



**Town Council Meeting**  
**November 27, 2023 at 6:00 PM**  
**Howey-in the-Hills Town Hall**  
**101 N. Palm Ave.,**  
**Howey-in-the-Hills, FL 34737**

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**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 | Rick Thomas, Police Chief | Morgan Cates, Public Works Director | Fred DeVito, Finance Supervisor | Tom Wilkes, Town Attorney (Zoom)

**AGENDA APPROVAL/REVIEW**

**Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve the meeting's agenda with the exception of pulling Item #1 (11/13/2023 Meeting Minutes) from the 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 November 13, 2023 Town Council Meeting. **(THIS ITEM WAS REMOVED FROM THE MEETING'S AGENDA DURING THE AGENDA APPROVAL/REVIEW SECTION OF THE MEETING.)**

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

None

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### 2. Consideration and Approval: **Planning and Zoning Board Member Selection**

Mayor MacFarlane asked board applicant, Richard Mulvany, to come forward and introduce himself. Mr. Mulvany explained that he had just served out his term on the Planning and Zoning Board and would like to serve another term. Mr. Mulvany stated the pertinent experience that he had which would assist him in serving on the Planning and Zoning Board.

Mayor MacFarlane asked board applicant, Teresa Pileggi, to come forward and introduce herself. Mrs. Pileggi stated the pertinent experience that she had which would assist her in serving on the Planning and Zoning Board.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item.

**Peter Tuite, 300 E Croton Way** – Mr. Tuite was concerned that the candidates were too biased towards the developers. Mr. Tuite stated that he would like to see a new Town Planner.

**Tim Everline, 1012 N. Lakeshore Blvd.** – Mr. Everline stated that he believed both candidates would be fine for the Planning and Zoning Board. Mr. Everline stated that he felt the Town Council was too concerned about revenue and not enough about expenses. Mr. Everline stated that he did not want to see small lots approved for development within the Town. Mr. Everline stated that he was concerned about traffic in the Town.

**Motion made by Mayor MacFarlane to reappoint Richard Mulvany to the Planning and Zoning Board; 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

### 3. Consideration and Approval: **Water Treatment Plant Design Proposal**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Manager, Sean O’Keefe, to introduce this item. Mr. O’Keefe explained that Halff had been selected through the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) that the Town had performed for the design of the new Water Treatment Plan. Mr. O’Keefe stated that there had been four companies that had submitted packages to the Town’s RFQ. Mr. O’Keefe stated that that there would be a separate company for the construction of the Water Treatment Plant.

Councilor Miles stated that he was surprised that the Town Engineer, Don Griffey, was not at the meeting. Councilor Miles asked who was on the RFQ review panel. Mr. O’Keefe stated that Don Griffey (Town Engineer), Morgan Cates (Public Works Director), James Southall (Public Utilities Supervisor), and Phillip Clark (Public Utilities Director for the City of Tavares) were the four members on the review panel.

Councilor Miles stated that Halff's proposed contract allows for 270 days to design the water treatment plant and 270 days for the construction of the plant, with a proposed end date in January 2026. Councilor Miles wanted to know why there was an additional 200 days for completion not included in the design or construction phases of the project.

Michael Scullion, representative from Halff, explained that, after the drilling of the two wells, water must be pumped, sampled, and analyzed prior to the start of the design of the water treatment plant. Bid creation, the bid process, and negotiation with the construction firm would also take some time.

Councilor Miles was concerned that there were no penalties for untimely performance, and he stated that two years was too long of a time.

Councilor Miles asked if the Town Attorney had reviewed the proposed contract from Halff. Tom Wilkes, Town Attorney, stated that the review of the contract would be completed within the next week.

Councilor Miles asked if liquid or gas chlorine was going to be used in the water treatment plant. The representative from Halff stated that they would recommend liquid chlorine.

Councilor Miles stated that he wanted a penalty provision to be added to the contract if Halff runs long and to make sure that the Town is also added on the insurance that Halff would be getting for the project.

Councilor Lehning stated that the Town could also delay Halff with late decisions that the Town might make. It was asked who the Town's decision makers for this project would be. It was decided that Don Griffey, Morgan Cates, and James Southall would be the decision makers.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item.

**Peter Tuite, 300 E Croton Way** – Mr. Tuite stated that the drilling and construction of the water treatment plant was going to be more expensive than projected.

**Tim Everline, 1012 N. Lakeshore Blvd.** – Mr. Everline asked if the cost of the design agreement was in the meeting's packet. Councilor Miles stated that the contract amount was set at \$729,152 (it could possibly be less.) Mr. Everline also stated that the state appropriation money that the Town had received could not be spent on design.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment for this item.

**Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve the Halff contract, subject to the Town Attorney's and Town Manager's approval, adding per diem penalty for any delays that occur in the contract (amount to be set by the Town Manager), and ensuring that the Town is added as an additional named insurer; 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. Consideration and Approval: **Resolution 2023-013 Budget Amendment FY 2023**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Fred DeVito, Finance Supervisor, to introduce this item. Mr. DeVito summarized the budget amendment resolution that would bring the Town into balance.

Councilor Miles asked if the Encumbrance module had been set up. Mr. DeVito stated that he was currently doing that.

Councilor Miles recommended against trueing up revenue during the next fiscal year.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item.

**Peter Tuite, 300 E Croton Way** – Mr. Tuite questioned whether the Town got its money’s worth with the Parks & Recreation budget for the previous year. Mr. Tuite wanted to see the Sara Maude Mason Nature Preserve repaired.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment for this item.

**Motion made by Councilor Lehning; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli. Motion approved by roll-call vote.**

**Voting**

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

**Nay:** Councilor Miles

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

5. Town Manager

Sean O’Keefe, Town Manager, stated that he had heard a rumor that the Town had been in talks to take over the Talichet neighborhood greenspaces. Mr. O’Keefe wanted to assure everyone that there have been no talks about this topic at this point.

Mr. O’Keefe explained that the Town had recently obtained the agreement from the State of Florida for the Town to receive its \$4.25 million appropriation for the construction of Water Treatment Plant #3.

Mr. O’Keefe announced the upcoming Events Committee Meetings, Town Christmas Festival, and the Town Council Workshop of wastewater matters (scheduled for 12/12/2023).

**COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS**

6. Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli asked for an update on the Sheriff Dispatch matter. Tom Wilkes, Town Attorney, gave an update on the four other municipalities signing the joint letter and creating Resolutions on the matter.

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli asked for a status update from the Police Department on the recent vehicle break-ins. Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli reminded all residents to lock their vehicle and home doors.

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli asked for an update on Town going to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to try to change the number of lanes that can enter Hillside Groves. Mr. O’Keefe stated that the Town Engineer, Don Griffey, was working on the issue. Mr. Griffey has worked with the applicant to get all their information and has reached out to FDOT but had not heard back from them yet.

7. Councilor Lehning

Councilor Lehning asked if there has been any new information about areas around Town annexing into Town. Mr. Wilkes explained the processes of how land can be annexed into the Town. Councilor Lehning asked the Town Council if they had an appetite to try to annex land into the Town.

8. Councilor Miles

Councilor Miles asked for a status update on the FDEM grant (lift station pumps) submission and the Stormwater Grants Submission. Morgan Cates, Public Works Director, explained that FDEM had stated they needed more information and the Town had provided it. Currently, FDEM was still in the decision-making process. Mr. Cates stated that he was still waiting to hear back from the St. Johns River Water Management District about the stormwater grant submission.

Councilor Miles asked for a written report regarding what it would take to take over the wastewater lift station that services the Talichet subdivision. Mr. Cates stated that Don Griffey has been reviewing that lift station and if the Town wanted to take it over and bring it up to the Town specifications, it would cost between \$125,000 and \$150,000. Mr. Cates stated that he would work with Mr. Griffey to create a full report and would send it on to the Town Council.

9. Councilor Lannamañ

Councilor Lannamañ asked if there was an update for the Town's submission of a letter to the MPO supporting a street study. Mr. O'Keefe stated that the letter had been submitted. The next MPO meeting would be held in February. Councilor Lehning stated that submitting that letter was the first step in getting on the MPO's list and may take years to get a response or action.

10. Mayor MacFarlane

Mayor MacFarlane asked for an update on the hydraulic study for the main water treatment plant that the Town had attempted to get. James Southall, Public Utilities Supervisor, stated that the Town was not making any headway in getting the hydraulic study through Kimley-Horn and FGUA, so the Town has asked Halfp to complete the hydraulic study as part of the Master Plan that will be completed by them.

Mayor MacFarlane asked the Town Manager about a public record request that he was to submit to the City of Deland asking them how much water their juice plant uses. Mr. O'Keefe stated that he had not completed that yet.

Mayor MacFarlane asked that, when a new development status report was created for the Town, to please add Drake Point to the list of developments, and its status.

### **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.*

**Peter Tuite, 300 E Croton Way** – Mr. Tuite was concerned about annexations into the Town. Mr. Tuite did not want developers getting rejections from the County then coming to the Town asking to annex into the Town so that they could get a better development approval.

**Tim Everline, 1012 N Lakeshore Blvd** – Mr. Everline stated that he thought the agenda and the meeting for this Town Council meeting had been sent out too late and stated that he believed something needed to be done about it. Mr. Everline also stated that he thought the Town's Finger Piers were getting to be in bad shape and should be repaired.

**Banks Helfrich, 9100 Sams Lake Rd., Clermont Fl.** – Mr. Helfrich spoke about the theme of keeping Lake County beautiful.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

The Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m. | **Attendees: 36**

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Mayor Martha MacFarlane

ATTEST:

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John Brock, Town Clerk

DRAFT