



MINUTES OF THE HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS TOWN COUNCIL  
HELD JANUARY 11, 2021

Mayor MacFarlane called the Town Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.  
Mayor MacFarlane led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.  
Public Service Director Ernest led an invocation.

**Roll Call**

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

Also present: Chief Thomas (virtually), Lt. Brown (virtually), Town Attorney Mr. Wilkes, Public Service Director Mr. Ernest, Town Planner Mr. Harowski, and Town Clerk Mr. Brock.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- 1. The approval of the minutes and ratification and confirmation of all Town Council actions at the December 14, 2020 Town Council Meeting.**

**Motion made by Pro-Tem Conroy to approve the minutes; Councilor Gallelli seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote.**

**Councilor Lehning                      YES**  
**Council Gallelli                        YES**  
**Mayor MacFarlane                    YES**

**Councilor Klein                        YES**  
**Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy              YES**

**NEW BUSINESS**

- 2. Reading: February 9<sup>th</sup> Special Election Proclamation**

Martha MacFarlane, Mayor read the following proclamation:

*MAYOR'S PROCLAMATION, TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA NOTIFICATION OF REGULAR ELECTION BE IT KNOWN that I, Martha MacFarlane, Mayor of the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills, Lake County, Florida, do hereby call a Special Election for the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills, Florida, to be held during the legal voting hours on February 9, 2021, 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Howey Polling Location 420 N. Palm Avenue Howey-in-the-Hills, Florida For the purposes of the Town Charter Referendum and election of the following municipal officer: One (1) Council seat being designated as follows: SEAT # 1 Term ending December, 2022 – Town Councilor.*

### **3. Discussion: Review CIP (Capital Improvement Program)**

Martha MacFarlane, Mayor asked Thomas Harowski to provide an update on the Capital Improvement Program.

Mr. Harowski explained that this is an annual process to adopt a 5-year plan about proposed capital improvements. The town is obligated to adopt this plan each year. The deadline for this plan's adoption was December 1, 2020. We are late adopting this plan, but there is no penalty for being late. To adopt the CIP plan, there are no special notice requirements. The process of adoption is simply that the Town adopts the plan as an ordinance using the Town's normal procedures for adopting an ordinance. Once the ordinance has been approved, the Town then sends the ordinance to the State Department of Economic Opportunity. There is no review process, they just register that the process is completed. During the creation of the CIP there is coordination with Public Services to see what Capital Improvements are expected over the next 5 years. Some of the projects that have changed since last years CIP include: the north water treatment and well project, watermain improvement, Capital Ave Sewer project, annual maintenance of streets and sidewalks, the Police Station replacement, and parks projects.

Mayor Pro-Tem was concerned whether our estimated costs were high enough for projects and Mr. Harowski explained that we could still increase them.

### **4. Discussion: Livestock Ordinance**

Mayor MacFarlane explained the current rules that are on the books about farm animals and chickens.

Councilor Gallelli explained the rules in other nearby municipalities.

Chief Thomas further explained the current ordinances including reference to corner lots. Lt. Brown said he had worked a case in which someone had chickens and they had to remove them.

#### **Public Comments:**

Clay Ormsbee, 301 N Lakeshore Blvd – He was at a previous town council meeting when chickens in Howey was discussed and voted on. The town council voted it down then due to the noise.

Charlotte Maffia, 201 E Laurel Ave – She was worried about the odor of the chickens.

Donna Klein, 701 N Lakeshore Blvd. – She was concerned about the aesthetics of land that chickens live on because they just dig through grass down to the bare dirt, and the aesthetics of an area with chickens is also bad.

Sean O’Keefe, 500 N Florida Ave. – Recommended speaking with the staff of the Lake County Agriculture Extension office about best practices within small municipalities.

**5. Consideration and Approval: Long-term Water Planning Conservation Project with Bolling Engineering**

Mayor MacFarlane said that this discussion was about the ability to execute on the proposed contract with Bolling Engineering to create a long-term water conservation plan that is needed in conjunction with the Consumptive Use Permit (CUP) we are required to create this plan. Jennifer Bolling had worked with Sara Whitaker on our previous CUP, so she is already familiar with the town and its needs.

Councilors questioned Ms. Bolling on the contract and specifics about how she bills. Jennifer Bolling explained what task, services and other project management services would be provided under the contract.

Public Comment:

Fran Wagler, 409 W Central Ave - Fran asked specifics about how water management district allocation of 150 gallons of water, per person per day works and how that relates to the conservation plan.

Myron Lewellen, 508 Bellissimo Pl - Myron believes that a water conservation plan needs to look at new developers, because they water the new spec homes twice a day, 7 days a week.

Marnell Drebig, 524 Bellissimo Pl – Marni had questions about Venezia’s water bill.

Clay Ormsbee, 301 N Lakeshore Blvd – My Ormsbee believes there is leeway for the amount of water that can be used on new lawns or plants and that the cost of a water bill will help people conserve.

Jamie Troyer, 224 Messina Pl – Ask about conservation water heads.

**Motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy to approve the Long-Term Water Conservation Project contract with Bolling Engineering; Councilor Klein seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote.**

<b>Councilor Gallelli</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Council Lehning</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Councilor Klein</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Mayor MacFarlane</b>	<b>YES</b>		

**6. Consideration and Approval: KT Landscaping bid on monthly maintenance of the town cemetery**

Mayor MacFarlane provided a summary of the need for the contract with KT Landscaping to maintain the town cemetery. Currently the town cemetery is maintained by Public Services, which has 3 employees. With all the work on the town's water services including new wells going in and new developments such as Talichet coming in, there is too much work. Even if the city were to get day labor to maintain the cemetery it is a full-time job to manage them. The \$1,500 cost from KT Landscaping is less than it would cost us to hire someone.

Public Service Director, John Ernest explained further benefits of going with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party to maintain the cemetery. Mr. Ernest explained that the town does not have to pay worker's compensation, insurance, mower repair, or gasoline. The price that we received was the lowest that we could find.

Councilor Conroy expressed that we should re-look at the town's pricing for the cemetery. The Town's pricing for cemetery lots may be well below market value.

Public Comment:

Fran Wagler, 409 W Central Ave - Fran brought up the Cemetery Board and the work they did. Mayor MacFarlane explained the Cemetery Board is no longer active.

**Motion made Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy to approve the contract with KT Landscaping to maintain the landscaping of the town cemetery; Councilor Gallelli seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote.**

<b>Councilor Lehning</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Council Gallelli</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Mayor MacFarlane</b>	<b>YES</b>

<b>Councilor Klein</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy</b>	<b>YES</b>

**7. Consideration and Approval: Trade of town backhoe for tree trimming services of oaks on the east side of Palm Ave.**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Public Services Director John Ernest to provide a brief update on the proposed trade of the town's backhoe for tree trimming services of oaks on the east side of Palm Ave. The backhoe that we would be trading needs new tires, it has bad hoses, and overall, it is in bad shape. The appraised value of the town's backhoe is \$8,000. The trees that need to be trimmed are on the east side of Palm Ave. There are 61 trees that need trimming, the estimate for the trimming is \$14,500. The town only needs to trim the oak trees on the east side of Palm Ave because the electrical utility company trims the trees on the west side of the street.

Public Comment

Clay Ormsbee, 301 N Lakeshore Blvd – Mr. Ormsbee would like to make sure Christmas lights come down.

Donna Klein, 701 N Lakeshore Blvd- Ms. Klein wanted to know if we would need to buy a new backhoe. Mr. Ernest said “No”.

**Motion made Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy to approve the trade of the town’s backhoe for tree trimming services of oaks on the east side of Palm Ave; Councilor Gallelli seconded the motion. Motion approved by roll call vote.**

<b>Councilor Gallelli</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Council Lehning</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>Councilor Klein</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Mayor MacFarlane</b>	<b>YES</b>		

## **REPORTS**

### **Town Hall**

Nothing to report.

### **Finance**

This report was sent out. The town is currently working on audit items.

### **Police Department**

Chief Thomas, gave a report which included: all Cares Funded equipment is in the process of being installed, the Town Hall’s new cameras have been installed, the new cameras for the Library’s LEC building has been installed, the Chief needs a copy of the Town’s ordinance on Jake Braking so that he can send it to FDOT, the pot hole on 19<sup>th</sup> and Citrus has been called into FDOT and they are going out for it, and we are waiting on Tallahassee to approve of the waiver for golf carts.

Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy brought up that people are fishing on the boat dock and that there is no town ordinance about this. He asked the Mayor about the possibility of having Legal write up a draft proposal of an ordinance to address this issue and the Mayor agreed to do that.

### **Public Comment**

Clay Ormsbee, 301 N Lakeshore Blvd – Gave history of how the boat ramp was put in and he personal observations of people fishing on it.

### **Public Services**

John Ernest, Public Services Director, stated we received \$1,194,112 to get us started on the Well #5 project. The sewer system project will be going on for the next 7 months.

## **Code Enforcement**

Lt. George Brown stated that there was no ordinance regarding people fishing on the boat ramp, but that it was his experience that if the PD is called and they speak with people fishing on the boat dock they will move to a fishing pier.

Councilor Lehning brought up that there are negative signs in three citizen's yards. Lt. Brown said that he had spoke with city attorneys and advised about the lawsuit.

## **Library Report**

Mayor MacFarlane read the report from Tara Hall. The LEC is completed. The Town Council may want to consider renting out the LEC space but there are things like insurance and staffing to consider.

## **Town Attorney**

Nothing to report.

## **Council Members**

### **Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy**

Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy stated that a townsperson had come to him about the Charter and special election. Pro-Tem Conroy asked to have the Charter Review Committee make a 1-page sheet summary of what is new in the Charter that is easier to read. Mayor MacFarlane said that she would ask the Charter Review Committee to do this.

### **Councilor Lehning**

Councilor Lehning expressed that he wanted the city to create a noise ordinance, especially with the noise coming from the special events at the Howey Mansion. Mr. Wilkes, Town Attorney, stated that if a municipality does not have an ordinance governing it, the County ordinance may apply to the city because there is no specific ordinance displacing it. Mr. Wilkes would check into this for the Town.

### **Councilor Gallelli**

Councilor Gallelli has a list of streets within the town that have gas access and it will be available at town hall. New town resident should be aware that we have access to the waste facility on 448 where you can take some hazard waste and recycling materials; they even have a reuse of paint project. Some brochures about these waste service will be left for citizens at town hall.

## **Councilor Klein**

Councilor Klein spoke about the Town Council Work Session (4pm on 1/19/2021) to discuss Sara Maude what can be done to update or improve it and he wanted to encourage citizens to participate.

## **Mayor MacFarlane**

Mayor MacFarlane stated that the town is working on replacing the 3 Town Markers. These markers are in poor shape.

Mayor MacFarlane formally welcomed the new Town Clerk John Brock and gave an update on the Town Administrator/Finance Manager position stating that she wanted to leave it posted a little longer.

The Town audit is under way. Currently we are waiting on the actuary report on the Police Pension. We are hoping to complete the audit within the month of February, but it depended on the actuary report.

## **Public Comments**

Sal Gallelli, 1104 N Tangerine Ave – Wants a sign in front of town hall advertising events.

Fran Wagler, 409 W Central Ave – Thanked multiple people, she especially thanked committee members for work on Christmas events. She advertised multiple events which included: January 18<sup>th</sup> – Mr. Howey's Birthday, February 9 – the Town's Special Election, February 14<sup>th</sup> – Valentines Day Parent's Night Out, April 3<sup>rd</sup> – Easter Egg Hunt at the Howey Mansion, May 8<sup>th</sup> – Founder's Day at the Howey Mansion.


Marnell Drebbik, 524 Bellissimo Pl – Had questions about the candidates, charter, and February Special Election.

Myron Lewellen, 508 Bellissimo Pl – Discussed debate/discussion of special election candidates and about the concerns about the proposed charter.

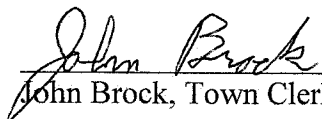
## **ADJOURNMENT**

**There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Conroy to adjourn the meeting; Councilor Gallelli seconded the motion.**

The Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m. | **Attendees: 33**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor MacFarlane

ATTEST:

  
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John Brock, Town Clerk