

MINUTES OF THE HOWEY IN THE HILLS TOWN COUNCIL  
BUDGET WORK SESSION HELD AUGUST 4, 2020.

Mayor MacFarlane called the August 4, 2020 Howey in the Hills Budget Work Session to order at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor MacFarlane, Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy, Councilor Nebel, Councilor McGill.

Also Present: Chief Thomas

**Preliminary Budget for FY 2020-2021**

**Mayor MacFarlane** reviewed Revenue. No comments from Council or public.

**Mayor MacFarlane** went through Legislative, Finance/Administrative and Other General Government. **Councilor McGill** commented on the Town Clerk's salary being lower than the compensation for the previous Clerk.

**Mayor MacFarlane** asked if there questions on the History budget. Ms. Maffia had no comments.

**Mayor MacFarlane** said that there is only \$100 budgeted for Cemetery because Public Services budgets for the care of the grounds.

**Mayor MacFarlane** explained that the Park and Recreation Board funding request for the electronic message board was cut because the Police Department is applying for a grant for the same and if the grant is not received it is an appropriate use for P&R impact fees. In addition, we must review/change the Town ordinances to allow for an electronic sign. **Councilor Conroy** asked about the Venezia sidewalk to the Lake County School Board buildings and the need for more information/approval from FDOT for the right-of-way. **Mayor MacFarlane** confirmed he was correct. In addition, impact fees would be available for the sidewalk and when the Town's impact fee Ordinances are updated to match the state the Town may be able to contribute some funds to the reparation of the Sara Maude Mason boardwalk though we do not have sufficient funds to complete the project. The Town should look for a matching grant. The current estimate for Sara Maude is \$114,000.

**Mayor MacFarlane** said that the Events budget was equal to the FY 2020 amount but that the Christmas Festival may not occur due to COVID. **Councilor Conroy** asked about the Festival attendance. **Mayor MacFarlane** responded that it was between three and five hundred for the parade. Between one and two hundred for the festival activities. **Councilor McGill** asked whether the doubt as to whether the festival would occur was due to COVID. The Mayor confirmed.

**Mayor MacFarlane** asked for questions/comments on the Police Advanced Training and Police Retirement funds. **Councilor Nebel, Councilor McGill and Councilor Conroy** had no comments.

**Mayor MacFarlane** walked through the Impact Fees. **Councilor McGill** asked about the date for the expiration of the Well 3 agreement with FDOT. **Mayor MacFarlane** thought it is 2033. **Mayor MacFarlane** discussed the pressure on the existing wells with Whispering Hills asking for a subdivision review and some “burbings” from Lake Hill, next to Well 3 on HWY 48.

**Mayor MacFarlane** Utility: talked about the realignment of the salaries and associated expenses between the Utility fund (restricted fund) and other funds. **Councilor McGill** asked if the increase was offset by the decrease the other funds. **Mayor MacFarlane** confirmed it was. **Mayor MacFarlane** added the Bishop’s Gate ERU revenues. **Mayor MacFarlane** pointed out increases in the budget for Other Contractual Services. **Councilor McGill** asked if the increase was due to the age of the infrastructure/number of repairs. **Mayor MacFarlane** affirmed. **Councilor Conroy** said that URE was identifying and fixing many of the breaks the were impacting our CUP. He also said that our water system is in much better shape since he joined the Town Council. **Councilor Nebel** said that in previous years many infrastructure repairs/improvement had been deferred due to budget constraints.

**Fran O’keefe-Wagler** asked if reserves were budgeted. **Mayor MacFarlane** responded no and asked Councilor Nebel and Conroy to comment. **Councilor Nebel** said that it could be done a couple of ways. It may be possible to setup a reserve account, but we were and are in doubt about how it’s done. **Councilor Conroy** said that the closest thing we have is the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) fund and that is not budgeted. It required by the state and we should look at it mid-year. Tom Harowski can assist.

**Mayor MacFarlane** asked if there were questions on Public Services and Transportation. **Councilor McGill** questioned the reduction in salaries. **Mayor MacFarlane** confirmed that it was due to the appropriate allocation of a percentage of those costs to the Utility fund. **Councilor McGill** asked about the funds budgeted for street lighting. **Mayor MacFarlane** explained that FDOT reimbursed \$5,700 but the town is responsible for the electric and maintenance. The improved lighting for Central and Palm is included.

**Mayor MacFarlane** met with the Library Director, Tara Hall and Mr. O’keefe to discuss the benefits of a larger investment in books for the Library. **Mr. O’keefe** stated that Lake County gives out approx. one million dollars in appropriations to the municipal libraries based on previous years total circulation and sharing resources with other people and libraries in the county. The numbers are calculated in the current year with the numbers from last year for the following year’s allocation. **Councilor McGill** asked about County funding for increased or improved programs. **Mr. O’keefe** restated that the funding is based solely on circulation.

**Mayor MacFarlane** moved on to Law Enforcement saying there were no changes since the last Budget Work Session on July 8. **Councilor McGill** questioned the increase in salaries. **Chief Thomas** said that the increase in salaries was Code Enforcement. **Councilor McGill** questioned the detail. **Mayor MacFarlane** said that she and the Chief would look into it. **Councilor McGill** asked about 440. **Mayor MacFarlane** said that the detail for the expense was listed directly below the line.

**Mayor MacFarlane** asked to cancel the August 10 budget workshop to get more final August final numbers, further qualifying the budget. Councilors McGill, Conroy and Nebel agreed.

#### **Citizen's Comment**


There was no public comment.

#### **Adjourn the Meeting**

Councilor McGill seconded by Councilor Nebel motioned to adjourn the meeting. The Meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

ATTEST:

  
Mayor MacFarlane

  
Chief Thomas