

MINUTES
1st Budget Hearing
September 14th, 2023
6:30 p.m.
Government Center
6601 Main Street
Miami Lakes, Florida 33014

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Councilmember Collazo called the meeting to order at 6:37 pm.

The Town Clerk, Gina M. Inguanzo, called the roll and Councilmember Collazo, Councilmember Dieguez, Councilmember Fernandez and Councilmember Garcia were present. Councilmember Marilyn Ruano was present via zoom. Vice Mayor Alvarez and Mayor Cid were absent.

2. MOMENT OF SILENCE:

Councilmember Josh Dieguez led the prayer.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Councilmember Garcia led the Pledge of the Allegiance.

4. ORDER OF BUSINESS (DEFERRALS/ADDITIONS/DELETIONS):

Town Manager Pidermann stated that on September 12th, 2023, during the Regular Council Meeting, the Town Council gave direction to Town Staff to explore alternatives and make a change with the security service from the Loch Lomond Neighborhood Services Districts. Town Manager Pidermann then provided the Town Council with two different resolutions: one terminating services with the current company and another resolution, which is how Town Administration recommends the amended services to be provided to the residents of Loch Lomond.

The Deputy Town Attorney, Mr. Lorenzo Cobiella stated that the 4 Day Rule applies. He stated that this item was not added to the 1st Budget Hearing and that it is considered a late item, yet he emphasized that at the September 12th RCM, the Town Council already discussed it. He then reminded the Town Council that they asked Town Staff to bring this item back to them at the First Budget Meeting. He also emphasized that the contract before the Town Council is one that has already being publicly vetted and that Town Staff is proposing an amendment to an existing contract, to add an additional service. He then stated that if the Town Council wanted to discuss this added Item, that a motion waving the 4 Day Rule is needed, to add this item into the 1st

Budget Hearing and to also incorporate the discussion held last meeting regarding this item. Councilmember Collazo stated that he would prefer to have this discussion on a later date, to allow the public more notice; that would allow more time. He then asked Councilmember Dieguez how he would like to handle this matter, for he is the elected official who brought this forward.

Councilmember Dieguez stated that what the residents of Loch Lomond want is a change of the guard gate. He also stated that he would like to defer and have this item discussed during the 2nd Budget Hearing, which is scheduled to take place on September 26, 2023, to give them an opportunity to digest all of this. He then stated that he would like to briefly discuss this item and the proposed changes now, so that the residents of Loch Lomond can start becoming aware of preliminary changes being proposed and can provide feedback to the Town Council before the 2nd Budget Hearing.

Councilmember Dieguez then made a motion to waive the Section 7.3 of the Special Rules of Order, as amended, to add a discussion item -the item of the contract change regarding to the Loch Lomond security Neighborhood Services District, and to add item 7C to the agenda. Councilmember Fernandez seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0. Vice Mayor Alvarez and Mayor Cid were absent.

Then, Councilmember Dieguez made a motion to adopt the agenda, as amended. Councilmember Fernandez seconded the motion and the motion passed 5-0. Vice Mayor Alvarez and Mayor Cid were absent.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS: (13:08)

(Phonetic spelling of each speaker's name will be used throughout the minutes unless correct spelling is known.)

The Town Clerk, Gina M. Inguanzo, read instructions of proper decorum that are to be respected and followed during public meetings.

Ms. Mirtha Mendez came to the First Budget Hearing and participated in-person public comments. She asked if the Blasting issues were included in the Legislative Priorities List; she stated that she could not find any reference to LPR's in Loch Ness, Windmill Gates, In Lake Hilda and in Lake Martha; she then stated that if the issue is security for the Town of Miami Lakes, then the Town should have an item to protect all the communities and not only the Special Taxing District.

Mrs. Claudia Luces came to the First Budget Hearing and participated in-person public comments. She started by thanking Councilmember Ruano for her exhausting efforts on trying to protect the right to vote for those who live in Miami Lakes Section 1; she also thanked Councilmember Collazo and Councilmember Dieguez for honoring their right to vote. Mrs. Luces also spoke about the LPR's and that residents should have the right to vote if they want them or not. She said that she does not understand the fear of not letting the residents from Miami Lakes Section 1 to vote on this matter. She asked to honor their right to vote.

The Town Clerk stated for the record that there were no participants for public comments on-line. There being no one else wishing to speak, Councilmember Collazo then closed Public Comments.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR:

Councilmember Fernandez motioned to approve the Consent Calendar. It was seconded by Councilmember Collazo and all were in favor.

Councilmember Collazo asked for a moment of personal privileged and recognized one of his fellow colleagues, Councilmember Garcia, because at the last meeting, on Tuesday, September 12th, Mayor Cid was celebrating his 40th birthday, and he had to go home a little bit earlier than expected and he mentioned that Councilmember Garcia came to the rescue and attended the Regular Council Meeting notably sick, in order to save quorum and save the meeting. Councilmember Collazo also extended his birthday wishes to Mayor Cid.

7. ORDINANCES – FIRST READING:

- A. AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE MILLAGE RATE OF THE TOWN FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2023 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2024, PURSUANT TO SECTION 200.065, FLORIDA STATUTES; PROVIDING FOR DIRECTIONS TO TAX COLLECTOR; PROVIDING FOR NOTICE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The Deputy Town Attorney Lorenzo Cobiella read the title of the ordinance into the record.

Councilmember Fernandez made a motion to move the Ordinance in First Reading. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Dieguez, Town Manager Edward Pidermann read a budget statement into the record.

The Town Manager, Edward Pidermann, read into the record the following statement: the proposed millage rate for Fiscal year 2023-24 is 2.0732 and this rate is the roll-back rate. The roll-back rate is defined by truth and millage that generates the same tax revenue as the current year, less new construction, additions, deletions, and rehabilitative improvements. The gross taxable value for operating purposes is four billion, five hundred and fifteen million, three hundred forty-five thousand and ninety-nine dollars (\$4,515,345,099). The proposed millage rate will generate eight million, eight hundred and ninety-three thousand one hundred and fifty-three (\$8,893,153) in Ad Valorem revenue budgeted at 95% collection rate.

The Town Clerk called the roll and the motion approving the Ordinance in 1st reading passed 5-0. Vice Mayor Alvarez and Mayor Cid were absent.

- B. AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE BUDGET FOR THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES FOR FISCAL YEAR

2023-2024; PROVIDING FOR EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS; PROVIDING FOR AMENDMENTS; PROVIDING FOR CARRYOVER OF FUNDS; PROVIDING FOR THE INCORPORATION OF THE ADOPTED CAPITAL BUDGET AS THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT ELEMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The Deputy Town Attorney Lorenzo Cobiella read the title of the ordinance into the record.

Councilmember Fernandez made a motion to move the ordinance in first reading and Councilmember Dieguez seconded for discussion.

Councilmember Ruano made a motion to re-open Public Comments and the motion was seconded by Councilmember Dieguez. The motion passed.

Public Comments (26:55)

Ms. Mirtha Mendez came before the Town Council and stated that in this budget there is an estimated project cost of \$50,000 allocated towards the K-9 Cove Parking lot. She asked the if those “50,0000 could be used towards the Glenn Eagle Drive, or Cow Pen or Bull Run Road. She also asked for a document that reflects what money will be allocated to the Tree Trimming projects in the town.

There being no additional public comments, Councilmember Collazo closed public comments.

Town Manager Ed Pidermann introduced Ms. Melissa Hernandez, Budget Officer. Ms. Hernandez presented a PowerPoint Presentation and highlighted changes made to the budget since the last Budget Workshop. They both answered questions posed by the Town Council.

Councilmember Garcia made a motion for Town Staff to look into adding an additional officer and seeing where we can get the money from to make it happen and have this for the Second Budget Hearing. He stated that he would prefer two police officers to be added onto the budget. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fernandez.

Town Manager Pidermann stated that every police officer that is added to the budget is \$160,000 per officer, so if it's 2 policer officers, it would be \$320,000 added to the Police Budget and Town Manager Pidermann would then recommend more of a transfer from the Miami Lakes Optimist Capital Fund (MLOP) to the General Fund, in order to fund the added police officers.

After discussion, Councilmember Garcia then re-stated the motion to add an additional police officer or two to the actual budget, with an explanation of where those funds would come from and how we would pay for it in the future. Councilmember Fernandez seconded the motion. At this moment, Councilmember Dieguez asked Major Jose Gonzalez to approach the podium.

Major Jose Gonzalez answered questions posed by the Town Council.

After further discussion, The Town Clerk called the roll and the motion failed 2-3; Councilmember Collazo, Councilmember Dieguez and Councilmember Ruano voted in opposition; Vice Mayor Alvarez and Mayor Cid were absent.

Councilmember Fernandez motioned to fund the Police Study and to add it to the fiscal year 2024 budget and fund it the way it was recommended. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Garcia.

Town Manager Pidermann stated that this study would be funded from the MLOP and he explained that the new state law mandates that the new Sheriff that is taking over the Department that already has a contract arranged with a municipality like in the case of the TOML, this new Sheriff is obligated to continue services for up to three years, when they take over.

After further discussion, Councilmember Collazo made the following statement via motion: he stated that he is a champion of the police study because it is the biggest line item, and he likes to revisit the item with frequency. However, due to the budgetary constraints, Councilmember Collazo would like to add to the item, that if we are going to hire a consultant, and we are going to pay \$50,000, let's have them look into this issue and ask if we are properly staffed. Councilmember Collazo emphasized for the study to include a forecasting component and if we are going to start a police department. He asked if we could leverage the study at this time to give us a roadmap to what we need, whether it's our police department now or in the future. Councilmember Dieguez seconded the motion and the amendment passed 5-0; Vice Mayor Alvarez and Mayor Cid were absent. The Town Clerk then called the roll, on the motion to approve funding the Police Study and to include it in the 2024 Budget, and the motion passed 4-1; Councilmember Ruano voted in opposition and Vice Mayor Alvarez and Mayor Cid were absent.

The Deputy Town Attorney addressed the Town Council and explained that they only have \$206,000 in their budget, and that that amount is what is currently budgeted for the new fiscal year. He explained that given some of the litigation that this Board will be facing in the upcoming year, Deputy Town Attorney Cobiella asked the Town Council to allocate a total of \$300,000 in reserves.

After the request and explanation provided by the Deputy Town Attorney, Councilmember Collazo made a motion to raise the reserves to \$250,000 for the Town Attorney litigation. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fernandez. The Town Clerk called the roll and the motion passed 5-0, Vice Mayor Alvarez and Mayor Cid were absent.

Councilmember Collazo asked Town Manager Pidermann that if with the amount of monies received from the police impact fees, why is it that we are paying more money per camera? Town Manager Pidermann explained that for the NSD not to get a huge hit, the TOML went into negotiations with the vendors and that allows them to pay it over several fiscal years as opposed to having to pay in one shot. Councilmember Collazo then asked if we could do a short-term rental to address the current gap until the monies come in; showing up the net around the entire community without the huge capital investment and then pull out the short-term rental once the capital investment is there. Councilmember asked for this LPR Net to be brought back as a report to the Town Council, at the Second Budget Hearing. Councilmember Fernandez seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

The Town Clerk called the roll on the main motion, as amended, to move the ordinance in first reading, and the motion passed 5-0; Vice Mayor Alvarez and Mayor Cid were absent.

C. AMENDMENT TO THE LOCH LOMAND NSD SECURITY

At the September 12th Regular Council Meeting, during the discussion of Item 14E, the Town Council motioned for Town Staff and the Town Attorney to explore alternatives addressing the concerns brought up by the residents of Loch Lomond conduct research on this matter and to report back at the First Budget Hearing, with options.

Councilmember Dieguez presented the item, and he asked the Parks and Recreation Director, Mr. Jeremy Bajdaun, to answer questions on this matter.

Parks and Recreation Director, Mr. Jeremy Bajdaun, answered questions posed by the Town Council.

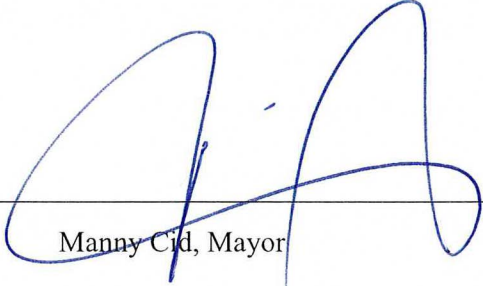
Mr. John Frensdorf, Vice President of Security Operations for SFM Security Systems, answered questions posed by the Town Council.

Councilmember Dieguez explained that the Town Council will discuss this item during the Second Budget Hearing, which is scheduled to take place on September 26, 2023.


Councilmember Collazo thanked Town Staff for their work and time. He specifically thanked the Budget Officer, Ms. Melissa Hernandez, and Town Manager Pidermann, and his colleagues for their collegiality, making sure we understood where we all stand and for having a great meeting.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Town Council, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.


Manny Cid, Mayor

Attest:


Gina M. Inguanzo, Town Clerk