

# TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA

## BUDGET WORKSHOP

6805 MAIN STREET CONFERENCE ROOM  
MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA 33014  
5:30 PM

The Town Council of the Town of Miami Lakes met on the above date at the above place to discuss the preliminary 2005-2006 budget. In addition to Mayor Wayne Slaton and Vice Mayor, Alberto Alonso, the following Council members were in attendance: Nancy Simon, Mary Collins, Peter Thomson, Robert Meador, and Michael Pizzi who arrived a few minutes later. In addition, the following staff was in attendance: Town Manager, Alex Rey, Assistant Town Manager, Mariaelena Salazar, Public Works Director, Rafael Casals, Code Enforcement Officer, Osdel Diaz, Parks Director, Linda Reale and Town Clerk, Debra Eastman.

The Town Manager explained that he would cover three points: 1. The results of the citizen satisfaction survey; 2. The current financial position of the Town and; 3. hear from the Council regarding their priorities and programs for the upcoming budget.

Town Manager, Alex Rey gave an overview of the results of the Citizen Satisfaction Survey, pointing out the high and low points and the possible reasons behind the results.

Councilmember Mary Collins suggested a newsletter as a way to better communicate with residents. Councilmember, Nancy Simon suggested an article in the Laker, such as a letter from the Town Manager. An email newsletter was also suggested.

Councilmember, Robert Meador gave examples of newsletters from other communities. It was suggested that the Laker may not be sufficient, but paid advertising in the Herald could be considered and perhaps in two languages.

Councilmembers congratulated Parks Director, Linda Reale for the high ratings, as well as, Code Enforcement Officers. Councilmember, Mary Collins pointed out that garbage in the bus shelters is a problem and perhaps trash cans should be provided. Police services were discussed, along with the perception that Main Street is seen as a town street and not private property.

Town safety was discussed and it was suggested that there be lights installed in the parks that are not currently lighted.

Councilmember, Peter Thompson suggested that it is usual practice in business to place lowest paid employees in the position of giving first impression and perhaps that should be explored as a way of enhancing the town's friendliness factor. Town Manager, Alex Rey suggested that more could be done in training. The current receptionist position was discussed, along with ways of cross training in that position. Current problems of communicating and distribution of mail was discussed. Town Attorney, Nina Boniske suggested that all correspondence be scanned and then emailed to Council. Councilmember Michael Pizzi stated he would like a telephone call to remind him of events. Councilmember Nancy Simon suggests a master file be maintained for each case.

The upcoming city map was discussed and should be accomplished by committee.

Assistant Town Manager, Mariaelena Salazar gave an overview of the town's current financial condition and reported on the recent receipt of FEMA funds. Councilmember, Mary Collins asked if it was possible to roll back taxes, even just a small amount. The Town Manager, Alex Rey suggested it was too early to know at this point. The Town Manager pointed out the increase in assessments reported for this year.

Alex Rey pointed out there are three areas of the business plan that should be addressed this coming year, being, translate website into Spanish, long term construction plan—town hall, police department, and update the strategic plan since a lot of the projects are now complete.

Councilmember, Mary Collins reported on the Elderly Affairs Committee involvement in discussions regarding an elderly facility with "wrap-around" services and suggested that the town should be involved in promoting this through a private/public partnership.

It was suggested that the Youth Center should be in a park for purposes of supervision. Councilmember, Peter Thomson suggested new conference room chairs be included in the budget.

Councilmember Mary Collins left at 7:10 p.m.

Vice Mayor Roberto Alonso suggested that the Council should have support staff. Agreement was heard from other Councilmembers. It was suggested that the level of support be more than secretarial with Councilmember Nancy Simon suggesting the person have paralegal training, It was suggested that the person or persons would not report to the Council, but would be members of staff.

Vice Mayor Alonso asked to look at bond for Royal Oaks Park and questioned equipment for the tot-lot at Royal Oaks. He also asked to look at status of Town Hall project and savings for it.

There was a discussion regarding the Police services and current incidents. Councilmember, Michael Pizzi would like to see the continuation of the adult education



program and funds set aside for the Youth Center. It was decided more would be known about this in the next couple of months.

Councilmember Peter Thomson left at 7:35 p.m. and he indicated that he would like a list of the Council's budget items.

Councilmember Robert Meador recognized that the Town Manager will come back with proposed millage rates and that there will be further discussion. He would like to see more attention given to storm water drainage cleanouts. There was a discussion about the levels of cleaning and the cycles being shortened to address the current problems. Councilmember Meador would like to see the website reviewed for efficiency and improved and he questioned the replacement of tot-lot equipment. Councilmember Meador suggested that perhaps a Citizen's Crime Watch would be helpful and offered to share emails. He suggested looking at the need for additional Code Enforcement Officers with the completion of the town code. Enhancing street lighting, exploring any vacant land, and how to minimize the impact of decisions made by the County regarding solid waste was discussed. Town Manager, Alex Rey gave an update on the street banners and discussed the possibility of holiday banners as well.


Mayor Wayne Slaton suggested that this may be the time to enhance and accelerate the things the Council has wanted to accomplish. He stated that Police dispatch is a key point and encourages that the police be able to enforce all town codes. He gave support to the Town Clerk to move forward with automated records management, automated agenda and constituency tracking. Mayor Slaton gave support for customer service and quality control.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Approved this 27 day of June, 2005.

  
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Wayne Slaton, Mayor

Attest:

  
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Debra Eastman, MMC  
Town Clerk