



CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FL
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL CALLED SESSION
Held in City Hall Chambers, 1600 Nela Avenue

Tuesday, July 29, 2025, * 6:30 pm

AGENDA

Present was:

Jason Carson, Mayor
District 1 Commissioner – Frank Vertolli
District 2 Commissioner – Holly Bobrowski
District 3 Commissioner – Karl Shuck
District 4 Commissioner – Bobby Lance
District 5 Comm – Beth Lowell (conf call)
District 6 Commissioner – Stan Smith
District 7 Comm – Jim Partin (conf call)

Absent was:

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1. Call to Order and Confirmation of Quorum

Mayor Carson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm, and the Clerk confirmed the quorum. Also present were Chief Grimm, Officer Shaffer, Public Works Director Phil Price, Finance Director Tracey Richardson, Board member Shook, Board member John Evertsen, and Yolanda Quiceno, City Clerk.

Mayor Carson stated that Comm Lowell and Comm Partin are in attendance via conference call.

2. Public Comments

Mayor Carson opened for public comments. There being none, he closed the public comment section.

3. Proposed Millage Rate for FY 2025/2026

a. Discussion on Setting Maximum Millage Rate for FY 2025/2026

Acting City Manager Grimm informed the Council that the City must submit the *Maximum Millage Levy Calculation Preliminary Disclosure* form to the Orange County Property Appraiser by noon on August 1, 2025. This form determines the maximum allowable tax levy under Florida Statutes and requires the City to set a proposed millage rate. Once submitted, the City cannot adopt a final millage rate higher than the proposed rate without restarting the entire process, including mailing revised *Notices of Proposed Property Taxes* to all taxpayers.

At the July 11th Budget Committee meeting, the committee recommended increasing the millage rate from 4.4018 to 5.0000, as reflected in the proposed budget draft. This adjustment is necessary to maintain current service levels due to significant cost increases from Orange County Fire Services.

Commissioner Smith moved to set the proposed millage rate at 5.0000 for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2025, and ending September 30, 2026.

Commissioner Bobrowski seconded the motion.

Commissioner Bobrowski noted the possibility of further cost increases from Orange County and the Sheriff's Office. She expressed interest in exploring whether these rising costs could be addressed through an Ad Valorem assessment rather than a general tax increase.

Commissioner Partin emphasized the necessity of the increase, citing a 27% rise in fire service costs—an additional \$594,000, bringing the total to approximately \$2.22 million. He reminded the Council that the City

has not raised its millage rate in 15 years and acknowledged the importance of carefully balancing financial needs with the impact on residents. He also inquired about the timing for staff to open contract renegotiations with Orange County. Acting CM Grimm committed to researching the matter and reporting back.

Commissioner Vertolli thanked the Budget Committee for their work but expressed concern about the proposed rate, stating that the increase represents roughly 13.6% and that he is not comfortable approving the 5.0000 rate at this time.

Commissioner Shuck clarified that the motion is only to set the maximum allowable millage rate. The final millage can be adjusted downward during the budget adoption process. He emphasized that both the Council and the public will have further opportunities to review and discuss the proposed rate in upcoming meetings.

City Clerk confirmed that the budget workshop and Council meeting are scheduled for Monday, August 5th, beginning at 6:00 PM.

After discussion, the motion passed 6:1 upon roll call with Comm Vertolli, nay.

4. Adjournment

With no further business, Mayor Carson called for a motion to adjourn.

The motion passed unanimously at 6:45 pm.