



Town Council Meeting
September 23, 2024 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.
Councilor Reneé Lannamañ delivered an invocation.

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 Manager (via Zoom) | Morgan Cates, Public Services Director | Tom Wilkes, Town Attorney | Rick Thomas, Police Chief | John Brock, Deputy Town Manager/Town Clerk

AGENDA APPROVAL/REVIEW

Motion made by Councilor Lannamañ to approve the meeting’s agenda; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli. 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. Consideration and Approval: **Selection of Parks and Recreation Board Member**

Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve the Consent 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

PUBLIC HEARING

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

2. Consideration and Approval: **Town Planner Agreement**

Town Manager, Sean O’Keefe, introduced and explained this agenda item. Mr. O’Keefe stated that the Town had sent out a Request for Qualifications (RFQ 2024-01) Urban Planning Continuing Professional Services, to select firms to function as the Town Planner. Mr. O’Keefe stated that, after review, the Town staff had selected Parks Consulting Services as the primary firm and KCT Consulting Services as the secondary firm.

Mayor MacFarlane asked Parks Consulting Services to come forward and introduce themselves. Sean Parks, CEO and Principal Planner for Parks Consulting, and Lisa Busto, Project Manager for Parks Consulting, came forward and introduced themselves. Mr. Parks came forward and spoke about his background (26 years in local municipal planning) and the experience that his firm would bring to the Town. Mr. Parks stated that Parks Consulting currently serves as senior planning consultant for the Town of Montverde.

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli asked Mr. Parks about the fact that he was currently serving as a Lake County Commissioner and if that would be a conflict of interest and if so, how he would deal with it. Mr. Parks explained that it was already determined that this was not a conflict of interest as he had already been serving as the senior planning consultant for the Town of Montverde and that the possibility of a conflict of interest had already been vetted. Mr. Parks explained that he would work with the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills as his client and represent its issues. Mr. Parks stated that, if there was ever a conflict of interest with the County, he would recuse himself from voting on that issue. Mr. Parks stated that, because of his position and experience with Lake County, it brought him a greater awareness of what was going on within the County which would assist with Town’s planning.

Councilor Miles stated that he was concerned about Mr. Parks currently sitting on the Board of County Commissioners and how he had voted against the Town’s positions twice in the past.

Councilor Miles made a motion to table this item to the 10/28/2024 Town Council Meeting and reject Parks Consulting Services; motion seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli. This motion was withdrawn.

Mayor MacFarlane asked KCT Consulting Services to come forward and introduce themselves. Kelly Turner, President of KCT Consulting Services, introduced herself. Ms. Turner explained her background, including her time working for the City of Fruitland Park.

Councilor Miles made a motion to table this item to the 10/28/2024 Town Council Meeting and to approve KCT Consulting Services as the primary planner and Pritchett Steinback Group as the secondary group; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only.

Peter Tuite, 300 E Croton Way – Mr. Tuite stated that he believed the Town Council was about to make a bad decision, that the Town needed the experience that Sean Parks and Parks Consulting would bring to the Town.

Tim, Everline, 1012 N. Lakeshore Blvd. – Mr. Everline stated that he believed that the Town needed to hire the Planning firm that could offer the Town the most experience.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment for this item.

Public Services Director, Morgan Cates, stated that one of the biggest problems the Town had with the previous problems that the Town had with its previous Town Planner was a lack of communication with Lake County. Mr. Cates urged that the Town needed to work closer with Lake County and Parks Consulting Services was the better candidate.

Deputy Town Manager/Town Clerk, John Brock, stated that one of his responsibilities with the Town was managing the Planning Department and he was afraid that the Town Council was about to make a mistake with their current direction. Mr. Brock stated that Town Staff had recommended Parks Consulting Services for the local experience they brought the Town. Mr. Brock highly recommend that the Town Council reconsider their current motion and that, from his review of the packets that were submitted, he recommended Parks Consulting Services.

Councilor Miles withdrew his previous motion.

Motion made by Councilor Miles to follow staff recommendations on Planning Consultants, to draft the agreements with Parks Consulting Services and KCT Consulting Services, and to have final approval of this item tabled to the 10/24/2024 Town Council Meeting; seconded by Councilor Lehning. Motion approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Voting

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

Nay: None

3. Consideration and Approval: **Cedar Creek Water Agreement**

Town Attorney, Tom Wilkes, introduced and reviewed the proposed Cedar Creek Water Agreement with the Town Council

Mayor MacFarlane stated that she would like to see the agreement amended to show that the Town be paid back for the hours that Town employees have to work on getting the Cedar Creek Development for water services. The Town Council was in agreement that section 27 (pg. 17) should be amended to state that the reimbursement should also include Town staff costs.

Tim Loucks, representative for the Cedar Creek Development, spoke about the proposed agreement. Mr. Loucks explained the status of the proposed Cedar Creek Development and that they were seeking an agreement with the Town for the Town to supply the development with water. The Cedar Creek Development was located outside of the Town, within the Town's ISBA area, but not contiguous with the Town's borders. Mr. Loucks stated that the proposed agreement would have the developer pay for all the costs to hook up to the Town's water supply. In the agreement, the residents of the Cedar Creek would pay a 25% premium over the cost that a town resident would for water. Mr. Loucks also stated that, in the proposed agreement, if the Cedar Creek development ever became contiguous with the borders of the Town, the development would annex into the Town.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only.

Peter Tuite, 300 E Croton Way – Mr. Tuite stated that he believed that the Town was moving too fast and that he questioned the developer’s wastewater plans.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment for this item.

Deputy Town Manager/Town Clerk, John Brock, stated that he reviewed the agreement and noticed that the 10-year sunset date for the agreement was missing. It was agreed that Town Attorney would need to add this before the agreement could be signed.

Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve the Cedar Creek Water agreement with Town staff costs being reimbursed and the 10-year sunset agreement being added to the agreement; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli. Motion approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Voting

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

Nay: None

4. Discussion: **Update on Asma Hearing**

Town Attorney, Tom Wilkes, gave a status update on the Asma (Lakeview Investments) Special Magistrate Hearing. Mr. Wilkes stated that Lakeview Investments has a proposal to make to the Town that they believe will settle the matter without going before the Special Magistrate, and, as such, the hearing has been cancelled to allow for the Town to review the proposal and, if it is not acceptable, the Special Magistrate Hearing will be scheduled again.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

5. Town Manager

Town Manager, Sean O’Keefe, stated that the Town’s Surveyor firm George F Young Inc. would be complete their work for the Citrus Avenue construction project within the current week.

Deputy Town Manager / Town Clerk, John Brock, asked the Town Council for volunteers to work the Town Council table at the Town’s Halloween Bash scheduled for October 26. Mayor MacFarlane, Councilor Lehning, and Councilor Candidate Tim Everline volunteered to work the Town Council table.

COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

6. Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli

None

7. Councilor Lehning

None

8. Councilor Miles

Councilor Miles stated that he would not be attending the 10/14/2024 Town Council Meeting, as he would be vacationing in Europe. Councilor Miles asked about the status of the Central Lake CDD agreement. Tom Wilkes, Town Attorney, stated that was working on this and would have a report for the Town Council the next week.

9. Councilor Lannamañ

Councilor Lannamañ congratulated Officer Corman for recently being honored as Officer of Year by the South Lake Chamber of Commerce.

10. Mayor MacFarlane

Mayor MacFarlane stated that the Town was no longer a member of the South Lake Chamber of Commerce, and she thought the Town should rejoin it. Mayor MacFarlane spoke about the importance of the next mayor fostering good relationships with organizations and other public officials.

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.

None

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 7:57 p.m. | **Attendees: 37**

Mayor Martha MacFarlane

ATTEST:

John Brock, Town Clerk