



**Town Council Public
Hearing on Final Budget
and Millage Rate**

September 26, 2022 at 5:05 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 5:05 p.m.

Mayor MacFarlane explained that Councilor Lehning was home sick and that he would have to attend the meeting virtually via Zoom, so as not to expose anyone to his illness.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli to allow Councilor Lehning to participate and vote via Zoom; seconded by Councilor Miles. Motion was approved unanimously with a voice vote.

ROLL CALL

Acknowledgement of Quorum

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councilor David Miles | Councilor Rick Klein | Councilor George Lehning (via Zoom) | Mayor Pro Tem Marie V Gallelli | Mayor Martha MacFarlane

STAFF PRESENT:

Sean O'Keefe, Town Administrator | John Brock, Town Clerk | Abigail Herrera, Finance Supervisor | Tara Hall, Library Director | Morgan Cates, Public Works Director | Rick Thomas, Police Chief

Confirmation of Meeting Notification and acknowledgement of Quorum was completed.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Consideration and Approval: **Resolution 2022-008 - Final Millage Rate**

Martha MacFarlane, Mayor, read Resolution 2022-008 by title only and the following statements.

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-008, A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA; ADOPTING A FINAL MILLAGE RATE OF 7.50 FOR THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA FOR AD VALOREM TAXES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

- The Taxing Authority is the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills.
- The Rolled-Back Rate is 6.7227 mills.

- The percentage over the Rolled-Back Rate is 11.56%, which is the percentage increase in property taxes.
- The proposed Millage Rate to be levied is 7.500.

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Clerk, John Brock, to read out loud a written statement that had been submitted to the Town. Mr. Brock read out loud a written statement from **Wayne Mather of 1004 N. Tangerine Ave.** Mr. Mather's statement expressed his objection to the proposed budget and increased millage rate.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment and Questions for this issue only.

Tim Everline, 1012 N Lakeshore Blvd. – Mr. Everline compared old budgets to the currently proposed budget and was not in favor of the size of the current budget.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment and Questions.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Councilor Comment and Questions for this issue only.

Town Administrator, Sean O'Keefe, explained the current administrative cost and current budget's expansion. Mayor MacFarlane explained that the Town had only recently brought on two new positions relative to staffing in 2008.

Councilor Miles stated that the inflation during the past year had increased by about 11%, which was close to the rate in the increase of taxes. Councilor Miles also said that the newly-hired Finance Supervisor was necessary for the Town to have adequate internal financial controls.

Mayor MacFarlane stated that the Town Council had reduced the Town's millage rate in 2019 from approximately 8.21 or 8.25 to a millage rate of 7.5.

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli explained that the Town's staff had been diligently working to get grants and to minimize costs to the Town.

Motion made by Councilor Lehning to approve Resolution 2022-008, RESOLUTION NO. 2022-008, A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA; ADOPTING A FINAL MILLAGE RATE OF 7.50 FOR THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA FOR AD VALOREM TAXES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; seconded by Councilor Klein. Motion was approved unanimously by roll-call vote.

Voting

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

Nay: None

2. Consideration and Approval: **Resolution 2022-009 - Final Budget**

Martha MacFarlane, Mayor, read Resolution 2022-009 by title only and the following statements.

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-009, A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA; ADOPTING A FINAL BUDGET FOR THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023 AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The Final Budget for the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills for Fiscal Year 2023 to be adopted by Fund Department is as follows:

- General Fund in the amount of \$2,479,898.
- Infrastructure fund in the amount of \$233,227.
- Enterprise fund in the amount of \$1,463,696.
- Police Pension Fund in the amount of \$95,653.
- Police Advanced Training in the amount of \$3,000.
- Impact fees in the amount in the amount of \$626,600.
- Building Services in the amount of \$219,615.
- Total all Funds \$5,121,689.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment and Questions for this issue only.

Tim Everline, 1012 N Lakeshore Blvd – Mr. Everline asked questions about the Police Department’s SROs and stated again that he was not in favor of the increased budget.

Darren Surr, 403 E Camelia Way – Mr. Surr was not in favor of the increased millage rate and budget, and that he thought the proposed budget was too high. Mr. Surr stated that he felt that the employees of the Town were at too high of a pay rate.

Gerald Roque, 505 E Mission Lane – Mr. Roque was concerned that new jobs were not hired appropriately. Mayor MacFarlane stated that all job openings were posted publicly.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment and Questions.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Councilor Comment and Questions for this issue only.

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli stated that job openings were posted appropriately on Indeed.com and the Town’s website.

Motion made by Councilor Lehning to approve Resolution 2022-009, A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA; ADOPTING A FINAL BUDGET FOR THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023 AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli.

Motion was approved unanimously with a roll-call vote.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Miles, Councilor Klein, 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.

Bill Reid, 411 N. Lakeshore Blvd – Mr. Reid voiced his support for the Town’s Police force. Mr. Reid asked what a comparable Town’s millage rate was. Town Administrator, Sean O’Keefe, stated that the highest millage rate in Lake County was the City of Eustis. Mr. O’Keefe stated that the City of Umatilla and the Town of Astatula were tied with Howey-in-the-Hills’ millage rate of 7.5.

Donald Peterson, 1016 N Lakeshore Blvd. – Mr. Peterson stated that he believes Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) can be repealed and that he believed that PUD approvals needed to be set with a finite end date.

Paula Abney, 411 E Orchid Way – Mrs. Abney suggested that the Town should use the electronic sign in front of Town Hall to advertise job openings. Mrs. Abney stated that she was unsure how the bidding for the fishing pier project was done. Mrs. Abney stated that she was upset that the Town’s residents didn’t get to choose the current sign’s design. Councilor Gallelli spoke about how the RFP for the Fishing Pier renovation was created and how it was discussed in previous Town Council meetings.

Councilor Miles stated that a Town Councilor had said to the Simpson parcel developers that they had wanted a five-year expiration on the PUD for the Simpson parcel development project.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli to adjourn the meeting; Councilor Klein seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

The Meeting adjourned at 5:48 p.m. | **Attendees: 36**

Mayor Martha MacFarlane

ATTEST:

John Brock, Town Clerk