



Town of Belleair

901 Ponce de Leon Blvd.
Belleair, FL 33756

Meeting Minutes Town Commission

Wednesday, September 4, 2024

6:00 PM

Town Hall

First Budget Hearing

Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM with Mayor Wilkinson presiding

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COMMISSIONER ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Mayor Michael Wilkinson
Deputy Mayor Tom Shelly
Commissioner Patricia Barris
Commissioner Thomas Kelly
Commissioner Todd Jennings

PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

[24-0179](#)

Life Saving Awards

Mayor Wilkinson read a narrative of events that occurred on August 15th; Mike Holmes, Ryan Womack, Scott Meyer, Mike King, Officer Joe Torch, and Detective Allison Daniels responded to a medical emergency; CPR was provided to the individual, Largo Fire Rescue responded. Mr. John Lens and his wife were both in attendance; thanked staff.

Chief Richard Doyle presented life saving awards to each of the employees for their service.

[24-0169](#)

Proclaiming September as Hunger Action Month

Mayor Wilkinson read proclamation; Melinda Perry accepted proclamation on behalf of Hope Villages of Pinellas.

Ms. Perry thanked the Commission for their support; spoke on services provided by organization, 30-60 come from the Town of Belleair.

Mayor Wilkinson announced items 24-0173 and 24-0174 were being moved to the top of the agenda prior to beginning the public hearing; no objections.

[24-0173](#)

Use of Coronavirus State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, \$2,133,637 plus Interest Earned

Amy Lockhart-Interim Finance Director-spoke on the ARPA fund; 2.1 million received; in 2022 The Commission directed staff to use funds for revenue loss, detailed how funds must be spent; fire services expenses meet qualifications to be reimbursed with ARPA funds.

Deputy Mayor Shelly moved to designate \$2,133,637 for fire service expenses as ARPA qualified expenses. Seconded by Commissioner Barris.

Aye: 5 - Mayor Wilkinson, Deputy Mayor Shelly, Commissioner Barris, Commissioner Kelly, and Commissioner Jennings

[24-0174](#)

Closing of the Enterprise Wastewater Fund and transfer balances to the General Fund

Gay Lancaster-Town Manager-stated staff recommends approval.

Ms. Lockhart spoke on history of wastewater sale; account acts as a pass-through by collecting funds for county and remitting to county; no assets or debts; recommends closing and transferring any balances to the general fund.

Deputy Mayor Shelly moved to recommend closing the enterprise wastewater fund and transferring any balances to the general fund. Seconded by Commissioner Barris.

Aye: 5 - Mayor Wilkinson, Deputy Mayor Shelly, Commissioner Barris, Commissioner Kelly, and Commissioner Jennings

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS

Persons are advised that, if they decide to appeal any decision made at this meeting/hearing, they will need a record of the proceedings, and, for such purposes, they may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

[24-0175](#)

Tentative Adoption of Millage Rate for FY 2024-2025

Jay Daigneault-Town Attorney-read resolution 2024-25 into record by title only; read millage and roll back rates; 6.977 mils which is 16.26 % greater than the roll back millage rate of 6.0019.

Mayor Wilkinson provided procedure for tonight.

Ms. Lancaster spoke on community and high level of responsive service; priority on safety; outdated infrastructure, projects needing completion; provided statistics on number of projects completed; escalating costs seeking alternative funding; spoke on grants, allocations and matches; budget is realistic, conservative, and future focused; program for replacement and repair, renewal; maintaining and improving quality of life for residents.

Ms. Lockhart stated the last change to the millage rate was in FY 2019; deficit of \$552,000, reserves can be used to fund deficit; 6.9777 Maximum Millage Preliminary rate was set in July; provided example rates.

Deb Marcellus-resident-thanked for informational mailer; appreciates transparency; spoke in support of millage, would like to see a unanimous approval.

Morgan Schmidt-resident-spoke on property values increasing; questioned amount of revenue received over last few years.

Attorney Daigneault clarified public comment.

Jay Lunt-resident-commented on current tax rate and other municipalities throughout county; questioned how other communities are able to keep the rates lower.

Mayor commented on commercial that other communities collect that we don't have.

Bob Barris-resident-spoke in support of unanimous approval; commented on area, importance of maintaining community; spoke on taxes collected; infrastructure improvements needed to keep values high.

Laurie Kowalski-resident-commented on Woodlawn; questioned when improvements will be done in that area; Mayor stated plans are available online.

Closed to public comment.

Commissioner Jennings spoke on shortages in funds; raising millage rate one option, reserves can be used, utilizing special revenue funds, reducing personnel and operating expenses or a combination there of; staff went back and sharpened pencils, and reduced the projected the general deficit; ARPA funds and wastewater transfer funds used; projects are daunting; supports issuance of bonds when rates lower; availability of state assistance for projects; outcome won't be known until next year; funds can be balanced without raising general fund millage rate; does not support.

Deputy Mayor Shelly spoke on infrastructure fund needs; currently have 2 months of reserves, best practices are 6 months; inflation has been double digit; supports increase.

Commissioner Barris spoke in support of increase; commented on items that need done; unsure of availability of state funding; reserves needed.

Commissioner Kelly thanked staff for work and patience on budget; spoke on current needs; many homes are homesteaded which lowers tax collected; importance of investing in community; supports increase.

Mayor Wilkinson spoke on prior finance director; commended interim director and finance board on work; sees both sides; residents are accustomed to a certain level of service; in favor.

Ms. Lancaster spoke on finance board comments and acknowledgements regarding the budget.

Mayor Wilkinson announced next meeting date.

Deputy Mayor Shelly moved the Town of Belleair, Florida moves for the tentative approval of Resolution 2024-25 adopting the millage rate of 6.9777 provided that 6.9777 is greater than the roll back rate of 6.0019 by 16.29 percent. The new millage is to be applied as follows: the 6.9777 increases goes to infrastructure and the general fund, general fund at 5.2500, and infrastructure at 1.7277, with a total of 6.9777. Seconded by Commissioner Barris.

Aye: 4 - Mayor Wilkinson, Deputy Mayor Shelly, Commissioner Barris, and Commissioner Kelly

Nay: 1 - Commissioner Jennings

[24-0176](#)

First Budget Hearing - Tentative Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Town Budget

Ms. Lockhart began presentation with general fund expenditures; increases to insurances, cyber security state mandate; spoke on staff levels; no changes to the

legislative, executive administration, other government services since the August 13th meeting; finance and administration saw a personnel and operating expenses decrease; Police department decreased due to personnel change; parks and streets changes; no changes to recreation since last meeting; spoke on special revenue funds; local option fuel tax changes and transportation changes; no changes to tree replacement; no changes to debt service fund, no changes to capital equipment replacement, requesting it be brought to 15% of equipment value.

Ashley Bernal-Assistant to the Town Manager-spoke on the infrastructure fund; no changes to the fund since last meeting; 58 million of projects over next few years, grants not included as not guaranteed, aggressively seeking funding.

Ms. Lockhart spoke on solid waste and water funds, no changes since the August meeting.

Ms. Lancaster spoke on procedure regarding the resolution; once tentative budget is passed, the resolution will be built around it; will come before the Commission on the 17th.

Deputy Mayor Shelly moved approval of the tentative fiscal year 2024-2025 budget. Seconded by Commissioner Barris.

Aye: 5 - Mayor Wilkinson, Deputy Mayor Shelly, Commissioner Barris, Commissioner Kelly, and Commissioner Jennings

[24-0170](#)

Second Reading of Ordinance 574: Bluff Maintenance

Attorney Daigneault read ordinance 574 into the record by title only.

Ms. Lancaster stated this is for receipt of grant funds.

Deputy Mayor Shelly moved approval of Ordinance 574 on second and final reading. Seconded by Commissioner Barris.

Aye: 5 - Mayor Wilkinson, Deputy Mayor Shelly, Commissioner Barris, Commissioner Kelly, and Commissioner Jennings

[24-0171](#)

First Reading of Ordinance 581 - Water Rates

Attorney Daigneault read Ordinance 581 into the record by title only.

Ms. Lancaster stated this implements a four tier rate system, reflects rate paid to the county.

Deputy Mayor Shelly moved approval of Ordinance 581. Seconded by Commissioner Barris.

Aye: 5 - Mayor Wilkinson, Deputy Mayor Shelly, Commissioner Barris, Commissioner Kelly, and Commissioner Jennings

[24-0172](#)

First Reading of Ordinance 582 - Solid Waste Rates

Mr. Daigneault read Ordinance 582 into the record by title only.

Ms. Lancaster stated change reflects the increase cost of operation.

Deputy Mayor Shelly moved to recommend approval of Ordinance 582 on first reading. Seconded by Commissioner Barris.

Aye: 5 - Mayor Wilkinson, Deputy Mayor Shelly, Commissioner Barris, Commissioner Kelly, and Commissioner Jennings

CITIZENS COMMENTS

(Discussion of items not on the agenda. Each speaker will be allowed to speak once for a maximum of 3 minutes.)

No comments

CONSENT AGENDA

Deputy Mayor Shelly moved approval of the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Barris.

Aye: 5 - Mayor Wilkinson, Deputy Mayor Shelly, Commissioner Barris, Commissioner Kelly, and Commissioner Jennings

[24-0178](#) Approval of August 13, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes

[24-0168](#) Approval of Pinellas County Combined Mutual Aid Agreement 2025

GENERAL AGENDA

[24-0177](#) Budget Resolution 2024-24, Budget Amendment for FY 2023-24

Mr. Daigneault read Resolution 2024-24 into the record by title only.

Ms. Lancaster stated this for adjustments to current fiscal year.

Deputy Mayor Shelly moved approval of budget Resolution 2024-24 budget amendment for FY 2023-2024. Seconded by Commissioner Barris.

Aye: 5 - Mayor Wilkinson, Deputy Mayor Shelly, Commissioner Barris, Commissioner Kelly, and Commissioner Jennings

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Lancaster spoke on lead service line inventory underway, resident assistance needed; RO plant nearing 100% plans, anticipates submission soon; PR&T board requests a resolution against active recreation in state parks for October, consensus to add; spoke on heavy rains, a tree in Gaienne Park, tree in Hunter Park is being saved; thanked for photos received of flooding in areas of town, infrastructure issue that needs addressed; looking at areas to address flooding.

TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Attorney Daigneault commented on an upcoming memo that will go out regarding quasi judicial hearings.

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Kelly had nothing to report.

Commissioner Jennings had nothing to report.

Deputy Mayor Shelly had nothing to report.

Commissioner Barris stated she was happy that the Rec will be getting a new roof.

Mayor Wilkinson attended the Mayor's council meeting; Brad Miller, PSTA; commended staff for the life saving award.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business

ADJOURNMENT

No further business; meeting adjourned in due form at 7:03 PM.

TOWN CLERK

APPROVED:

MAYOR