



Town Council Meeting

January 23, 2023 at 6:00 PM

**Howey-in the-Hills Town Hall
101 N. Palm Ave.,
Howey-in-the-Hills, FL 34737**

MINUTES

Mayor MacFarlane called the Town Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
Mayor MacFarlane led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
Mr. Jim Steele, Poet Laureate for Lake County, read an untitled poem.

ROLL CALL

Acknowledgement of Quorum

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councilor Reneé Lannamañ | Councilor David Miles | Councilor George Lehning | Mayor Pro Tem Marie V. Gallelli | Mayor Martha MacFarlane

STAFF PRESENT:

Sean O'Keefe, Town Administrator | John Brock, Town Clerk | Morgan Cates, Public Works Director | Rick Thomas, Police Chief | Tara Hall, Library Director | Abigail Herrera, Finance Supervisor | Tom Harowski, Town Planner (via Zoom)

AGENDA APPROVAL/REVIEW

**Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve the meeting's agenda; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ.
Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.**

Voting

Yea: Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

Nay: None

CONSENT AGENDA

Routine items are placed on the Consent Agenda to expedite the meeting. If Town Council/Staff wish to discuss any item, the procedure is as follows: (1) Pull the item(s) from the Consent Agenda; (2) Vote on the remaining item(s); and (3) Discuss each pulled item and vote.

1. The approval of the minutes and ratification and confirmation of all Town Council actions at the January 9, 2023 Town Council Workshop.

2. The approval of the minutes and ratification and confirmation of all Town Council actions at the January 9, 2023 Town Council Meeting.

Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve the items on the Consent Agenda with the revised Town Council Workshop Minutes from January 9, 2023; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

Nay: None

PUBLIC HEARING

3. Consideration and Transmittal: (Transmittal Stage) **Ordinance 2023-001**

Martha MacFarlane, Mayor, read Ordinance 2023-001 by title only:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA, PERTAINING TO COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING; AMENDING CERTAIN POLICIES UNDER OBJECTIVE 1.11 IN THE FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT OF THE TOWN'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; AMENDING POLICY 1.11.4 TO ELIMINATE OBSOLETE WORDING PERTAINING TO ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES IN THE TOWN'S LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS; AMENDING POLICY 1.11.6 IN ITS ENTIRETY TO ELIMINATE THE REQUIREMENT FOR NEW LAND DEVELOPMENT TO FOLLOW THE TOWN'S EXISTING STREET GRID PATTERN AND, INSTEAD, TO SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIVITY BY OTHER MEANS; CREATING NEW OBJECTIVE 1.11.7 TO SPECIFY THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF VEHICULAR ACCESS POINTS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT WITH 50 LOTS OR MORE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT, CODIFICATION, SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Planner, Tom Harowski, to introduce and explain this item. Mr. Harowski explained the current and proposed policies.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only.

Paul Hoar, 503 E Mission Ln. – Mr. Hoar had a handout about the Thompson Grove development, which was given out to the Town Councilors and staff. Mr. Hoar doesn't believe that the proposed development needs rezoning. Mr. Hoar wants the existing characteristics of Howey-in-the-Hills to be retained. Mr. Hoar stated that, if new developments retained the existing lot sizes as the older part of the town did, there would be no need to block the streets from connecting.

Tim Everline, 1012 N Lakeshore Blvd. – Mr. Everline was not in favor of grid streets.

Peter Tuite, 300 E Croton Way – Mr. Tuite was not in favor of the Thompson Grove proposed development.

Doug Hower, 444 Bellissimo Pl. – Mr. Hower asked for a definition of cluster housing.

Tom Ballou, 1105 N Tangerine Ave. – Mr. Ballou stated that he didn't want to see any major changes.

Seeing no further public comment, Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment for this item.

Town Manager, Sean O'Keefe, read the proposed policy changes out loud and explained them.

Councilor Miles stated that he was in favor of the proposed Policy 1.11.7, and that he would not want the Town to have to upgrade existing or future emergency access roads to real roads. Councilor Miles also stated that he felt that the threshold of developments with 50 lots or more being required to have a second access should be lowered to 25 lots or more. Councilor Miles also stated that an emergency access road should not be considered as the second access road.

Councilor Miles suggested that proposed Policy 1.11.6 should be amended to say “Promoting interconnected neighborhoods. The Town shall support the development of interconnected neighborhoods using pedestrian linkages, bicycle facilities, and golf carts.”

Councilor Lehning stated that he did not want cut-through traffic unless developers rebuild existing roads to be safer.

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli agreed with Councilor Miles about Proposed Policy 1.11.6 and suggested that, if two entrances to a development cannot be made, a wider main entrance should be allowed.

Councilor Lannamañ agreed with Councilor Miles’ proposed Policy 1.11.6. Councilor Lannamañ suggested that the word “Support” in in the proposed Policy 1.11.6 be changed to “Encourage.”

Police Chief, Rick Thomas, encouraged the Town Council to leave emergency access in the Town’s Comprehensive Plan.

It was decided that amendments to the originally proposed Ordinance should be made. These amendments are:

Policy 1.11.6 – “Promoting interconnected neighborhoods. The Town shall encourage the development of interconnected neighborhoods using pedestrian linkages, bicycle facilities, and golf carts.”

Policy 1.11.7 – “Multiple access to subdivisions: The Town shall require new developments consisting of 50 lots or more to have a minimum of two points of vehicular access. This policy shall not be construed as prohibiting private streets or prohibiting the use of emergency only access points in addition to the standard vehicular access requirement.”

Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve Ordinance 2023-001 to be transmitted to Florida Department of Economic Opportunity with the proposed amendments to Policy 1.11.6 and Policy 1.11.7; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion passed unanimously by roll-call vote.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

Nay: None

OLD BUSINESS

4. Consideration and Approval: **Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)**

Mayor MacFarlane explained that proposed items in the CIP were included in the meeting’s packet.

Councilor Miles was concerned about the years that were listed in the 5-year schedule and if they were the correct 5-years to be considered. Councilor Miles also stated that he did not believe that enough time was spent on this topic in workshop meetings.

Councilor Lehning did not believe there was enough detail in the backup sheets to the CIP projects.

Councilor Miles stated that CIP was an advance planning tool that should be used for future budgeting and prioritizing.

Town Manager, Sean O’Keefe, explained that the CIP would go before the Planning and Zoning Board and then would come back to the Town Council for two readings in March, as an Ordinance.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item. Seeing no public comment, Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment.

Motion made by Councilor Lehning to forward the CIP to the Planning and Zoning Board for recommendation; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion approved unanimously by roll-call vote.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

Nay: None

Councilor Miles stated that he would like another Town Council workshop with at least 4 hours spent on this item prior to the Ordinance coming before the Town Council.

5. Consideration and Approval: **Town Council Goals for Calendar Year 2023**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Manager, Sean O’Keefe, to introduce and explain this topic. Mr. O’Keefe stated the purpose for this item was to set goals and priorities for Town staff for the current calendar year.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item. Seeing no public comment, Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment.

Mayor MacFarlane stated that Councilor Miles’ goal of acquiring the Drake Point Wastewater treatment plant would not give a big enough benefit to the town for the associated cost. Councilor Miles disagreed and also stated that he had changed his goal #5 (“*Eliminate ‘woke’ concepts from council agendas*”) before the meeting.

Councilor Miles made a motion to approve all five of his goals; there was no second to this motion.

Councilor Lannamañ stated she liked that it appeared that all Councilors were prioritizing the need for a town-managed wastewater solution, as the Town must control its own destiny.

Councilor Miles made a motion to approve all of his goals and all of Councilor Lehning’s goals as a single block of 10 goals, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli seconded this motion. Councilor Lannamañ stated that she thought everyone’s goals should be considered.

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli suggested picking eight goals that should be used for the next quarter to be then reevaluated in the next quarter.

Councilor Miles withdrew his previous motion and made a motion to approve 24 of the 25 goals, excluding Mayor MacFarlane’s goal #1 (“*Creating a CRA for the Town City Center*”); there was no second for this motion. After some discussion, Councilor Miles withdrew this motion too.

Motion made by Councilor Miles to table this item until the next Town Council Meeting on February 13, 2023; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

Nay: None

NEW BUSINESS

6. Consideration and Approval: **Budget Amendment Authorization (Budget Transfer #93)**

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item. Seeing no public comment, Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment.

Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve the Budget Amendment; seconded by Councilor Lehning. Motion was approved unanimously by roll-call vote.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

Nay: None

Councilor Lehning made a motion to move Public Comment up to the next item on the agenda; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

Nay: None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any person wishing to address the Mayor and Town Council and who is not on the agenda is asked to speak their name and address. Three (3) minutes is allocated per speaker.

Banks Helfrich, 9100 Sam's Lake Road, Clermont Florida – Mr. Helfrich asked what made everyone move to Lake County and then invited the public to attend a farm sustainability event on his property. This event will occur on the second Saturday of each month.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

7. Town Manager

Sean O'Keefe, Town Manager, stated that Lennar had stepped away from the proposed Reserve/Hillside Groves development. Mr. O'Keefe also explained the Lake County-sponsored *Strong Towns* event that had started the week prior to the Meeting.

Mr. O'Keefe solicited the date for the Town Council CIP workshop. It was decided that the workshop would occur on Friday, February 10, 2023, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

8. Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli

None

9. Councilor Lehning

Councilor Lehning asked the Town Attorney, Tom Wilkes, about the Reserve project and if the Town Council could pull that project and not allow another developer to use it. Mr. Wilkes stated that the Developer Agreement, which was a contract, was between the Town and the owners of the property, not Lennar.

10. Councilor Miles

Councilor Miles thanked the Public Works Department for cleaning up a tree that had fallen in the right-of-way the night before the Town Council meeting. Councilor Miles stated that he would like someone to inspect all the trees in the right-of-way to see if they were also rotten.

11. Councilor Lannamañ

Councilor Lannamañ thanked the residents in the audience for showing up to the meeting.

12. Mayor MacFarlane

Mayor MacFarlane gave an update on the Town's request to the State for appropriations to build Well #5 and Water Treatment Plant #3. Mayor MacFarlane also gave an update on an upcoming County Joint Planning Agency meeting and that the Town would voice its disagreement with the Rural Protection Area surrounding the Town. Town Manager, Sean O'Keefe, stated that he would share an RPA map with the Town Councilors before the next meeting. Mayor MacFarlane stated that she would like to amend her list of goals to be considered before the next Town Council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Councilor Lehning to adjourn the meeting; Councilor Lannamañ seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

The Meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m. | **Attendees: 48**

ATTEST:

Mayor Martha MacFarlane

John Brock, Town Clerk