

MINUTES OF THE HOWEY IN THE HILLS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD JUNE 25, 2018

Mayor Sears called the Pre-Work Session to order at 5:45 p.m.

Present: Mayor Sears, Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel, Councilor Scott and Councilor Mabry.

Absent: Councilor Conroy, Excused. (Joined by phone)

Also Present: Town Clerk Burke, Chief Thomas and Public Services Director.

Councilor Scott let everyone know the Light Emitting Diode (LED) Light upgrade had begun in Town.

The Pre-Work Session ended at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Sears called the Town Council Meeting of June 25, 2018 to order at 6:00 p.m.
Mayor Sears led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
Public Services Director Ernest led the Invocation.

Present: Mayor Sears, Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel, Councilor Scott and Councilor Mabry.

Absent: Councilor Conroy, Excused. (Joined by phone)

Also Present: Town Clerk Burke, Chief Thomas and Public Services Director.

PRESENTATION

Member Tuite, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, proposal to comply with the newly effective (June 1) Lake County Fertilizer Ordinance - 2017 - 55.

Member Tuite, Parks and recreation advisory Board, gave a presentation on the local fertilizer ordinances. He also explained the benefits of native plant landscaping and maintaining a natural buffer to the lakes. He explained that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board wanted to build an example plot at Griffin Park.

Sal Gallelli, 1104 N Tangerine, asked how big the example plot at Griffin park would be. **Member Tuite** replied about 50x50 foot.

Marian, Lake County Water Management Authority, said that there are grants the Town can apply for to help educate residents and better show what the Town can do to help preserve the lakes in our County.

Mayor Sears said that the Town would work on getting a fertilizer ordinance in place.

Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel said that if the Town adopts their own ordinances they would become the enforcers. **Mayor Sears** replied that the ordinance would just be to educate residents. **Member Tuite** said that the Town wouldn't want to enforce but encourage residents to help preserve the lake and use native plants. The Town can also help support as well.

Mayor Sears said that Town Hall staff would work on getting and ordinance written.

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration and Approval of policy 7.14 Longevity Policy (Councilor Scott).

Councilor Scott said that the Town Attorney's had reviewed the policy multiple times and said that the policy language was ready.

Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel said that he was for this policy but said that when an employee was counseled it needed to be included in the employee's personnel file.

Mayor Sears said that he gives employee evaluations and that the Town Clerk maintains the records.

Mayor Sears asked if the Town Council wanted to make it effective immediately and if it was to be retro activated.

Councilor Conroy said that the Town Council had agreed at a prior meeting that the money would be budgeted in the upcoming budget. (Fiscal Year 18-19.)

Mayor Sears said that it would be effective October 1, 2018.

Joe Zdunsky, 704 Camino Real, asked if the Town Employees were paid a fair wage. He then asked if the policy was retro activated how many employees did it effect?

Councilor Scott replied four. **Mr. Zdunsky** said that the Town had the highest millage rate in Lake County. **Mayor Sears** explained the reasoning as to why the Town adopted such a high millage rate in the past.

Councilor Scott seconded by, Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel moved to approve policy 7.14 Longevity Policy. Motion carried 4-0 with a roll call vote.

Consideration and Approval of the proposed increase to the Utility Repair Expert (URE) Contract.

Mayor Sears said that utility company the Town uses was asking for an increase.

Councilor Mabry asked what the increase was. **Mayor Sears** said that the Town currently pays \$1,550.00 a month and the Town would pay \$1,950.00 a month if the increase was accepted. **Councilor Mabry** said so about a 23% increase.

Public Services Director Ernest said that they haven't asked for an increase in three years.

Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel said that these were the same people who helped and solved our problems when our sulfur levels were high.

Public Services Director Ernest said that they also balanced the chlorination at the water plant. He added that they all work well together.

Councilor Mabry asked if the Town should put it out for bid as a 23% increase was a lot.

Mayor Sears said that the Utility Repair Experts team gives the Town the expertise. They help with emergency call outs and rotate every week with after hour call outs. They run water samples and keep the Town in FDEP regulations. He added that there are not a lot of people who are in this kind of work and that they were hard to find.

Councilor Mabry asked if the Town could hire someone for the cost of what the contract was for. **Mayor Sears** replied no. That someone with the knowledge and experience that URE has would be about \$45,000 - \$60,000 a year. Not including benefits, vehicle, etc.

Chief Thomas said that URE has always had a rapid response when dealing with them for emergency call outs.

Councilor Conroy said that it was the first increase in three years and that he assumed the price also included all the equipment needed to do the job. **Public Services Director Ernest** replied yes.

Marie Galleli, 1104 N Tangerine, asked if the contract was for three years. **Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel** said that there was no date certain but that either party could terminate the contract with sixty days' notice.

Collen Scott, 706 Camino Real, asked if the Town put out a request for qualifications? **Mayor Sears** said no but that the Town Council could.

Sal Galleli, 1104 N. Tangerine, said that there was no reason why the Town couldn't ask that it be written as a three year contract.

Carissa Imel, 401 S. Palm Ave, asked if the \$10.00 a month water improvement fee would increase due to contract increase. **Mayor Sears** replied no that the \$10.00 a month water improvement fee was to pay off the loan for the water plant. **Mrs. Imel** said that her water quality has improved in the last couple years.

Councilor Mabry seconded by, **Councilor Scott** moved to approve the proposed increase to the Utility Repair Expert (URE) Contract. Motion carried 4-0 with a roll call vote.

Consideration and Approval to reappoint Bill Herrington, Trey Purser and Clay Ormsbee to the Police Pension Board.

Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel seconded by **Councilor Mabry** moved to reappoint Bill Herrington, Trey Purser and Clay Ormsbee to the Police Pension Board. Motion carried 4-0 with a roll call vote.

Consideration and Approval of the Howey in the Hills Water Master Plan.

Mayor Sears said that the Town signed a contract with Booth, Ern, Straughtan and Hoitt (BESH) to complete a Water Master Plan. He said that this was the official sign off from the Town Council. He added that the master plan identifies the Town's needs regarding future growth. The Sewer Master Plan will be ready soon.

Councilor Mabry seconded by, **Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel** moved to approve the Howey in the Hills Water Master Plan. Motion carried 4-0 with a roll call vote.

Discussion: Preliminary Budget for FY 2018-2019

A. Department Directors Submittal

B. Mayor Sear's Balanced Budget

Mayor Sears said that the Department Directors and Boards submitted their Budget request to him. He took all of their wants and cut some things that were not necessities. Tonight, he had presented the Town Council a Balanced Budget. He had rolled the millage rate back to 8.8750 from the current 9.2750 millage rate. He said that he felt this was the year the Town should roll back the millage rate. He said that with the millage rate at 8.8750 there was no wiggle room in the budget. He said that July 09, 2018 at 7:30 a.m. was that Budget Work Session. He explained that at the meeting the Town Council along with the Department Head and Boards would meet to discuss their needs and wants. After that meeting the Mayor would re-balance the Budget for the Town Council's review.

Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel said that once the tentative millage rate is adopted you can't go any higher.

Mayor Sears said that the difference in ad valorem taxes at the 9.2750 millage rate and the 8.8750 in his current Budget was about \$37,000.00.

Councilor Scott said that he agreed with lowering the millage rate but thought that the Town Council should wait until next year when almost all of the Venezia Subdivision was on the tax roll.

Mayor Sears said that when compiling everyone's budget request he had to cut back \$172,000.00 to balance the Budget.

Councilor Mabry told Mayor Sears that he did a good job on the Budget.

Sal Gallelli, 1104 N. Tangerine, said that Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel agreed that when the economy came back he would be the one to vote on lowering the millage rate. As far as Councilor Scott you can't be on the fence. That the Town Council as a whole needed to tighten the purse strings.

Consideration and Approval to allow a Temporary Construction fence to be permitted for a period of 180 days.

John Rhodes, Pathfinder Development, said that he had purchased the lots on South. Florida Avenue (Howey Gardens) and wanted to obtain permission to put up a temporary construction fence.

Mayor Sears said that he was unaware that he was building all the lots. So he used the 180 days as a start reference but would think the Town Council could extend it to 365 days with a renewal.

Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel asked if it was going to be a chain-link fence with screening. **John Rhodes** replied yes.

Councilor Mabry asked if it would be a six-foot fence. **John Rhodes** replied yes.

Mayor Sears said that this request is typical for a construction site.

Councilor Mabry asked when John Rhodes would start. **John Rhodes** replied in a few weeks.

Councilor Mabry also asked how it would be secured since it is currently hurricane season. **John Rhodes** said that he would place the fence in the ground to secure it.

Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel *seconded by, **Councilor Mabry** moved to approve a Temporary Construction fence to be permitted for a period of 365 days. (Howey Gardens). Motion carried 4-0 with a roll call vote.*

OLD BUSINESS

BOARD REPORTS

Library Board Minutes – No Comment

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Report & Minutes -No Comment

Planning & Zoning Board Minutes-None- No Comment

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Code Enforcement/Police Department Report

Chief Thomas said that there was an attempted suicide in Town and unfortunately the gentleman did pass away.

Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel thanked Public Services Director Ernest for his job well done with consulting the family in their time of need.

Finance Report – No Comment

Impact Fee Balance – No Comment

Library Director Report

Town Clerk Burke said that Library Director Hall submitted her State Grant.

Public Services Report (Staff Meeting Minutes) – No Comment

Town Hall Report – No Comment

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Sears- No Comment

Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel- No Comment

Councilor Mabry-No Comment

Councilor Scott- No Comment

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sal Gallelli, 1104 N Tangerine, said that Member Tuite's presentation was great.

Joe Zdunsky, 704 Santa Cruz, asked if the Police Department had access to the southern entrance gate at Mission Inn. **Chief Thomas** said that they used to but don't have access now. He added that the gate had a decibel meter on it and that if it heard a certain decibel as in a siren it would automatically open. **Chief Thomas** said that he would look into getting gate access.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

ATTEST:

Chris Sears, Mayor

Dairian Burke
Town Clerk