

Town of Melbourne Beach

TOWN COMMISSION BUDGET WORKSHOP

WEDNESDAY JULY 1, 2020 @ 5:00 pm
MASNY ROOM – 507 OCEAN AVENUE

MINUTES

Commission Members:

Mayor Jim Simmons
Vice Mayor Wyatt Hoover
Commissioner Steve Walters
Commissioner Sherrie Quarrie
Commissioner Corey Runte

Staff Members:

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro
Town Clerk Jennifer Torres
Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr

I. Call to Order

Mayor Simmons called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Town Clerk Torres led the Roll Call.

Commission Members Present:

Mayor Jim Simmons
Vice Mayor Wyatt Hoover
Commissioner Steve Walters
Commissioner Sherrie Quarrie
Commissioner Corey Runte

Staff Members Present:

Town Manager Elizabeth Mascaro
Town Clerk Jennifer Torres
Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr

III. Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

Mayor Simmons led the Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

IV. Public Comment

VI. New Business

A. Continued discussion regarding the FY 2020/2021 Budget

Town Manager Mascaro reviewed updates to the budget book since the last meeting that included:

- P. 6 Statement of Revenue and Expenditures: FY21 Budget number reflects updated figures from Brevard County TRIM.
- P. 12 Training and Schools: Removed from #1 quantity.
- P. 22 Vehicle Maintenance: Increased quality from \$9,000 to \$10,000.
- Fire Department: Decreased its short-term capital to \$8,000 and increased long-term capital to \$27,000. The overall budget decreased due to a duplicate calculation for the \$12,000 allocated to Chief Brown's salary.
- P. 24 Professional Services: Reduced \$12,000 from stipend was counted in the salary section.
- P. 25 Equipment Maintenance: Annual maintenance breathing compressor increased to \$900 from \$521 and removed from page 27 under licenses for \$900 as duplicate entry.

- P. 25 Annual Fire Extinguishers: Increased number of units from 29 to 30.
- P. 25 Annual Co2 Maintenance: Increased number of units from 1 to 6.
- P. 25 Hose Testing and Maintenance: New line from \$2,400.
- P. 27 Short-Term Capital: Reduced from \$24,000 to \$8,000.
- P. 27 Long-Term Capital: Increased from \$11,000 to \$27,000.
- P. 27 Licenses and Fees: Increased 800 MHZ number of units from 27 to 28.
- P. 48 Stormwater Bond Grants Fund: Increase transfer in by %51,841 amount of overage in general fund.

Commissioner Walters, who had to leave the previous workshop early, said he has a few questions.

First he asked how much the Town was looking to receive from the Federal Relief Bill/CARES funding.

Finance Manager Kerr responded that the proposal was about \$7,000 – and they projected there might be \$7,000 more.

He then asked what deductible the employees are playing on health insurance and Town Manager Mascaro said it depends on the service, but usually \$50 for a doctor visit copay and about \$5,000 to \$7,800 for an individual or family plan.

Commissioner Walters said he noted that police officers are paying 5-percent into their pension and asked why the staff doesn't also do this.

Town Manager Mascaro said they do – at 3-percent.

Mayor Simmons asked if the amount police officers pay is determined by the state and Town Manager Mascaro said the state represents us and the Pension Board regulates the police.

Commissioner Quarrie asked if 5-percent is too high and Town Manager Mascaro responded by saying that it's a very well-funded pension plan and they're paid a substantial amount from it when they retire, adding that we are one of few municipalities that use a good gap.

Commissioner Walters then asked about the police vehicles, noting that last year we had eight cars and this year there are six.

Town Manager Mascaro said we now have six cars. They didn't anticipate the loss of two vehicles – so they were replaced. They had discussed providing a new replacement vehicle every year. This year they would replace a 2012 Caprice used by the SRO. Then the oldest car in the fleet of four would be replaced.

Commissioner Walters asked about the promotion of Gavin Brown to Fire Chief and the Town Manager explained that he has served as the volunteer Fire Chief and the Town

would like to make him a paid Town Fire Chief with an increase in salary to \$55,000, with \$12,000 of that coming from the stipend.

Public Comments

*Neil Tompkins
204 Neptune Drive*

Mr. Tompkins asked if there were any grant opportunities the Town could pursue to resolve issues with the Indian River Lagoon. He suggested grant money could be used for swales on Oak and anything the Town can put in the budget for long term improvement with two general areas to focus on; limiting runoff into the lagoon and potential remediation. He asked the Town to help with anything they can to accumulate funding and reduce the load in the Indian River. He said the homeowners have spent a total of a half-million dollars having dredging work done. He understands the Town does not have the resources to do the work itself, but he would like assistance in reducing the load into the Indian River. Currently the canals are brown and filled with grass clippings. When people hire lawn service companies they don't pay attention. He said perhaps some additional signage indicating this activity goes against a Town Ordinance, would help.

Mayor Simmons responded by saying they do have an Ordinance against this, but he continues to see people doing it anyway. He said the Town is in the process of planning the Orange Street repaving with new Miami guttering and swales and breaks in the guttering. He also pointed out that Mr. Tompkins does not have 100-percent participation with the neighborhood dredging. The Mayor reminded him that he invited the homeowners association to come to a meeting so they could set up a special tax district.

Mr. Tompkins said they have one neighbor in disagreement which prevents this.

Commissioner Walters asked if Harbor East Dredging Inc. collects money from homeowners into a fund to use for dredging.

Mr. Tompkins said they formed a special LLC to raise money and this time they had to pay the state for a 25-year submerged land lease and needed an LLC to hold a land lease – he added that they don't annually try to raise money; instead they do it when a dredging need arises.

Commissioner Runte asked if they are a couple years away from dredging again.

Mr. Tompkins said yes and they are probably looking at 10-20,000 cubic yards of muck for the next dredging. He said anything the Town can do to help them would be great.

With no further public comments, Mayor Simmons brought the meeting back to the subject of the budget.

Referencing P. 6 of the proposed budget, Commissioner Walters commented that Town Attorney fees are up 20-percent. He said he knew some of that was from the Labor Attorney but he thought the Town Commission had decided they didn't need the Town Attorney to attend Planning & Zoning meetings.

Mayor Simmons said that wasn't the case. The Town Attorney attends Planning & Zoning, Board of Adjustment, Special Meetings and Regular Town Commission Meetings.

Town Manager Mascaro said they still have work to do with the labor attorney.

Commissioner Walters asked how many officers are left in the union and Town Manager Mascaro said she believed there were two.

Mayor Simmons said that last year they did not budget a labor attorney (\$15,000) or a magistrate so the real increase is that they needed to have a labor attorney.

Referencing the tape of the last meeting on 6/24/2020, Commissioner Walters said he listened to the tape and heard they reduced Ryckman Park revenue but he didn't catch what the reason was for this.

Mayor Simmons said they did not want to make a change resulting in a huge budget shortfall so they thought, let's be more conservative, and if we get more than that – great.

The Mayor asked if there were any other comments or questions from the Commission and there were not, so he addressed the Town Manager and asked what she needed from them to proceed.

Town Manager Mascaro said that if everyone is content with the budget as discussed; she would set up two meetings in September – unless they wanted to meet sooner.

She pointed out that the millage rate is less than the millage rate last year. She said that she planned to put out a message on social media to help residents better understand their tax bill because she thinks a lot of people misunderstand that only a small portion comes to the Town. This would serve as an educational tool to help people understand that taxes from gas, communications, etc. are all revenue generated through the state that we get a percentage of. So for example, out of a \$2,000 bill a resident may only be paying \$700 to the Town.

Town Manager Mascaro said she had to take a pretty conservative approach. Our revenues are down, but still up over last year.

Also, she noted with the Building Department, even though permitting continues to rise – there are not as many big jobs (over \$50,000) and people have pulled back.

Mayor Simmons asked if \$35,000 is going into contingency fund and Town Manager Mascaro clarified it was \$30,000.

Town Manager Mascaro said that when they finish the audit they can transfer reserves and will move in \$51,500.

Mayor Simmons said that should give us about \$2 million in reserves and Florida League of Cities recommends that coastal communities have six months in reserve.

Mayor Simmons then asked if everybody was happy with the budget at the 9-percent over rollback rate. Commissioner Runte, Commission Quarrie indicated they were happy with it – Commissioner Walters said no.

Commissioner Quarrie asked Commissioner Walters what changes he would propose.

Commissioner Walters suggested they don't hire two police officers because the Town doesn't need as many as it has.

Commissioner Runte asked Commissioner Walters, as former police chief, what kind of staffing did he think was needed?

He responded; One chief, nine officers (two Sergeants and the rest patrol.)

But he added – that all changed when the former Commission decided to promote so they could give them more money.

Commissioner Runte said we should all leave here satisfied – or offer concrete solutions.

Commissioner Walters said he felt the other Commissioners were trying to start an argument and said he's not voting for this budget because we have a pandemic and people are out of work. When prompted for more suggestions, Commissioner Walters declined.

Discussion ensued about police department staffing.

Vice Mayor Hoover said he liked the capital investment worksheet and noticed that over ten years the capital investments are decreasing and gave credit to Mayor Simmons.

Vice Mayor Hoover also said he liked how the Town Manager broke out the parks and the pier and said good job.

Commissioner Runte also gave credit to Finance Manager Jennifer Kerr for a good job.

Moving on from the budget discussion, Mayors Simmons said he had a couple of items to discuss.

First, he wanted to know if the Commission wanted to try and close the Town's beaches.

Some discussion on the issue ensued.

Mayor Simmons said the other issue he wanted to discuss was a mandatory mask policy. Residents have been asked him about it and it is something the Commission needs to make a decision on.

Some discussion on the issue ensued. A suggestion to create a resolution to encourage the use of masks was discussed.


The Town Commission agreed by unanimous consent to create a Resolution that says the Town strongly encourages residents to wear masks in local businesses and public buildings and observe social distancing

Commissioner Walters said he wanted it noted that the Town Commission spent a total of three hours and 45 minutes on the budget.

Vice Mayor Hoover moved to adjourn; Commissioner Runte seconded;
Motion carried 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

ATTEST:



James D. Simmons, Mayor



Jennifer Torres, Town Clerk