



MINUTES OF THE HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS TOWN COUNCIL
HELD SEPTEMBER 27, 2021

Mayor MacFarlane called the Town Council Meeting to order at 6:24 p.m.
Mayor MacFarlane led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
Mr. Jim Steele read a poem titled “Twenty-Thousand Days”.

Roll Call:

Members Present:

Martha MacFarlane, Mayor
George Lehning, Councilor
Rick Klein, Councilor
Ed Conroy, Mayor Pro-Tem
Marie V. Gallelli, Councilor

Staff Present:

Sean O’Keefe, Town Administrator
John Brock, Town Clerk
Thomas Wilkes, Town Attorney (Virtual)
Thomas Harowski, Town Planner (Virtual)
John Southall, Public Works Supervisor (Virtual)
Rick Thomas, Police Chief (Virtual)

AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion made by Councilor Gallelli to approve the agenda; Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. The approval of the minutes and ratification and confirmation of all Town Council actions at the September 13, 2021, Town Council Meeting.

Motion made by Councilor Klein to approve the minutes; Councilor Lehning seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

PUBLIC HEARING

2. Consideration and Approval: **Resolution 2021-15 Vacating Public Right-of-Way TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS VACATING PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY – WEST OLEANDER AVENUE**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Planner, Tom Harowski, to review the Resolution and vacation process. Mr. Harowski stated that the request for the vacation of the easement property came from the Flacks, who own the property to the north of the Town’s easement. The property that is being referenced was an easement that had been created to continue the West Oleander Ave. street, west of South Florida Ave. Mr. Harowski also explained that there were three factors that the town staff looked at in reference to the request to vacate this property. The first factor was if the easement was necessary to provide access to any property (no it was not). The second factor

that was reviewed was if the property or potential street was necessary or useful in providing any other transportation services (this answer was also no). The third factor that was reviewed was if the easement would be useful for any utility purposes (the answer to this question was also no). The Planning and Zoning Board reviewed those three factors and made a recommendation to vacate the public right-of-way.

Public Comment:

None

Motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy to approve of Resolution 2021-15; Councilor Gallelli seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

Councilor Lehning	YES	Councilor Klein	YES
Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy	YES	Councilor Gallelli	YES
Mayor MacFarlane	YES		

NEW BUSINESS

3. Consideration and Approval: **Auditor Agreement with Binney Accounting & Assurance Services, PLLC.**

The Mayor explained that this is the auditor that the Town has used for the last two years. The auditor did not raise his price last year. The Mayor recommended renewing the agreement for the next year.

Public Comment:

None

Motion made by Councilor Lehning to approve of the agreement with Binney Accounting & Assurance Services, PLLC.; Councilor Klein seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

Councilor Lehning	YES	Councilor Klein	YES
Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy	YES	Councilor Gallelli	YES
Mayor MacFarlane	YES		

4. Discussion: **Multi-Family Dwelling Impact Fees**

Mayor MacFarlane started a discussion on impact fees for multi-family dwelling units, such as the townhomes slated for development in front of Venezia. Sean O'Keefe, Town Administrator,

explained that Town Councilors were provided the impact fee schedule for the city of Mount Dora to use as a reference for discussion and the next discussion on Library impact fees.

Councilor Klein suggested that the impact fee for a townhome should be the same as a Single-Family Residence (SFR). Councilor Klein explained that townhomes are still SFRs, they just have a smaller footprint.

Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy suggested that town staff should reach out to other local municipalities and find out what their impact fees are and what the thought process to why they were set that way. Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy stated that while the town looks at updating impact fees, the town should also look at adding a Road Impact fee.

Public Comment:

Berniece Hower, 444 Bellissimo Place – Mrs. Hower believes that townhomes should be treated as SFR. Mrs. Hower stated she was concerned about available parking for townhomes.

Doug Hower, 444 Bellissimo Place – Mr. Hower wanted to know how fire impact fees are assessed. Mr. Hower also shared a story about a townhouse complex in Virginia Beach going up in flames because the fire walls were not built up to the top of the attic.

Richard Mulvaney, 308 Dupont Circle - Mr. Mulvaney explained that he was a certified building contractor and that the state required fire walls to be built up to the roof.

5. Discussion: Library Impact Fees

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Administrator, Sean O’Keefe, to explain local and county library impact fees. Howey-in-the-Hills does not currently collect local library impact fees. Other local municipalities, like Mount Dora, do collect local library impact fees and can still tap into the county’s shared fees. The county collects library impact fees which are set at \$191 for an SFR. The county fees are then used for projects at all the libraries throughout the cooperative; as an example, Howey-in-the-Hills used those funds to build the Howey-in-the-Hills Library Education Center (LEC).

Councilor Lehning asked how the different municipal libraries make their requests for funding from the county. Mr. O’Keefe explained the county’s ranking policy.

Public Comment:

Berniece Hower, 444 Bellissimo Place - Mrs. Hower said that she was shocked that Mount Dora was able to keep their local library fees and still partake in the county fees. She stated that the Town should do this as well.

Frances O’Keefe Wagler, 409 W Central Ave. – Mrs. Wagler stated that she agreed with Mrs. Hower and that the Town should do what Mount Dora does and charge its own local library impact fees. She thought that this would help the library have as many books as Sean O’Keefe has.

Old Business:

6. Consideration and Approval: **Town Hall Electronic Notification Sign Quote.**

Mayor MacFarlane stated that the Town has been working with the Friends of the Library to get bids for the Electronic Notification Sign Project and the Friends of the Library would help fund the project. Mayor MacFarlane explained that the Town needs a way to notify its residents about important matters in a timely manner. The Notification Sign will be placed on the south-east corner of the Town Hall property. There were three bids that had been submitted for the Electric Sign Project. The Mayor explained that the town staff recommendation was to go with the proposal from CTI. The reasoning for going with CTI was that it is a domestic product (the boards are built in South Dakota). CTI is also a recognized, local, Lake County vendor. CTI and MidFlorida Signs both had 5-year warranties. CTI also had immediate availability for the sign, which other vendors did not have. CTI will provide training to town staff, the Town Clerk and Library staff.

Councilor Lehning stated that CTI is about \$6,000 more than GoBright and asked if the town had quantified the differences that led to recommending CTI over GoBright. Mayor MacFarlane explained that GoBright’s product was from China and they do not have a standard vendor for their boards. Also, GoBright is a “one-gentleman” show and requires a proprietary piece of hardware and software to communicate with their boards. With the other vendor’s signs, not only would there be support from the vendor, but there would also be support available from their manufacturers.

Public Comment:

Berniece Hower, 444 Bellissimo Place - Mrs. Hower said that she is in favor of CTI because they are made in America. Mrs. Hower asked if the sign would interfere with the Town’s fountain.

Motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy to approve the contract with CTI for the electric sign; Councilor Gallelli seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

Councilor Lehning	YES	Councilor Klein	YES
Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy	YES	Councilor Gallelli	YES
Mayor MacFarlane	YES		

7. Consideration and Approval: **Howey Fishing Pier Renovation Project.**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Administrator, Sean O’Keefe, to explain the status of this project. Mr. O’Keefe explained that the Town received 6 proposals for the renovation project. Mr. O’Keefe also stated that the town staff recommendation was to go with ESX Construction LLC. Their base price for wood came in at \$34,900. Their quote for using a composite material, rather than wood, came in at \$41,300. The staff recommendation was to go with the composite material with the ESX Construction LLC quote, this was due to there being less required future maintenance.

Councilor Klein explained that he had spoken with the ESX Construction LLC vendor about the composite material, and it was a plastic ground up material mixed with wood. The composite material could be used in larger spans of space, the life expectancy is about 20-years, and you do not have to seal it like you would wood.

Councilor Lehning said that the Town needs to know the exact substructure of the deck before voting on a motion.

Public Comment:

Richard Mulvaney, 308 Dupont Circle - Mr. Mulvaney explained the spacing requirements for the use of a polymer product. Councilor Klein asked what Mr. Mulvaney would use and he stated that he would use the composite.

Berniece Hower, 444 Bellissimo Place – Mrs. Hower explained that because of less maintenance, the Town should go with the composite material or something other than wood.

Motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy to approve the contract with ESX Construction LLC using composite material, pending confirmation of structural soundness; Councilor Gallelli seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

Councilor Lehning	YES
Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy	YES
Mayor MacFarlane	YES

Councilor Klein	YES
Councilor Gallelli	YES

8. Consideration and Approval (First Reading): **CDBG-CV Grant Application**

Town Administrator, Mr. O’Keefe, stated that nothing had changed since the last meeting on this topic (which was right before this meeting). Mr. O’Keefe also said that as with the Public Hearing, we still welcome all public comment about this topic. The deadline to submit the actual application for this grant is November 1, 2021.

Public Comment:

Berniece Hower, 444 Bellissimo Place – Mrs. Hower explained that she had attended the Public Hearing before this meeting, and that she thought the town needed to apply for the grant to assist with getting the new well. Mrs. Hower stated that the town should use chlorine dioxide instead of normal chlorine when treating water.

Motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy to approve of the town going forward and submitting an application for the CDBG-CV grant; Councilor Gallelli seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously by Voice Vote.

Council Member Reports:

Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy

Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy stated that he and Sean O’Keefe had attended an Economic Development Summit at the Mission Inn. Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy stated that at the summit he had learned that, as an operating principal, when a municipality takes on debt for a project, you are spreading the debt from the current users to future users as well and that wise use of debt is a good idea for municipalities.

Councilor Lehning

Councilor Lehning read a statement from the Howey Events Committee about the Halloween Bash and trick-or-treat around Central Park. The Committee is in need of the Town’s residents’ generosity. The Committee would like residents to donate Halloween candy in zip lock style snack bags. Donations can be dropped off at Town Hall or the Library by October 15th.

Councilor Gallelli

Councilor Gallelli stated that the library is running some raffle contests to try to get some more people in the library and to help support the library. Councilor Gallelli also reminded residents that if they are leaving a refrigerator out for pickup, that they need to remove the doors on it for safety.

Councilor Klein

Councilor Klein stated he believed it is unacceptable that the Sara Maude Park boardwalk is closed. Councilor Klein stated that he thought the town should use a contractor to pressure wash and repair the boardwalk and not Public Services. Mayor MacFarlane stated that Town would work to expedite the process getting the park re-opened.

Mayor MacFarlane

Mayor MacFarlane stated that the Howey fire truck has been moved to a location to repair the brakes on it. Mayor MacFarlane also stated that she would have the documents from the study for the Walkable Downtown sent out to the Town Councilors.

Public Comments

Lane Flack, 607 S Florida Ave. – Mr. Flack asked what happen to the town marker on south Highway 19.

Richard Mulvaney, 308 Dupont Circle – Mr. Mulvaney stated that the Planning and Zoning Board asked Town Council to look at some of the older approved Development Agreements with smaller lot lines and perhaps re-evaluate them. Mr. Mulvaney wants a town with houses with larger setbacks between them.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The Meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m. | **Attendees: 38**

Mayor Martha MacFarlane

ATTEST:

John Brock, Town Clerk