



Town Council Meeting

July 11, 2022 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.

ROLL CALL

Acknowledgement of Quorum

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Councilor George Lehning | Councilor Marie V. Gallelli | Councilor Rick Klein (via Zoom) | Mayor Pro-Tem Ed Conroy (via Zoom) | 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 | Tom Wilkes, Town Attorney (via Zoom) | Azure Botts, Code Enforcement Officer (via Zoom)

Motion made by Councilor Lehning to allow Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy and Councilor Klein to participate and vote via Zoom due to extenuating circumstances; seconded by Councilor Gallelli. Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Lehning, Councilor Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

Nay: None

AGENDA APPROVAL/REVIEW

Motion made by Councilor Gallelli to approve the meeting's agenda; seconded by Councilor Lehning. Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Lehning, Councilor Gallelli, Councilor Klein, Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy, 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 June 27, 2022 Town Council Meeting.

Motion made by Councilor Lehning to approve all items on the Consent Agenda; seconded by Councilor Gallelli. Motion approved unanimously by roll-call vote.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Lehning, Councilor Gallelli, Councilor Klein, Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy, Mayor MacFarlane

Nay: None

PUBLIC HEARING

None

OLD BUSINESS

2. Consideration and Approval: **Appointment of Mary Arnold to the Parks & Recreation Board**

Town Administrator, Sean O'Keefe, introduced this item and explained that Mrs. Arnold has applied to fill the fifth and final open seat on the Parks & Recreation Board. Mr. O'Keefe also explained that the Parks & Recreation Board met in June and recommended approval of Mary Arnold's appointment to the Parks & Recreation Board.

Mayor MacFarlane asked Mrs. Arnold to speak and explain why she wanted to serve on the Park's & Recreation Board. Mrs. Arnold stated that she thought it was important for residents to have good parks to enjoy.

Motion made by Councilor Gallelli to appoint Mary Arnold to the Parks & Recreation Board; seconded by Councilor Lehning. Motion approved unanimously by roll-call vote.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Lehning, Councilor Gallelli, Councilor Klein, Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy, Mayor MacFarlane

Nay: None

NEW BUSINESS

3. Consideration and Approval: (First Reading) **Ordinance 2022-015 - Code Enforcement Citation**

Martha MacFarlane, Mayor, rea Ordinance 2022-010 by title only:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA, PERTAINING TO CODE ENFORCEMENT; REVISING CHAPTER 8 OF THE TOWN'S CODE OF ORDINANCES TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN TO USE A CODE ENFORCEMENT CITATION PROGRAM; DESIGNATING CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS; PROVIDING FOR PROCEDURES, INVESTIGATION OF VIOLATIONS, AND THE ISSUANCE OF CITATIONS; PROVIDING FOR THE PAYMENT OF FINES, COURT HEARINGS AND ADOPTING A SCHEDULE OF

**CIVIL PENALTIES AND FINES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY,
CODIFICATION AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

Mayor MacFarlane opened up councilor comment on this item. Councilor Lehning asked how the Special Magistrate's responsibilities were determined. Mayor MacFarlane explained the Special Magistrate had responsibilities that were clearly outlined by the State, and that the Town has hired a Special Magistrate.

Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy asked what the difference was between a Special Master and a Special Magistrate. Police Chief, Rick Thomas, explained that it was just nomenclature, that both positions were the same, just named differently.

Councilor Gallelli asked if the expenses incurred from hiring a Special Magistrate could be charged back to the individuals that would have to go before the Special Magistrate. Code Enforcement Officer, Azure Botts, explained that some of the costs of prosecuting the case could be recouped from the individuals brought before the Special Magistrate.

Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy asked if the town was required to have a Code Enforcement Board. Town Attorney, Tom Wilkes, explained that the Town was not required to have a board and was allowed to have the Special Magistrate.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only. Seeing as there was no comment, Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment.

Motion made by Councilor Lehning to approve Ordinance 2022-015; seconded by Councilor Gallelli. Motion approved unanimously by roll-call vote and the Ordinance would move forward to a second reading.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Lehning, Councilor Gallelli, Councilor Klein, Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy, Mayor MacFarlane

Nay: None

4. Consideration and Approval: **Mower Replacement**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Public Works Director, Morgan Cates, to introduce and explain this item. Mr. Cates explained that one of Public Work's Department's two mowers had broken down and the Town needed to buy an additional, third mower that would be more reliable.

Councilor Lehning asked if Mr. Cates had gotten any additional quotes for the mower other than was provided. Mr. Cates stated that he had not, because the John Deere dealership was on the state-approved list of contractors to purchase from. Mr. O'Keefe explained that this was acceptable and followed the Town's procurement policy.

Mayor Pro-Tem asked what would happen to the broken mower. Mr. Cates explained that servicing of mower could take months. Mr. Cates stated that, if the mower could reasonably be repaired, he would have it repaired to be used as a spare.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only. Seeing as there was no comment, Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment.

Motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy approve of purchasing a new mower for the Public Works Department; seconded by Councilor Klein. Motion approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Lehning, Councilor Gallelli, Councilor Klein, Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy, Mayor MacFarlane

Nay: None

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

5. Town Hall

Town Clerk, John Brock, explained that he had given the Councilors a memo showing utility bad debt for June 2022. Mr. Brock also that both the new Utility Billing Clerk, Kimberly Bohrer, and Building Services Clerk, Jack Pavlik, had been hired in June. Mr. Brock also reminded the audience of the of the Charter referendum coming up for vote on August 23rd. Mr. Brock also reminded the audience that there would be three Town Councilor seats up for election this year, seats 1, 2, and 3, and that the Election Qualifying Window would begin at noon on August 8th. Mr. Brock also reminded everyone that the final day of the Election Qualifying Window was at noon on Friday, August 19th and that if anyone had any questions to see him.

6. Police Department

Police Chief, Rick Thomas, let everyone know that COVID-19 cases were on the uptick in Lake County and to be careful. Chief Thomas also relayed a story about a police chase that started just outside of the Town's border and ending in a shooting in Mount Dora.

7. Code Enforcement

Mayor MacFarlane asked what happened to the Code Enforcement case that had previously been scheduled to appear before the Special Magistrate in May but had been delayed. Code Enforcement Officer Botts explained that it was being settled outside of a hearing and should be signed off by the Special Magistrate soon.

Councilor Klein asked Code Enforcement Officer Botts to explain the process of a Code Enforcement case. Code Enforcement Officer Botts explained the process.

8. Public Works

Public Works Director, Morgan Cates, read the June 2022 Public Utilities monthly report and gave an update. Mr. Cates said that the work on Grove Square Park should be completed in the next week or so.

Councilor Lehning asked about the fiber optic boring that was occurring on the north side of town. Councilor Klein stated sidewalk in front of the Lake Hill school looked good, but the sidewalk on the other side was overgrown and needed to be edged.

9. Library

Library Director, Tara Hall, stated that the library had 32 new patrons in June. Mrs. Hall also stated that the children who participated in the Summer Reading Program in June had collectively read 441 books during the month.

Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy suggested that the library add programming for residents that would train them to use their smartphones and computers.

10. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board / Special Events

Nothing to report

11. Town Attorney

Nothing to report

12. Town Administrator / Finance Manager - Finance and Development Reports

Town Administrator, Sean O'Keefe, stated that the Town had sent escrow funds for the Well #5 land purchase and had executed the contract with FGUA for their consulting services. Mr. O'Keefe stated that the Town did not receive the CDBG-MIT grant for the construction of a Police Station. Mr. O'Keefe gave a development update for Golden Hills and Thompson Groove

Mr. O'Keefe reminded all those in attendance about the Town Council Budget Workshop scheduled for July 14, 2022 at 9 am and the Charter Education Meeting on Tuesday, July 26, 2022, at the Marianne Beck Memorial Library at 6 pm. Mr. O'Keefe also explained that the fee schedule project was moving forward.

COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

13. Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy

Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy stated that he would be resigning from the Town Council after the July 27, 2022, Budget Workshop meeting. Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy stated that he was hoping that, by resigning now, it would allow the Mayor to appoint someone to fill his spot on the Town Council and for that person to get some experience. Mayor MacFarlane thanked Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy for his hard work and dedication through the years.

14. Councilor Lehning

Councilor Lehning volunteered himself to take Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy's spot on the MPO. Councilor Lehning asked about the status of the SWOT. Mr. O'Keefe stated that, due to budget season, the SWOT was on hold.

15. Councilor Gallelli

Nothing to report

16. Councilor Klein

Councilor Klein thanked Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy for his nine years of service.

17. Mayor MacFarlane

Mayor MacFarlane stated that she would need a list of people that would be interested in volunteering to serve on the Town Council. Mayor MacFarlane stated that the Town needed someone to volunteer to chair the Christmas Festival Committee, because she would not be in town or be able to fill this role. Mayor MacFarlane also stated that the proposed Oktoberfest Event would not be occurring this year as there was not enough time to get ready for it; it was being planned for 2023.

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.

Tina St. Clair, 135 E Central Ave – Mrs. St. Clair stated that there was a problem with residents sticking sticks in their front yards next to the road in the right-of-way and wondered what could be done about this. She stated that this was a safety concern if there were two cars or trucks passing near them. Mayor MacFarlane stated that Mrs. St. Clair should inform the Code Enforcement Officer, Azure Botts, about the problem.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The Meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m. | **Attendees: 25**

Mayor Martha MacFarlane

ATTEST:

John Brock, Town Clerk