



Town Council Budget Workshop

July 27, 2022 at 2:00 PM

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

MINUTES

Mayor MacFarlane called the Town Council Budget Workshop to order at 2:00 p.m.
Mayor MacFarlane led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

Acknowledgement of Quorum

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councilor George Lehning | Councilor Marie V. Gallelli (via Zoom) | Councilor Rick Klein | Mayor Martha MacFarlane

STAFF PRESENT:

Sean O'Keefe, Town Administrator | John Brock, Town Clerk | Rick Thomas, Police Chief | Morgan Cates, Public Works Director | Tara Hall, Library Director | James Southall, Public Utilities Supervisor | George Brown, Police Lieutenant

OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion: Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Administrator, Sean O'Keefe, to introduce and explain this item. Mr. O'Keefe explained that the workshop would begin with a presentation from Police Chief, Rick Thomas, on the Police Department's Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Prep and then a presentation from Public Works Director, Morgan Cates, on the Town Parks Expansion Plan. Chief Thomas' presentation included showing traffic studies for the area, difficulties with recruitment of police officers, a pay comparison of local Police Departments, and call volumes.

Mr. Cates read the Parks and Recreation Board's plan to expand the parks. This plan included recommending park expansions in Central Park to include adding sunshade over swings, adding electrical outlets and water misting fans to the covered seating area, expanding the basketball court to regulation size, replacing the water fountain with a new dog-friendly fountain, and adding a kid-sized basketball court. Other expansion plans included creating a new expanded entrance off Lakeshore Blvd. for Sara Maude Mason Nature

Preserve, creating a design plan for Pine Park (Venezia Park), repairing some of the Town's finger piers, and continuing the repair of the Sara Maude Mason Nature Preserve boardwalk.

Mr. O'Keefe continued his discussion by explaining the revenue and expenditure reports that were given to the Town Councilors. Mr. O'Keefe also explained that, during the last Town Council Meeting on July 25, 2022, Councilor Klein requested that the Town look at returning the Town Councilor's pay back to their previous 2018 levels. Mr. O'Keefe explained that this increase in Town Councilor pay was placed back in to the budget, but to actually increase the Town Councilor's pay, it would require that the Town Council pass an Ordinance to do so.

Councilor Lehning asked why in the Police Department Account (521), under the general fund (1), object Executive Salaries (110) was underspent by \$65,000. It was discovered that Police Lieutenant George Brown had been incorrectly set up in payroll to have his pay come out of the wrong object code. Town Clerk, John Brock, and Mr. O'Keefe committed to correcting this error.

Councilor Klein stated that he thought there would be residents that were upset due to not decreasing the millage rate, while at the same time increasing the employee head count. Mayor MacFarlane explained that the Town was increasing head count back to the 2005-2006 levels with the addition of one extra person over those numbers. Mayor MacFarlane explained that the level of headcount was necessary for the Town considering the growth that was occurring in the Town. Councilor Klein wondered if each department could tighten up a little and then possibly roll back the millage rate some. Mayor MacFarlane explained that was not possible, and that two years ago she had lowered the millage rate too much; this had caused some things in the Town like the finger piers and the Sara Maude Mason Preserve Boardwalk to fall into a state of disrepair.

Mr. O'Keefe reviewed the previous budget workshop's discussion on employee compensation. It was decided that Town employees who had worked at the Town for at least nine months should get a 10% pay increase as a salary correction, which would bring pay up closer to market levels.

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, Mayor MacFarlane adjourned the meeting.

The Meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m. | **Attendees: 12**

Mayor Martha MacFarlane

ATTEST:

John Brock, Town Clerk