

**CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FLORIDA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET**

Meeting Date: July 21, 2026

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council

From: Rick J. Rudometkin, City Manager

Subject: **1st Reading:** Fire Rescue Assessment Ordinance 26-05

Background:

The Legislature has approved a proposed Constitutional Amendment ballot measure that would reduce property taxes for homestead properties for the upcoming election in November 2026. This measure would reduce property taxes based on raising the homestead exemption for homeowners. This would decrease ad-valorem revenue to the city.

The city contracts fire rescue services with Orange County and the city pays Orange County for such services using ad valorem revenue. Orange County currently charges unincorporated County residents a Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU) for fire rescue services. Orange County has expressed that it is unwilling to directly charge Belle Isle residents for a MSTU for fire rescue services performed by Orange County and requires that the city continue to pay Orange County directly for such services.

The staff along with our attorney would like the City Council to consider adopting this ordinance to give the city a legislative framework for creating a non-ad valorem fire rescue assessment should this need to be done in the future to offset ad valorem tax revenue losses. Non-ad valorem assessments are not impacted by homestead exemptions.

Keep in mind, the ordinance, by itself, does not create a non-ad valorem fire rescue assessment. There are many more steps that have to be taken in addition to adopting a fire rescue assessment ordinance, including multiple public hearings and public notices that are required.

A chart of the non-ad valorem assessment process is attached for reference. If the ordinance is adopted, the next step will involve the city retaining a consultant to prepare a fire rescue assessment study and to generate proposed assessment rates for the different types of properties within the city. The earliest that a non-ad valorem fire rescue assessment could be put in place is October 1, 2027.

Staff Recommendation:

1st Reading: Fire Rescue Assessment Ordinance 26-05

Suggested Motion:

1st Reading: ORD 26-05 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FLORIDA, RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF FIRE RESCUE SERVICES, FACILITIES, AND PROGRAMS WITHIN THE CITY; AMENDING CHAPTER 12 OF THE BELLE ISLE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES RELATING TO FIRE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION; RESERVING SECTIONS 12-2 THROUGH 12-10 OF ARTICLE I; CREATING A NEW ARTICLE II, ENTITLED “FIRE RESCUE ASSESSMENT”; PROVIDING DEFINITIONS; PROVIDING LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS; PROVIDING DETERMINATIONS OF SPECIAL BENEFIT; AUTHORIZING THE IMPOSITION, LEVY, COLLECTION, AND ENFORCEMENT OF ANNUAL FIRE RESCUE SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS WITHIN THE CITY; ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES FOR THE ADOPTION OF ASSESSMENT RESOLUTIONS AND ROLLS, FOR NOTICE, AND FOR INTERIM ASSESSMENTS; PROVIDING THAT THE ASSESSMENTS CONSTITUTE A LIEN ON ASSESSED PROPERTY; PROVIDING METHODS OF COLLECTION; AUTHORIZING EXEMPTIONS AND HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Alternatives:

Fiscal Impact: N/A at this time

Attachments:

Ordinance 26-05

Flow Chart