districts around Florida to provide various types of insurance for those governmental entities.

The four plans for employees offered by Public Risk are through Florida Blue and include the base plan PPO, a second PPO plan, an HMO plan, and a high-deductible plan.

The new plans for the 2022-2023 fiscal year that begins October 1 will increase by 13 percent, and in all plans, the employee-only portion of the insurance will cost \$65 less per month if the employee completes a health screening at the city clinic by September 30.

The base plan PPO will cost the city \$800.75 per month for the employee only, while the high-deductible plan is the cheapest at \$726.03 for the city. The employee's \$65 per month for both plans will be reduced to no cost for the employees completing the health screening on time.

On the other PPO plan, the city will pay the same \$800.75 each month for the employee only, which is 90 percent of that PPO plan, while the employees who complete the health screening will pay \$85.97 per month.

The HMO plan is the most expensive and after the city's payment of \$800.75 per month, the cost for the employee-only plan is \$117.91 per employee.

The high-deductible plan is the least expensive for the city at \$726.03 per month for the employee only with no cost to the employees who complete the health screening.

The city will pay 75 percent of the cost for the employee-plus-spouse plan, employee-plus-children plan, and the

employee-plus-family plan. The cost of those various employee-plus plans range from \$175.78 per month for employee-plus-spouse in the high-deductible plan to \$938.10 each month for employee-plus-family in the HMO plan.

Currently, the city has 282 active employees and 30 retirees on the base plan PPO, 127 employees and 24 retirees on the second PPO plan, 25 employees and one retiree on the HMO plan, and four employees and one retiree on the high-deductible plan.

### Grant for Camp Wewa

The city has received a grant of \$7,500 from Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund that will be used to purchase gear support for Camp Wewa.

The funds will be used by Camp Wewa Adventures, the city's new outdoor education program. According to city documents, Camp Wewa Adventures will focus on connecting youth ages 5-18 to outdoor activities such as archery, recreational boating, kayaking, fishing, swimming, and wildlife identification.

### Van for police

Supply-chain issues have forced the city to allot up to \$18,000 more to purchase and outfit a 2021 Ford Transit Van that will be used by the Apopka Police Department's Forensic Unit. When outfitted for the Forensic Unit, the van will cost between \$39,000 and \$43,000, Apopka Police Chief Mike McKinley said.

In December 2021, the City Council received approval to purchase the van from Mullinax Ford of Apopka. However, Mullinax Ford could not provide the vehicle, so city staff looked to find one from a Ford dealer that is under state contract. Due to availability issues from Ford, that dealer could also not provide the van.

Duval Fleet of Jacksonville has agreed to provide the APD with a 2023 model of the Ford Transit Van, but at a higher cost than for the 2021 model. The \$18,000 will cover that higher cost of the 2023 van as well as the additional funds needed to outfit the van for the Forensic Unit, McKinley said.

## Qualify: Election set for August 23

Continued from page 1A

tion for governor and other state and local races.

Early voting for the August 23 election will be held August 8-21 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. each day at the Apopka Community Center/VFW, 519 S. Central Avenue. If a runoff is needed, early voting in Apopka will be held October 24 to November 6 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., also at the Apopka Community Center.

City of Apopka residents who are not registered to vote must do so by July 25 in

order to be eligible to vote in the city election.

The qualifying fee to run for Seat 3 on the Apopka City Council is \$648, which is 4 percent of a commissioner's annual salary, \$16,200.

Qualifying for Seat 3 continues through noon today, Friday, June 17.

Bankson must resign from his city commissioner's seat in order to run for state House District 39, which includes the Apopka area and Northwest Orange County north of U.S. Highway 441, and a small portion of northwestern Seminole County.