



**TOWN OF LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA
TOWN COMMISSION MEETING
FIRE ASSESSMENT - MINUTES
Jarvis Hall
4505 N. Ocean Drive
Friday, September 12, 2025
5:02 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER, MAYOR EDMUND MALKOON

Mayor Edmund Malkoon called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. Also present were Vice Mayor Randy Strauss (by phone), Commissioner Richard DeNapoli, Commissioner John A. Graziano, Commissioner Theo Pouloupoulos, Interim Town Manager Ken Rubach, Town Attorney Susan L. Trevarthen, Director of Budget and Finance Lucila Lang, Assistant Director of Budget and Finance Edner St. Jean, Development Services Director Jhanelle Campbell, Acting Town Clerk/Assistant to the Town Manager Courtney Easley, and Events and Marketing Manager Katie Anderson.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

3. INVOCATION

All present observed a moment of silence.

4. ADDITIONS, DELETIONS, DEFERRALS OF AGENDA ITEMS

None.

5. PRESENTATIONS

None.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

At this time Mayor Malkoon opened public comment, which he closed upon receiving no input.

7. PUBLIC SAFETY DISCUSSION

None.

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8. TOWN MANAGER REPORT

a. Town Manager Report

None.

9. TOWN ATTORNEY REPORT

None.

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Approval of Minutes for

None.

The following Item was taken out of order on the Agenda.

12. RESOLUTIONS – PUBLIC COMMENTS

- a. Resolution 2025-41 – A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA, FLORIDA, ESTABLISHING THE FINAL FIRE ASSESSMENT RATE ON PROPERTY THAT IS SPECIALLY BENEFITED BY THE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2025 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2026; PROVIDING FOR AN INCREASE IN RATES FOR FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES; DIRECTING THE PREPARATION OF AN ASSESSMENT ROLL FOR FIRE PROTECTION ASSESSMENT AREA-TOWNWIDE; CONFIRMING THE FINAL ASSESSMENT ROLLS AND LEVYING SUCH SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS.**

At this time Mayor Malkoon opened public comment, which he closed upon receiving no input.

Director of Budget and Finance Lucila Lang advised that the purpose of tonight's meeting is the consideration and approval of the second reading of non-ad valorem assessment

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rates for Fire services. At the July 8, 2025 Town Commission meeting, the Commission adopted the following tentative rates:

- \$303.39 per residential unit
- \$0.45 per square foot of commercial property

In the previous year, Resolution 2024-35 provided for an annual 5% increase in the Fire Assessment beginning on October 1, 2025 through fiscal year (FY) 2037. Since that time, the City of Pompano Beach has elected to terminate its contract with the Town and has indicated that they will begin invoicing the Town for actual costs. These costs are currently projected at between \$3.6 million and \$3.9 million annually. Staff prepared the FY 2026 budget based on the \$3.6 million estimate.

Director of Budget and Finance Lang explained that 60% of the \$3.6 million is allocated to the Fire Fund and 40% to the General Fund, which covers Emergency Medical Services (EMS) costs.

Under the FY 2026 Fire Assessment rates, the Town anticipates receiving \$2.3 million for the Fire Fund. This amount would support contractual services currently provided by Pompano Beach Fire Rescue (PBFR), as well as legal and financial services if the Town chooses to go through the public-private partnership (P3) process for the design of a new public safety facility. This will be determined by the Commission.

Additional considerations include the fact that, as of today's date, the Town has received no additional invoices from PBFR; at present, they continue to be billed for the amount of the contract. If expenses exceed what has been projected, there is additional funding in the Fire Fund which can be used to cover some increases.

Commissioner DeNapoli requested clarification of the projected range of costs. Director of Budget and Finance Lang advised that PBFR provided the Town with the range of \$3.6 million to \$3.9 million. Mayor Malkoon had also made a public records request to the City of Pompano Beach; however, that City did not provide the Town with detailed information, instead stating that their budget was based on all the municipalities they served, with no exact breakdown.

Director of Budget and Finance Lang added that should the Town choose to contract with another provider for Fire services, the costs could be as high as approximately \$7 million; however, that information is not yet available.

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Commissioner DeNapoli also requested clarification of the other sources from which money could be taken to cover any shortfall by the Fire Fund. Director of Budget and Finance Lang recalled that in recent years, the Town has set aside \$300,000 from the Fire Fund toward the cost of a new public safety building. This could be reallocated toward Fire costs. There are also very small reserves within the Fire Fund totaling roughly \$800,000. It is difficult to estimate whether any of these reserves may remain at the end of FY 2026.

Director of Budget and Finance Lang added that she has reached out to PBFR to request updated billing information, including whether or not the Town will be billed for the months of July through September 2025; however, she has not received this information.

Mayor Malkoon asked if the proposed fee is expected to break even if costs are close to the estimated \$3.6 million. Director of Budget and Finance Lang replied that this amount would allocate \$2.1 million to the Fire Fund. Should the Commission choose to issue a P3, there would be additional legal and financial expenses. \$150,000 is budgeted for the design phase of the proposed public safety facility.

Mayor Malkoon asked if there is a way to receive half of the projected increase up front and extend the rest over the next couple of years by using reserves. Director of Budget and Finance Lang stated that the proposed amount is estimated to break even, depending upon whether other anticipated expenses may occur. The funds set aside for the public safety facility are one option. She noted that the Interim Town Manager has requested information from other potential providers, and those costs may reach as much as \$7 million.

Interim Town Manager Ken Rubach advised that one reason for the ambiguity in numbers is the way in which the Town is billed, which is by an hourly rate. He recommended retaining the proposed rate, as any overage could be used to lessen a substantial increase next year.

Commissioner Graziano requested clarification of the direct relationship between the proposed P3 and what the Commission is currently discussing. Director of Budget and Finance Lang replied that a P3 is one possibility the Commission may wish to consider for a new public safety facility. The FY 2026 budget includes contractual services at \$2.16 million, with an additional \$150,000 for the Fire portion of the proposed public safety building.

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Commissioner Pouloupoulos observed that the Town should carefully consider the proposed public safety building, as they do not know what the costs for Fire services may be over the next few years.

Commissioner DeNapoli asked if the Town is aware of the metrics used by PBFR to determine what the Town is charged. Director of Budget and Finance Lang replied that the Mayor of Pompano Beach had sent the Town a letter stating that the budget is prepared and maintained for the entire PBFR Department and is not broken down exclusively by the Town's contract. The letter also indicates that the costs represent the Department as a whole rather than being isolated by contract jurisdiction. Projections for service to Lauderdale-By-The-Sea are based on salaries only, not including overtime.

Commissioner DeNapoli noted that the proposed increase in costs is 73%, and asked if it is possible that PBFR might see the Town's estimate for services and charge that amount. Director of Budget and Finance Lang recalled that the previous Town Manager had requested actual costs from January through June 2026, but the Town did not receive this information.

Interim Town Manager Rubach explained that the language in the contract with PBFR refers to actual costs, which do not necessarily have any profit built into that estimate. He added that once the Town receives its first invoice under the new billing system rather than the contractual rate, the Town will begin requesting invoices to ensure these costs match up.

Commissioner Graziano advised that he found the letter from the Mayor of Pompano Beach to be unacceptable, as that municipality has not told the Town how much the contract is costing them. It was noted that the letter was dated August 27, 2025 and was sent in response to Mayor Malkoon's public records request.

Town Attorney Susan Trevarthen reminded the Commission that PBFR could have begun charging actual costs as of July 1, 2025. The Town has benefited by the continued charge of contractual costs rather than actual costs. Interim Town Manager Rubach added that the actual costs will depend upon PBFR's staffing and actual expenses, which may vary on a monthly basis and need to be reconciled. The invoice is likely to include variable costs, which is why the range was provided.

Commissioner DeNapoli requested clarification of how the Fire Assessment is levied on individual taxpayers. Director of Budget and Finance Lang explained that the final Truth

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in Millage (TRIM) notice, which will be sent out in November, will include this information as non-ad valorem taxes and will be calculated according to the specific rates cited earlier in the meeting.

Commissioner Poulopoulos made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Graziano, to accept the proposed Fire Assessment. Motion carried 4-1 (Commissioner DeNapoli dissenting).

11. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Graziano stated that the Audit Advisory Committee has completed its review of the responses submitted to the Town's request for proposal (RFP). Their recommendation will be brought forth as an Agenda Item at a subsequent meeting.

Commissioner DeNapoli advised that he had voted against tonight's Resolution because he felt 73% was too high an increase, and that the amount could have been lessened by using monies from other Town funds.

Commissioner Poulopoulos noted that September 13, 2025 will be the reopening date for the new Friedt Family Park. Residents are encouraged to attend between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

13. ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to come before the Commission at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

Mayor Edmund Malkoon

Mayor Edmund Malkoon

ATTEST:

Courtney Easley

Courtney Easley, Acting Town Clerk

10/21/2025 | 2:34 PM EDT

Date