

MINUTES OF THE HOWEY IN THE HILLS TOWN COUNCIL
HELD DECEMBER 14, 2020

Mayor MacFarlane called the Town Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor MacFarlane led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Mr. Steel read a poem

Roll Call

Present: Mayor MacFarlane, Pro-Tem Conroy, Councilor Lehning, Councilor Rick Klein, and Councilor Gallelli

Also present: Chief Thomas, Lt. Brown

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. The approval of the minutes and ratification and confirmation of all Town Council actions at the November 9, 2020 and November 30, 2020 Town Council Meetings**

Pro-Tem Conroy made a motion to approve and Councilor Gallelli seconded

Roll call vote, passed unanimously

New Business

2. Consideration and Approval of RESOLUTION 2020-008. A Resolution Amending the General Fund, Police Retirement Fund, Police Advanced Training Fund, Tree Fund, Impact Fee Fund and Water/Sanitation Fund for Budget Year 2019-2020. (Budget Amendment 2020-001).

Mayor informed council that we are late in completing the budget amendment. Did not know we had to file within 60 days of the end of our fiscal year. We may get a “ding” from the state for this delay. Items are all budgeted for. Councilor Pro-Tem Conroy had a question about this and in reviewing the CDD, though we budget for state revolving loan fund but it does not reflect in the accounting system itself with exception of movement of funds from our checking at Seacoast to the state fund revolving loan mgt. account at Seaside. A journal entry is done to move funds but need clarification why is done this way – done since beginning of loan. Why is it budgeted if not reflected? Will try to get clarification on this. The amount budgeted last year was \$162,540 which is what it should be. Amount this year is less because payments went from about \$81,000 to \$72,000 because of amortization. When we finalized Amendment 3 our payment schedule was changed. Councilor Pro-Tem Conroy asked “so last year’s audit was incorrect”? Mayor MacFarlane said because received amendment in May/June it is correct. We owe 1.657M on loan yet.

The Mayor read the resolution 2020-008 in detail.

Motion to approve by Pro-Tem Conroy and Councilor Klein seconded.

Discussion – Pro-Tem Conroy stated so expenditures 3.2M plus \$150 odd dollars? Mayor MacFarlane trying to find out where reflected appropriately. Don’t think numbers will change at all. Offsets revenue rather than being an expense.

Discussion – Councilor Lehning asked if appropriate to vote on if questions. Mayor replied if we need to do an additional amendment in future, we will.

No Public Comments

Roll call vote – passed unanimously with reservation.

Mayor MacFarlane said have same issue with CDD payment. We just draw down. It is a pass through for the funds. Does not reflect at revenue or expense, but it should, specifically, the amount for CDD wastewater.

3. Consideration and Approval of RESOLUTION 2020-009. A Resolution of the Town of Howey-in the-Hills, Florida; supporting the Florida Association of Counties adopting a policy statement to expand the use of Tourist Development Taxes for Feasibility Studies, Design and Engineering Costs; and providing for an effective date.

Motion to approve made by Pro-Tem Conroy and seconded by Councilor Klein.

Mayor MacFarlane read RESOLUTION 2020-009 in detail. Discussion – Councilor Gallelli asked if, for us to use tourist dollars, do we only get to use the dollars that Howey has created as money comes from county? Mayor MacFarlane said that there was no allocation of money right now, Lake County currently has not been allocated any money. If it passes, Howey may receive funds if revenue sharing or may be just for joint projects like with the MPO. Councilor Gallelli asked about effective date – Mayor said that we were resolving this to support Lake County and that Lake County would then take it to the FAC.

No public comments.

Roll Call – passed unanimously.

4. Discussion and Approval: Howey Piggybacking on Tavares contract with Griffey Engineering

Mayor proposing benefits of leveraging Howey contracts to be executed with other communities. Examples - Sewer project and relocation of well. Mr. Griffey has been used for other Howey projects. Mayor reviewed with Tavares and asked if can piggyback for larger amounts and larger projects. They confirmed would not be problem. Our law firm with Mr. Wilkes and Heather have reviewed the documents.

Motion to approve made by Pro-Tem Conroy and seconded by Councilor Gallelli.

Discussion – Councilor Gallelli asked about getting better rates with this piggybacking. Mayor advised the rates we now receive from Griffey are good. Councilor Lehning asked who gives us

the estimate to build the project out. We have \$400K for the sewer project from the state. For the well the money will come from St John River Water District to be signed after the first of the year. Mr. Griffey is a contractor and only does the engineering. This is to eliminate to bid project. To build project will be bid out as this is not what Griffey does. Put out for bid after he provides engineering costs. Downsized project as was original requested. Asked Besh scope of project downsized – gave to state and extended time for \$400K and Griffey will continue with engineering costs and getting permits and then we will put out for bid for construction.

Mr. Harowski – defining from engineering to bid process – the engineer prepares construction plans and docs and also submits estimated bid. Will have chance to modify for bidding out if cost were too high. Engineer would also assist with permitting.

No Public Comments.

Roll Call Vote - passed unanimously.

5. Discussion and Approval: CARES Act Funding –

We have received a boon – originally allocated \$89K - \$15K for past expenses and for items enabling staff to work remotely. New allocation – laptops, servers, police upgrades another \$74,500. We have received these funds. Received call from county manager last week and said we can get payment for first responders' salaries and other salaries - another \$39,000. Must apply by 12/30. Mayor wants to purchase 2 modules for Black Mountain software for managing cemetery services and managing business licenses (all in Cloud) - \$10K. Also, we did not give staff increases in 2020. Want approval to give staff a 3% one-time bonus. Next year we start at current salary stated this year.

Motion to approve made by Pro-Tem Conroy and seconded by Councilor Gallelli

No Public Comments.

Roll Call Vote – passed unanimously.

6. Discussion and Approval: Upgrade to pump #1

Provided documents to Council. Pump 1 is too small – never runs. Pump 4 has over 18,000 hours because of this (which is getting close to the life of the pump). Want to change out pump and it needs to be re-engineered. \$26,000 for pump plus need to re-engineer because of location of pumps. Max amount to be \$81,780. Comes from Water fund, the enterprise fund.

Motion to approve by Pro-Tem Conroy and second by Councilor Lehning

Discussion – Pro-Tem Conroy asked if can use impact fees? Is redesign an improvement? or capital improvement? Mayor will check.

No public comments.

Roll Call Vote– passed unanimously

7. Discussion and Approval: Town Staffing

Provided job descriptions for administration / finance manager. Mr Wilkes also looked at our charter and it will not currently allow us to hire staff member. We need to look at changing charter in the future to be able to do this. For this position in our area, salary higher than clerk, less than town manager. Same benefits as town directors, and exempt employee. \$80,000 to \$90,000 range. Not budgeted but in reserves. Also need to look at doing salary review for all staff employees in next couple months. Will not go to paycheck for payroll at this time.

Motion to approve by Pro-Tem Conroy and seconded by Councilor Klein

Discussion – Pro-Tem Conroy said town of our size cannot rely on the luck of the draw for new hires. Need somebody that can steer the ship within our strong mayor system. Councilor Lehning asked what the next step is. Mayor said to post position and talk to candidates. Do a 360 degrees interview panel process - Mayor interviews and then Directors and councilors will interview.

Councilor Klein – hire both finance manager and town clerk at this time? – want to hire both ASAP. Indeed will help fine tune the way we try to get candidates for the Town Clerk.

No Public Comments

Roll call vote - passed unanimously

8. Discussion: Thoughts on rezoning property on 19/Citrus Ave for office building –

Town has been approached about new office building with concept – southern / metal roof style – would design to fit Howey building style. Tom Horowski input – comp plan residential now – single family residence - would have to amend – neighborhood commercial would likely be zoning. If we approve this new classification, any use permitted in that classification can go on that site – he says professional office. But could be another business – convenience store, gas station. No specific conditions applied for other uses. If conditions not defined, could have business we may not want. Non-resident use might be option. Reasonable for single family lot?

We could avoid strip commercial development. Commercial property away from current commercial development on Central and SR19. Wanted to discuss here first before P&Z reviews. Gentleman can request application to pursue and go to P&Z, if desired.

Public Comments – Sal Gallelli – 1104 N Tangerine Avenue – Not good corner for that type of business. Central Avenue would be better option.

REPORTS

Police Department - Chief Thomas and Police – new lights are installed at SR19 and Central – golf cart crossing update – nothing yet. Bed Charity we participated in will donate \$1500 to Howey for AED. Report of Christmas light damage at a resident. Please report if you see someone wandering around.

Public Services – review of site with well by Lake Hills at SR48 and 19 – Drake Point (other side of Bishops Gate) is beginning application fee process. Mission Rise is talking to us again. Need to look at additional staff here. Talichet water lines – wrong size installed and need to correct – developer has paid for rework. Dreamfinder homes 14 permits waiting to be processed but need this fixed first.

Code enforcement – Lt Brown – Some building permit issues. Report submitted to Council members. Thank you for work on Christmas festival from Mayor to Police.

Library report – No Lake County Commissioner visit until January some time

Town Attorney - Mr. Wilkes – Attorney fees for first suit to recall, April first election, was successful on part of Mr. McGill's lawyer. FMIT has agreed with McGill attorney to pay on behalf of town. Would be \$17,500. Case to stop recall case over. Second lawsuit from McGill, Alimenti and Ellis civil rights violations allegation has been dismissed as the court said was poor pleading. The 3 can refile complaints but must file separately. Must refile about 1 week from this meeting.

Council Members:

Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy – Revolving Loan – revenue versus expenses needs to be looked at again. MPO meeting last week – operating if they have 3 board members social distancing and can vote and can allow members to vote remotely. Towns in Lake County have passed Resolution to put in document that we can vote, if necessary, without 4 Councilors present at meeting. Mr. Wilkes said with Home Rule he believes we can meet by telephone, and we don't need are solution to allow remote voting but is good idea to make resolution. Charter as proposed takes away this ability.

Councilor Gallelli – No comment

Councilor Klein - Sara Maude – he will make blueprint of 3 areas (North, West, and South) and 1 complete blueprint along with approximate costs plus, cost for setting up reserves for future maintenance. The South section rebuild cost is about \$116,000. He will talk with Pat about Park and Rec. recommendations and using Impact Fees.

Councilor Lehning – any discussion with Venezia re: commercial space? Martha has not heard of anything. What is value of city block (police, town hall, library)? Can we piggyback a possible new Police Station and Town Hall to add on to new Fire Station down #2 Road. The Howey Mansion – is there agreement about noise ordinance. Discussed at prior meeting should be closed down at midnight and host small weddings. No zoning guideline as to noise or event size.

Mayor MacFarlane – Not sure if should make resolution for 2 meetings in January as we will vote on Charter Feb 9th.

Public Comments – Fran Wagler - 409 W Central Ave. – Library – new library divider will be installed 12-15-2020.

Garden Club Upscale Resale Tuesday thru Friday – all items half price. All money goes to local charity. Giving Tree at Library. Thanked the Fab 4 for Christmas events and Events Committee. Thanked all the volunteers that helped out.

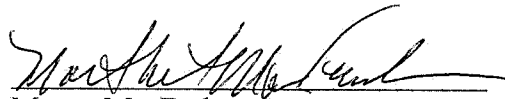
ADJOURNMENT

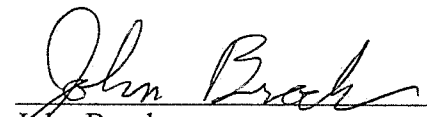
Councilor Pro-Tem Conroy moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilor Gallelli..
Motion passed unanimously.

Attendees: 25

The Meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

ATTEST:


Martha MacFarlane


John Brock
Town Clerk