

CITY OF WESTLAKE



MINUTES

City Council First Budget Hearing

Wednesday, September 03, 2025, at 6:00 PM

The Lodge at Westlake Adventure Park
5490 Kingfisher Blvd.
Westlake, Florida 33470

CITY COUNCIL:

JohnPaul O'Connor, Mayor
Greg Langowski, Vice Mayor
Gary Werner, Council Member – Seat 1
Erik Gleason, Council Member – Seat 2
Charlotte Leonard Council Member – Seat 3

CITY STAFF:

Ken Cassel, City Manager
Zoie P. Burgess, CMC, City Clerk
Donald J. Doody, Esq., City Attorney
Osniel Leon, AICP, Planning and Zoning
Suzanne Dombrowski, P.E., ENV SP, Engineering

A first budget hearing of the City Council of the City of Westlake was held on Wednesday, September 3, 2025, at 6:00 PM, at The Lodge at Westlake Adventure Park, 5490 Kingfisher Blvd. Members of the public also attended the meeting through electronic means and accessed as follows:

1. Webex meeting from a computer, tablet or smartphone at the following link:
<https://cityofwestlake.my.webex.com>

Meeting ID: 2633 520 6190

2. United States Toll: +1-650-479-3208

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CALL TO ORDER

Mayor O'Connor called the City of Westlake First Budget Hearing on Wednesday, September 3, 2025, to order at 6:00 PM

ROLL CALL

Present and constituting a quorum:

Councilman Gary Werner
Councilman Erik Gleason
Councilwoman Charlotte Leonard
Vice Mayor Greg Langowski
Mayor JohnPaul O'Connor

Also Present:

Ken Cassel, City Manager
Zoie P. Burgess, CMC, City Clerk
Donald J. Doody, Esq., City Attorney
Osniel Leon, AICP, Planning and Zoning
Suzanne Dombrowski, P.E., ENV SP, Engineering

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor O'Connor led the Pledge of Allegiance

ADDITIONS, DELETIONS OR MODIFICATIONS, AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor O'Connor called for any additions, deletions, or modifications to the agenda.

Mayor O'Connor called for a motion.

Motion by Vice Mayor Langowski, to approve the agenda as is, seconded by Councilwoman Leonard.

UPON ROLL CALL:

Councilman Werner	YES
Councilman Gleason	YES
Councilwoman Leonard	YES
Vice mayor Langowski	YES
Mayor O'Connor	YES

With all in favor, motion carried without dissent (5-0).

FIRST BUDGET HEARING

A. RESOLUTION 2025-20 - Approval of Tentative Millage Rate for Fiscal Year 2026

Submitted By: Administration

RESOLUTION 2025-20

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF WESTLAKE, FLORIDA, ADOPTING A TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATE OF _____ FOR THE CITY'S GENERAL OPERATING FUND FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING ON OCTOBER 1, 2025, ENDING ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2026; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor O'Connor introduced the item.

Mr. Cassel stated there were minor budget changes from last meeting, including a reduction of millage rate from 4.7 to 4.6.

Mayor O'Connor opened discussion to Council. Scenarios discussed if the rate went lower, what would be the effect on reserves and taxes. Mr. Cassel strongly advised against further reductions, citing financial responsibility and the uncertainties of new revenue sources.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Langowski to approve a tentative millage rate of 4.6 a 6.31% increase over the rollback rate. Seconded by Councilman Werner.

Mr. Cassel identified the rollback rate of 4.3269 an increase of 6.31% increase over rollback rate.

Councilman Werner withdrew second. Motion failed.

Mayor O'Connor opened discussion to the public:

PUBLIC COMMENTS

This section of the agenda allows for comments from the public to speak. Each speaker will be given a total of three (3) minutes to comment. A public comment card should be completed and returned to the City Clerk. When you are called to speak, please go to the podium, and prior to addressing Council, state your name and address for the record. All public comments will be noted and may receive a response if necessary. Any follow-up will be handled by staff later.

Public Comment – Mr. Bobby Farber – 4829 Saint Armands Way – Mr. Farber requested clarification on whether part of the budget would be going to future street lighting, flashing stop signs and roadway services.

Public Comment -- Alphie Aiken -- 5416 Liberty Lane – Ms. Aiken advocates for a lower millage rate of 4.5, which would increase surplus reserve amounts.

Public Comment -- John Shuman -- 5399 Liberty Lane – Mr. Shuman suggested, while discussing numbers, to include a color chart for more impact and clarification.

No additional public comments.

Council had further discussion regarding proposed millage rate.

Motion by Vice Mayor Langowski for the proposed millage rate of 4.6, which is a 6.31% increase over the rollback rate. Motion seconded by Councilman Werner.

UPON ROLL CALL:

Councilman Gleason	YES
Councilwoman Leonard	YES
Vice Mayor Langowski	YES
Mayor O'Connor	YES
Councilman Werner	YES

With all in favor, motion carries without dissent (5-0).

Motion made by Vice Mayor Langowski to approve Resolution 2025-21 approving the tentative budget and the milage rate of 4.6. Seconded by Councilman Gleason.

UPON ROLL CALL:

Councilwoman Leonard	YES
Vice Mayor Langowski	YES
Mayor O'Connor	YES
Councilman Werner	YES
Councilman Gleason	YES

With all in favor, motion carries without dissent (5-0).

B. RESOLUTION 2025-21 - Approval of Tentative Budget for Fiscal Year 2026

Submitted By: Administration

RESOLUTION 2025-21

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WESTLAKE, FLORIDA, ADOPTING A TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2025 AND ENDING ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2026; DETERMINING AND FIXING THE AMOUNTS NECESSARY TO CARRY ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CITY FOR THE ENSUING YEAR; DETERMINING THE AMOUNT OF APPLICABLE FUNDS ON HAND; ESTIMATING RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES FOR ALL FUNDS, EXHIBIT "A"; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor O'Connor introduced the item.

Mayor O'Connor opened for council discussion, there being none.

Mayor O'Connor opened the floor to the public.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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Public Comment -- Dana Aiken -- 5416 Liberty Lane – Mr. Aiken mentioned his bill last year was at a 4.7 and was appreciative that it was going to be reduced to 4.6. Reminded council to consider residents when it comes to tax increases.

Councilman Werner made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-21 approving the tentative budget for fiscal year of 2026, as presented, seconded by Councilman Gleason.

UPON ROLL CALL:

Vice Mayor Langowski	YES
Mayor O'Connor	YES
Councilman Werner	YES
Councilman Gleason	YES
Councilwoman Leonard	YES

With all in favor, motion carries without dissent (5-0).

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

A. Councilwoman Leonard thanked the mayor for his hard work by lowering the tax rate and thanked the residents for sharing their comments.

B. Councilman Gleason thanked staff, accountant, and Mr. Cassel for the hard work put in making sure the budget was balanced and equal.

C. Councilman Werner thanked his colleagues and staff for doing a good job putting materials together.

D. Vice Mayor Langowski stated he was glad taxes went down and looks forward to seeing that every year

E. Mayor O'Connor stated he was pleased tax number dropped to 4.6, he has been successful in lowering taxes each year

REPORT - CITY ATTORNEY

No comments.

REPORT - CITY MANAGER

No comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND REQUESTS

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you are called to speak, please go to the podium, and prior to addressing Council, state your name and address for the record. All public comments will be noted and may receive a response if necessary. Any follow-up will be handled by staff later.

Public Comment -- Bobby Farber -- 4829 Saint Armands Way -- Mr. Farber asked for clarification on how much the millage rate reduction would save the average homeowner. City Manager Cassel explained that for a home valued at \$500,000, the reduction from 4.7 to 4.6 would save approximately \$50 per year.

Mayor O'Connor added that of resident's total tax bills, only about 20% goes to the city, with the remainder going to schools, county, fire services, and other taxing authorities.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor O'Connor adjourned the meeting at 6:47 PM.

Odet Izquierdo, Acting City Clerk

JohnPaul O'Connor, Mayor