



Town Council Meeting

March 14, 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 | Mayor Pro-Tem Ed Conroy | Mayor Martha MacFarlane

STAFF PRESENT:

Sean O'Keefe, Town Administrator | John Brock, Town Clerk | Rick Thomas, Police Chief | Morgan Cates, Public Works Director | Azure Botts, Code Enforcement Officer | James Southall, Public Utilities Supervisor (via ZOOM) | Tom Wilkes, Town Attorney (via Zoom) | Tom Harowski, Town Planner (via Zoom)

AGENDA APPROVAL/REVIEW

Motion made by Councilor Gallelli to approve the meeting's agenda; Seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy.
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 February 28, 2022 Regular Town Council Meeting.
2. The approval of the minutes and ratification and confirmation of all Town Council actions at the February 28, 2022 Town Council Charter Workshop Meeting.

3. Approval: **Storm Debris Removal, confirmation of option B "County as an Agent" on 2018 Interlocal Agreement (Lake County) starting June 1, 2022 (for 12 months)**

Motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy to approve of the consent 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

PUBLIC HEARING

4. Consideration and Approval: (2nd/Adoption Reading) **Ordinance 2022-001 Capital Improvements Schedule Update**

Martha MacFarlane, Mayor, read Ordinance 2022-001 by title only:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA AMENDING THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT IN CHAPTER 8 OF THE TOWN'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN BY UPDATING THE FIVE-YEAR SCHEDULE OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO INCLUDE ESTIMATED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022 THROUGH FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 PURSUANT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF CHAPTER 163 OF THE FLORIDA STATUTES; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT, CODIFICATION, SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Administrator, Sean O'Keefe, to introduce this item to the council and give an overview of the Ordinance. Mr. O'Keefe explained that there were three changes that were requested to be made to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) during its first reading. The changes that were made as a result of the first reading were: adding a line item for the Howey mausoleum, adjusting the costs for the Well #5 Project, and adding the transportation table (20A) into the CIP.

Mayor MacFarlane opened this item for Public Comment and Questions. There were no public comments, so Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment.

Motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy to approve of Ordinance 2022-001; 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

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

5. Consideration and Approval: **Proclamation Water Conservation Month**

Martha MacFarlane, Mayor, read the Proclamation about declaring the month of April as the Water Conservation Month.

Motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy to approve the Proclamation; 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

6. Consideration and Approval: **Pamela Szydlik Library Board applicant**

Councilor Gallelli welcomed Pamela Szydlik and thanked her for her time.

Motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy to appoint Pamela Szydlik to the Howey-in-the-Hills Library Board; Seconded by Councilor Gallelli. Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

Voting

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

Nay: None

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

7. Town Hall

Town Clerk, John Brock, gave the Town Hall report for February 2022. Mr. Brock explained that the number of permits issued may have been down in February due to the transition to Alpha Inspections as the Town's Building Official.

8. Police Department

Police Chief, Rick Thomas, gave the Police Department report for February 2022. Police Chief Thomas explained that Lt. Brown would be absent for a while due to knee surgery that he had just undergone. Chief Thomas also explained that there were two members of the Police Pension Board who had recently left the board and the Town needed to find two new residents to replace them.

9. Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement Officer, Azure Botts, gave the February 2022 Code Enforcement report/update. Code Enforcement Officer Botts handed out a newly designed Code Enforcement brochure and solicited suggestions for the brochure. Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy suggested mailing out the brochure to all residents in the town and adding a section to the brochure that tells residents where they can look up Town Ordinances. Mayor MacFarlane explained that the Town had interviewed Samuel Reda for Special Magistrate and the Town would be moving forward with retaining his services.

10. Public Works

Public Utilities Supervisor, James Southall, gave the February 2022 Public Utilities report. Mr. Southall explained that the town was in the process of cleaning its 500,000 primary water storage tank; once that was complete the tank would be inspected before being brought back online. This process was expected to take three days.

Public Works Director, Morgan Cates, gave the February 2022 Public Works Department report. Mayor Pro Tem Conroy stated that he thought the maintenance of Sara Maude Mason Park looked terrible.

Councilor Klein identified that there were benches that looked horrible at Sara Maude Mason Park and wanted them replaced with metal benches. Councilor Gallelli suggested that the Public Works Department get trail cameras and use it to see who is breaking the boards on the boardwalk at Sara Maude Mason Park.

11. Library

Town Administrator, Sean O'Keefe, gave an update on the Town's library. Mr. O'Keefe stated that the Town's library submitted two county impact fee applications. One of the applications submitted was for \$7,500, which was for furniture, furnishings, display cubes, and storage items and a second application for \$40,000 worth of books in a special collection of children's literature.

12. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board / Special Events

Town Administrator, Sean O'Keefe, gave the Parks & Recreation report which had been submitted by the board's chair, A.J. Quinones. Mr. O'Keefe and Mayor MacFarlane stated that the Parks & Recreation board chair and others were assisting to plan future events (Easter Egg Dash and Howey Founders Day) due to the resignation of the Events Committee and that the Parks & Recreation board was seeking new volunteers so that it could restart the Events Committee. Mayor MacFarlane stated that she needed Town Councilors to volunteer to assist with the Easter Egg Dash Event on Saturday April 16th.

Mr. O'Keefe stated that the board had submitted its suggestions for how the Town should proceed with the utilization of Pines Park. Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy stated that Town needed to work with the Lake County Trails association to make Pines Park a trailhead. Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy also wanted a joint meeting between the Parks & Recreation Board and the Town Council so that the board could hear what the Town Council supports or doesn't support.

13. Town Attorney

Town Attorney, Tom Wilkes, stated that, during the most recent Florida legislative session, SB620 Local Government Protection Act was passed, and it will have a negative impact on municipalities in Florida. Mr. Wilkes wanted to give a summary of this bill at a future Town Council meeting.

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

Sean O'Keefe, Town Administrator, gave the February 2022 Financial Report. Mr. O'Keefe stated that the Town had paid off its highest interest loan. Mr. O'Keefe also stated that the Daryl Carter parcels would be moving forward with possible annexation into the Town. Mr. O'Keefe also stated that the Town had put out an RFP for Solid Waste services for the Town.

COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

15. Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy

Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy thanked Town Clerk, John Brock, for getting the minutes out on a timely basis.

16. Councilor Lehning

Councilor Lehning stated that he believed the entire Town's staff has done a tremendous job. Councilor Lehning also stated that he would like a future meeting to discuss the Town Council's interest in Annexation of lands to grow the Town. A 15- to 20-minute-long Town Council Workshop was set up for 03/28/2022 at 5:40 p.m. to discuss future annexations.

Councilor Lehning stated that the Town would need to have a public meeting to discuss the Thompson Grove's roadway interconnection with the older part of the Town, if this project moved forward.

Councilor Lehning also brought up the topic of short-term rental properties and asked about the possibility of the Town regulating this type of rental. Town Attorney, Tom Wilkes, stated that the Town can regulate this, to some extent, by regulating noise and parking but can not prohibit short-term rentals.

Councilor Lehning stated that Town should create an outreach program to recruit volunteers for the Town and stated that he would be willing to head up the program. Councilor Lehning suggested that the outreach program could go door-to-door inviting residents to a hot dog cookout at Griffin Park to educate the residents on volunteering opportunities within the Town. Mayor MacFarlane suggested that a handout or pamphlet should be created to use for this purpose. Councilor Klein suggested using events such as the Easter Egg Dash to educate and recruit volunteers.

17. Councilor Gallelli

Councilor Gallelli asked for a status update on the Downtown Sewer project and the sale of the Town's old landfill.

18. Councilor Klein

Councilor Klein stated that some people, who seem not to be Town residents, have been using the finger piers for fishing and he suggested that the usage of these piers should somehow be restricted to just town residents. Town Administrator, Sean O'Keefe, suggested that this topic should be sent to the Parks & Recreation Board for evaluation.

Councilor Klein also stated that it was noble in the past for the Town Council to cut the Councilors' pay in half, but he suggested that it might be time to restore the Councilors' pay back up to the previous levels.

19. Mayor MacFarlane

Mayor MacFarlane thanked everyone for their attendance and participation at the Town Council meeting, which has been excellent. Mayor MacFarlane also stated that, due to work levels, she thought that it was time for the Town to hire a full-time Finance person.

Mayor MacFarlane asked Chief Thomas to order safety vests in green for the Event volunteers to wear during events like the Easter Egg Dash. Mayor MacFarlane also stated that she thought the Town would need to do more for volunteer recognition.

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.

Donna Klein, 701 N. Lakeshore Blvd – Mrs. Klein asked about the status of the Griffin Park exercise equipment, as the padding was all gone from it.

Kathy Coleman, 706 Santa Cruz Lane – Ms. Coleman stated that she was a Board Member for the Friends of the Library (FOL). Ms. Coleman asked for residents to join the FOL to help support the Town's library. Also, Ms. Coleman wanted to make everyone aware that the FOL would be hosting a Masquerade Ball in June to raise money for the library.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m. | **Attendees: 25**

Mayor Martha MacFarlane

ATTEST:

John Brock, Town Clerk