



TOWN OF LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA TOWN COMMISSION

Jarvis Hall

4505 N. Ocean Drive

Tuesday, July 14, 2026

6:30 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER, MAYOR EDMUND MALKOON

Mayor Edmund Malkoon called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. Also present were Vice Mayor Randy Strauss, Commissioner Richard DeNapoli, Commissioner John A. Graziano, Commissioner Theo Pouloupoulos (by phone), Town Manager Ken Rubach, Town Attorney Susan Trevarthen, Public Works Director Chris Lips, Finance Director Lucila Lang, Assistant Finance Director Edner Saint-Jean, Development Services Director Jhanelle Campbell, Assistant to the Town Manager Courtney Easley, Events and Marketing Manager Katie Anderson, and Town Clerk Melissa Vasami.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

3. INVOCATION

Pauline Brooks McGuinness gave the Invocation.

4. ADDITIONS, DELETIONS, DEFERRALS OF AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Malkoon advised that Item 18.c would be heard immediately following Public Comments.

5. PRESENTATIONS

a. Launch of the Resilient Broward Grant Program

Dr. Jennifer Jurado, Chief Resilience Officer for Broward County, provided a presentation on an initiative recently launched by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners. It follows an eight-year collective initiative by the Broward business

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community, municipalities, and water management districts that worked together to address flood risk reduction and the economic impacts that accompany it.

Dr. Jurado explained that the County, with the collective support of stakeholders across the community, completed a resilience plan in 2025. This strategy focused on flood risk reduction and included projects which addressed seawalls, stormwater pumps, conveyance mechanisms, controls on water elevations, green infrastructure, and storage, all intended to address the escalation of sea level rise. Several flood scenarios were considered, including 2 ft. of sea level rise, a 100-year rainfall event, and storm surge.

The County is advancing a funding opportunity which focuses on conveyance improvements such as pumps, culverts, and control structures. The Board of County Commissioners wishes to incentivize these investments through the leveraging of funds. Outside of the budget process, \$20 million has been allocated to the new Resilient Broward Grant Program, which will provide municipal and water control district partners with 25% cost-sharing toward projects consistent with and/or specifically identified in the County-wide plan. The intent is to achieve a five-to-one return on investment, leveraging \$5 in installed construction projects for every \$1 in cost-sharing by the County.

While the Resilient Broward Grant Program cannot allocate funds beyond the term of the current Board of County Commissioners, the goal is to make a \$20 million investment each year in support of resilient infrastructure investments. Hopefully, these funds can be leveraged with municipal funding and additional grant funds, resulting in a consistent ability to count on these dollars as part of the capital planning process.

Dr. Jurado noted that criteria for the grant program are available in the backup materials provided to the Town Commissioners. A point system will be used to review and rank the projects; the municipalities are expected to know best where these investments are needed.

The three-year grant term allows design, construction, and permitting costs to be eligible for the program. Tonight's presentation is intended to ensure that Town leadership is familiar with the grant opportunity. Additional public webinars for stakeholders are planned throughout August and September 2026, and the grant portal will open in September and receive applications through October. Preferred projects will be brought to the Board of County Commissioners in early 2027, with awards to be

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included in the fiscal year (FY) 2027 budget process. Additional program details are available at [ResilientBroward.com](https://www.ResilientBroward.com).

Town Manager Ken Rubach advised that the grant program does not cover conveyance projects, which are the Town's current focus. It is expected that there will be a need for installation of pumps in the future. Dr. Jurado confirmed that some conveyance projects such as control structures or culverts will be eligible for grant funding.

Commissioner Graziano asked if projects on South Terra Mar Drive would be eligible for the program. Town Manager Rubach explained that the Town must first install pipe of an adequate size to address flooding in that area; the program does not fund this installation unless the pipe will serve as a control structure, culvert, or pump. Dr. Jurado noted that conveyance pipe may be eligible for funding; the grant team could look into the project to evaluate it for consistency with the overall plan.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

At this time, Mayor Malkoon opened public comment.

James Espada, resident of Deerfield Beach, recalled that at the May 26, 2026, Commission meeting, there had been discussion of opening a new avenue for non-water-related businesses. He hopes to provide an art studio experience on the Town's beach which will benefit the community. He requested that he be allowed to present a low-impact pilot program in approximately one month's time for the proposed activity.

Marc Pearson, resident, addressed Section 30-51 of the Town's Code of Ordinances, which covers architectural design standards. He pointed out that the Town's standards were established in 2015 and apply to all development within four zoning districts. He asserted that Town Staff incorrectly consider applicability as the only important standard, while all four standards should have equal priority. He expressed concern that this means any house in Town could have inappropriate structures built beside it.

Ken Brenner, resident, provided the Commissioners with a handout addressing the most recent paving project on Basin Drive, which occurred in April 2016, including multiple views of the street from his property. Photos in the handout show the condition of the roadway and parking spaces. He has spoken with the Town Manager and Town Staff on this issue, which he considered a blight to the neighborhood. He encouraged amicable resolution of the problem.

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With no other individuals wishing to speak at this time, Mayor Malkoon closed public comment.

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

18. RESOLUTIONS – PUBLIC COMMENTS

- c. RESOLUTION 2026-23 – A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA, FLORIDA, ADOPTING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWN OF LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA AND THE BROWARD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE FOR LOCAL POLICE SERVICES IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED BUDGETED FUNDS; AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT; PROVIDING FOR IMPLEMENTATION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

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

Broward Sheriff's Office (BSO) Major David Elwood emphasized the importance of the relationship between BSO and Lauderdale-By-The-Sea and looked forward to the continued provision of Police services to the Town. He also presented BSO Captain Christopher Sutter with a Longevity Service Award for 20 years' service to Broward County.

Captain Sutter stated that the proposed contract between the Town and BSO is nearly identical to the previous contract. Finance Director Lucila Lang noted that the annual cost of the contract is \$7,685,733, as listed in Exhibit A of the agreement. This is the portion paid to BSO by the Town for contractual services.

Finance Director Lang further clarified that the contract does not include the \$100,000 paid by the Town for additional services. The agreement has been reviewed by the Town Attorney and includes only one change from the previous contract.

Mayor Malkoon commented that he was pleased to see a vacancy credit added to the contract. Finance Director Lang confirmed that vacancy credits are provided to the Town on a monthly basis.

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Commissioner Graziano asked if the contract resulted from the Commission's discussion during the May 13, 2026, Budget Workshop. Finance Director Lang confirmed that the Commission has not yet approved a proposed contractual amount in the Town's FY 2027 budget. Approval of this Item will continue the Town's contract with BSO. There is an additional Resolution on tonight's Agenda which will address the financial aspect of the contract; once approved, it will be included in the FY 2027 budget, which will be presented at a future Commission meeting.

Commissioner Graziano requested clarification of the increase in the proposed FY 2027 contract. Finance Director Lang replied that this increase is 7.35% from the amount adopted in FY 2026.

Commissioner Graziano stated that he did not feel the Commission had fully discussed the proposed contractual amount, and felt it was the Commission's responsibility to take action on the contract rather than to leave signatures to the Town Manager and Finance Director.

Town Attorney Susan Trevarthen pointed out that Agenda Item 13.a discusses the amount of the contract in greater detail and suggested that that Item could also be addressed at this time as well in order to provide greater clarity. The Commissioners agreed to proceed to this Item for further discussion.

13. NEW BUSINESS

a. FY2027 BSO Proposed Budget

Finance Director Lang recalled that the adopted budget for FY 2026 included a BSO contract totaling \$7,159,374. The proposed BSO budget for FY 2027 is \$7,685,733. It includes the following:

- Personnel services: \$6,766,694, which is an increase of \$498,504; the largest component is a 16% increase in the Town's Florida Retirement System (FRS) contribution, with salaries, overtime, life insurance, and health insurance reflecting an average 10% increase
- Operating expenditures: this category increased by \$41,515, including an increase of \$900 in contract printing and binding, a principal payment of \$8,000, and a supplies and tools expense of \$17,000
- Capital outlay: this category decreased by \$23,685

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- Transfers and reserves: this category increased from \$231,207 to \$241,232, which is a difference of \$10,025
- Total difference between the adopted budget for FY 2026 and the proposed budget for FY 2027: \$526,359, or a 7.35% increase

Vice Mayor Strauss recalled that the Commission's original budget discussions had considered a BSO budget with a 14% increase. He noted that the contract also includes an annual increase of 5%, with exceptions for health care, pension costs, and insurance, which are not controlled by BSO. Town Manager Rubach clarified that BSO also does not control the FRS contributions, which includes a special risk assessment added by the Florida Legislature in FY 2027.

Commissioner Pouloupoulos asked if there were any guarantees that BSO might come back in the future with an unforeseen increase over the contract's cap. Town Manager Rubach explained that BSO has recently standardized all its municipal contracts, including contract years. The contract presented to the Town follows this template; any additional considerations the Town might wish to see in the contract would also have to be offered to the other communities as well.

Commissioner Pouloupoulos explained that he would like BSO to provide the Town with assurances that the Town will not be “blindsided” in the future by additional unexpected costs. He emphasized the Commission's fiscal responsibility to the Town's taxpayers, again requesting assurance from BSO that there would be no additional increases over the capped rates.

Major Elwood replied that the Town's contract includes a 5% cap which limits expenses as described earlier, with exceptions for insurance and FRS contributions. These items are not controlled by BSO. He recalled that BSO previously undertook a salary study which was intended to bring salaries up to the medium range in order to retain qualified employees. It has already been completed and presented to all municipal governments for which BSO provides services. He did not anticipate another salary study within the timespan covered by the proposed FY 2027 contract.

Commissioner Pouloupoulos advised that this was the information he had wished to place on the record for tonight's meeting: that there would be no follow-up salary study during the term of the proposed contract. Major Elwood confirmed this assurance.

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Commissioner DeNapoli noted that the current BSO contract expires on September 30, 2026. The proposed contract that will take effect in FY 2027 is a four-year contract that will be in effect from October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2030, and is renewable for one five-year term. Annual increases are capped at 5% each year.

Captain Sutter advised that the salary study indicated a need for an increase of approximately 13% for FY 2026. This estimated amount had been used as a placeholder for FY 2027 until actual numbers were provided from BSO, which were substantially lower than expected. These numbers were based on the salary study.

Commissioner DeNapoli asked if the estimated increase had included any negotiations. Major Elwood explained that the numbers presented had included anticipated operating costs based upon the knowledge of BSO's Finance Department as well as upon last year's costs. There was no room for negotiation in these operating costs.

Commissioner DeNapoli requested clarification of the estimated 13% increase previously anticipated in operating costs. Captain Sutter estimated that this was approximately \$7,900,000; the actual number represents a decrease in this amount of over \$400,000.

Commissioner DeNapoli continued that there is room for negotiation regarding the services included in the Town's contract with BSO, such as staffing elements. Captain Sutter confirmed that there are no changes proposed to staffing in the coming fiscal year.

Commissioner DeNapoli requested clarification of the annual budget review and negotiation mentioned in the proposed contract. Captain Sutter explained that this term applies to items over which BSO has no control, such as FRS contributions and insurance, which are allowed to exceed the 5% cap. The Town may also determine that it wants additional services, such as an extra Deputy.

Town Attorney Trevarthen recommended that the Commission first approve Item 13.a and then revisit Resolution 2026-23 for a motion.

Commissioner Graziano made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Strauss, to approve Item 13.a, the FY 2027 BSO proposed budget. Motion carried 5-0.

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Vice Mayor Strauss made a motion, seconded by Commissioner DeNapoli, to approve Item 18.c. Motion carried 5-0.

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

- b. RESOLUTION 2026-22: A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA, FLORIDA, APPROVING THE FIRST AMENDMENT (THE FACILITIES AMENDMENT) AND THE SECOND AMENDMENT TO THE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL AND RECYCLABLE MATERIALS PROCESSING AUTHORITY OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA; AUTHORIZING EXECUTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE FIRST AMENDMENT AND SECOND AMENDMENT; AUTHORIZING ANY NON-SUBSTANTIVE REVISIONS TO THE AMENDMENTS REQUESTED BY THE AUTHORITY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS, SEVERABILITY, AND FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

At this time, Mayor Malkoon opened public comment.

Denise Horland, representing the governing board and Executive Committee of the Solid Waste Authority of Broward County, thanked the Commission for their consideration of the proposed amendments.

Linda Thompson Gonzalez, resident and member of the Broward League of Women Voters, advised that she had written to the Commissioners to recommend support for the two proposed amendments, which she characterized as common-sense proposals. She briefly addressed elements of the Solid Waste Authority's plan, including recycling rate improvements and economies of scale.

With no other individuals wishing to speak at this time, Mayor Malkoon closed public comment.

Vice Mayor Strauss made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Graziano, to approve. Motion carried 5-0.

7. PUBLIC SAFETY DISCUSSION

- a. BSO June 2026 Public Safety Report**

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BSO Captain Christopher Sutter reported that a personnel change has been made at the Community Service Aide (CSA) position. The June 2026 Employee of the Month is Deputy Christopher Cathcart, who intervened in incidents involving vandalism and driving under the influence.

Additional incidents in the month of June included another auto theft. Captain Sutter strongly emphasized the importance of locking vehicle doors and properly securing key fobs. There were also incidents of graffiti on sidewalks and crosswalks, which were solved due to camera footage. An arrest warrant has been issued for the suspect.

Captain Sutter concluded that the Town's crime statistics have decreased by approximately 30% since last year, with auto thefts showing a particularly significant decrease.

8. TOWN MANAGER REPORT

a. Town Manager Report

Town Manager Rubach addressed concerns raised during Public Comment regarding Basin Drive, confirming that the Town is awaiting a quote from the contractor to take care of this issue. He noted that there may have been a miscommunication with the contractor that led to the current state of the roadway. The cost of this shoulder work was not included in the original contract.

Town Manager Rubach thanked Florida Representative Chip LaMarca and the Town's advocacy team, Ericks Consulting, who helped secure an appropriation in the state budget for the Bougainvillea Drive stormwater project, which will occur in two to three years. The Town has secured \$375,000 for this project.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has indicated once more that the Town does not meet its standards for a traffic signal on Bel Air Drive. They will, however, construct a mid-block crosswalk north of Bel Air Drive and south of Terra Mar Island.

Town Manager Rubach advised that the Town has been approached by an individual running for elected office outside of the Town who requested to hold a constituent meet-and-greet event in Jarvis Hall. He requested Commission direction on this request, as there is no mention of the proposed use in Town Code. There was Commission consensus not to allow this use.

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Events and Marketing Manager Katie Anderson gave a presentation on the Town's recent 4th of July event, thanking all members of the community who contributed to this celebration. The event included a parade, Family Fun Day in El Prado Park, and a fireworks display over the beach. The Town recognized all its veteran and active duty military residents as 2026 Grand Marshal honorees. Broward County Commissioner Lamar Fisher and Major Tom Palmer attended the celebration. Town Staff, particularly the Public Works Department, BSO, and several sponsors, were also recognized for their time and assistance.

Commissioner Pouloupoulos, who served as Chair of the 4th of July event, also recognized Town Staff, BSO, and Events and Marketing Manager Anderson for their contributions to the event.

The Commission determined the following dates and times for 2026 budget hearings as well as regular meetings during budget deliberations:

- Wednesday, September 2, 2026, at 5:01 p.m.: first Budget Hearing followed by the Regular Town Commission Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
- Monday, September 14, 2026: Fire Assessment Hearing at 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 23, 2026, at 5:01 p.m.: second Budget Hearing, followed by the Regular Town Commission Meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Town Manager Rubach thanked all who attended the Town's World Cup Watch Party, and recognized Broward County for splitting the costs of this event with grant funds. He encouraged any Town businesses with additional World Cup-related programming to advise Events and Marketing Manager Anderson so it can be included in *Town Topics*.

Town Manager Rubach advised that while solid waste contractor WastePro's contract expires in 2026, they have offered the Town a one-year extension with no cost increase. There was Commission consensus to accept the additional year and revisit this issue in 2027.

b. April 2026 Finance Report

Finance Director Lang noted that all Town funds continue to operate in a favorable position.

Commissioner DeNapoli requested additional information on separate funds, including the Building, Sewer, Fire, and other funds. Finance Director Lang replied that each of

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these funds is in a positive position relative to the approved annual budget and reviewed them as follows:

- General Fund: 4.6%
- Building Fund: 127%
- Sewer Fund: 119%
- Fire Fund: \$1 million
- Capital Fund: \$1 million
- Parking Fund: \$1 million

9. TOWN ATTORNEY REPORT

Town Attorney Trevarthen noted that the Commissioners' ethics training session needed to be rescheduled. The Commission may break this training up into two two-hour sessions if that is their wish or may schedule one four-hour session. It was determined that there would be one four-hour session, tentatively planned in October.

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Approval of Minutes of the June 3, 2026, Town Commission Code Enforcement Workshop, the June 9, 2026, Town Commission CIP Budget Workshop, and the June 9, 2026, Regular Town Commission Meeting.**

Commissioner Graziano requested a correction to p.7 of the June 3, 2026, Code Enforcement Workshop minutes: he would like the minutes to reflect that he was in favor of the \$100,000 threshold and opposed the use of repeated extensions. It was determined that approval of the workshop minutes would be deferred pending this correction.

Commissioner Pouloupoulos made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Graziano, to approve the June 9, 2026, CIP Budget Workshop and Regular Town Commission Meeting minutes. Motion carried 5-0.

11. CONSENT AGENDA

None.

12. OLD BUSINESS

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None.

14. COMMISSIONER PRESENTATIONS

None.

15. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Graziano recognized Events and Marketing Manager Anderson for her work on the Town's 4th of July celebration as well as the World Cup Watch Party. He added that he continues to seek funds for the lighting of the Town's mural.

Commissioner Graziano continued that Florida Power and Light (FPL) recently provided multiple grants to Pompano Beach under the Storm Secure Underground Program (SSUP) while the Town's vulnerable communities remain on a waiting list. He emphasized the undergrounding of utilities as a mitigation tool, stating that he will continue to seek these neighborhoods' earlier inclusion in the program.

Commissioner Graziano concluded that the Aruba Beach Cafe will host a pet adoption event on July 29, 2026, in coordination with the Chamber of Commerce.

Commissioner DeNapoli recognized Representative Chip LaMarca and Town advocacy team Ericks Consulting for their work in securing appropriations for the Town's Bougainvillea Drive project. He extended condolences to Candice Ericks on the recent loss of her father, David Ericks.

Vice Mayor Strauss wished Herb Schwartz, resident of the Town's Silver Shores neighborhood, a happy 100th birthday. Mr. Schwartz is a veteran of World War II and has worked for the Town in the past.

Vice Mayor Strauss also thanked BSO for their assistance with the 4th of July event, emphasizing the Town's quality of life as demonstrated by this and similar events.

Mayor Malkoon also recognized all responsible for securing the Town's appropriations from the Florida Legislature. He thanked everyone who has helped with recent events, including both the 4th of July celebration and the World Cup Watch Party. He reminded all present of the upcoming Blues By The Sea event held by the Aruba Beach Cafe and Pier 14 on July 22, 2026.

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16. ORDINANCES 1ST READING

None.

17. ORDINANCES 2ND READING

None.

18. RESOLUTIONS – PUBLIC COMMENTS

a. RESOLUTION 2026-21: A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA, FLORIDA, RELATING TO THE PROVISION OF FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS IN THE TOWN; DESCRIBING THE METHOD OF ASSESSING FIRE PROTECTION ASSESSED COSTS AGAINST ASSESSED PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THE TOWN'S GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES, KNOWN AS FIRE PROTECTION ASSESSMENT AREA-TOWNWIDE; ESTABLISHING THE ESTIMATED RATES FOR FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2026; PROVIDING FOR A INCREASE IN RATES FOR FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES; DIRECTING THE PREPARATION OF AN ASSESSMENT ROLL FOR FIRE PROTECTION ASSESSMENT AREA TOWNWIDE; AUTHORIZING A PUBLIC HEARING AND DIRECTING THE PROVISION OF NOTICE THEREOF; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT, SEVERABILITY, AND FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

At this time, Mayor Malkoon opened public comment.

Ken Brenner, resident, stated that the Town's Fire Assessment reflects a 200% increase for the Town's approximately 100 commercial accounts, which is a significant financial burden for these businesses. He recommended that the Town change the methodology by which this amount is calculated, instead of using ad valorem tax calculations based on the properties' assessed value.

With no other individuals wishing to speak at this time, Mayor Malkoon closed public comment.

Finance Director Lang explained that Resolution 2026-21 establishes a tentative Fire Assessment rate for FY 2027. The amount proposed at tonight's meeting is not the final

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assessment rate; Florida law requires that the Commission establish a tentative rate at this time so the rate can be included on the Truth in Millage TRIM) notice sent to property owners. The final rate will be adopted in September 2026 and can be reduced before that time, although it cannot be increased.

In 2023, the Town entered into an agreement with the City of Pompano Beach for Fire Rescue services. Since then, Pompano Beach has terminated the agreement, and the Town is being billed monthly for the actual costs of providing these services during the transition period until a new vendor is identified. The Town Manager has spoken with several vendors and has obtained preliminary quotes which indicate the combined annual costs for Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) will be approximately \$6.5 million.

Finance Director Lang further clarified that EMS costs may not legally be funded through Fire Assessment revenue. Only costs associated with Fire services may be recovered through the assessment. This has been historically broken down into 60% of the costs charged to the Fire Fund and the remaining 40% charged to the General Fund for EMS. The proposal of \$6.5 million would be broken down into \$3.9 million from the Fire Fund and \$2.6 million from the General Fund.

If the current methodology continues in FY 2027, the residential assessment would be \$509.70, which reflects an increase of \$206.31 per residential property. The commercial assessment would be 76 cents per square foot of property, which is an increase of 31 cents per square foot.

At the May 13, 2026, Budget Workshop, the Commission expressed interest in sharing these costs through use of the General Fund. Allocating 50% of the Fire Assessment to the General Fund would make a difference of approximately \$650,000, increasing the residential rate to \$424.75 and the commercial rate to 63 cents per square foot. This option would not reduce the Town's overall costs but would shift them from the Fire Fund to the General Fund. It would also decrease the availability of General Fund dollars for Town services and/or projects.

Staff recommends approval of Resolution 2026-21 with the proposed tentative rates of \$509.70 for residential properties and 76 cents per square foot for commercial properties. If the Commission chooses to use a lower rate, this will require the use of Fire Fund reserves. Finance Director Lang cautioned that these funds have already

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begun to decline as the Town continues to pay actual costs to Pompano Beach for Fire Rescue services.

Mayor Malkoon advised that he was in favor of maintaining the 60/40 allocation, noting that the Town should be cautious about shifting recurring costs to the General Fund, particularly given the potential for approval of a Florida Constitutional amendment which would potentially limit the Town's revenues.

Finance Director Lang clarified that the rate set by the Commission at tonight's meeting would be the maximum possible rate, although it can be lowered later in the budget process. The \$6.5 million Fire service estimate is the amount the Town Manager has received as an approximate cost from a new vendor.

Commissioner DeNapoli continued that residents currently pay a flat fee, which means residents of a large home pay the same amount as a condominium, which may be smaller. Changing the division to 50/50 would mean businesses would pay a relatively smaller amount. He concluded that he favored maintaining the status quo at tonight's meeting and having further discussions in the future, possibly revising downward.

Vice Mayor Strauss asked if there had been exploration of maintaining the residential allocation at \$509.70 per property while decreasing the commercial allocation to 63 cents per square foot. Town Attorney Trevarthen advised that the Town cannot make this change and remain consistent with the recommendations of Fire Assessment studies. The reason for the 60/40 split was that the studies showed only a maximum of 60% of actual expenses could be attributed to fire. The Florida Supreme Court has ruled that EMS services are ineligible for special assessment funding.

Vice Mayor Strauss explained that his concern was due to the possibility raised at a previous meeting, which suggested that commercial properties were paying an exceptionally higher percentage than residential properties. He asked if the cost per square foot could be adjusted downward by an amount that retains the 60/40 split but requires the Town to add a few dollars from reserve funds. Town Attorney Trevarthen replied that Staff could inform the Commission of whether this is an option at one of the pending budget meetings.

Vice Mayor Strauss concluded that while he would agree with the 60/40 split for the purposes of tonight's meeting, he would like to further explore the possibility of reducing the commercial square footage from 76 cents to a lower or slightly lower rate and would

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like to see figures on what this reduction might mean. It was confirmed that Staff would look into this option and meet with the Vice Mayor to discuss it further.

Commissioner Graziano asked how other Broward municipalities can operate without Fire Assessments. Town Attorney Trevarthen explained that these cities and towns pay for Fire services through their millage rates. Finance Director Lang further clarified that these municipalities' millage rates applied across the board to both residential and commercial properties; if the Town's millage rate were increased to cover the Fire Assessment, the ad valorem tax rate would still increase for commercial properties.

Commissioner Graziano continued that he was not in favor of the square footage calculation used for commercial properties and suggested that if the Town passed on proposed rate increases for residential properties to 100%, owners would be able to count this as tax-deductible. Town Manager Rubach pointed out that another consideration is that the millage rate would need to increase by more every year as property value exemptions increase; if the assessment is funded 100% through the millage rate, the Town would have to continue to increase the millage rate at a higher rate than if the Fire Assessment were still used.

Commissioner Graziano requested that Staff bring back a calculation of allocating 80% of the Fire Assessment from the General Fund. Finance Director Lang clarified that this would mean \$5.2 million would come from the General Fund and the remaining 20%, or \$1.3 million, from the Fire Fund.

Town Attorney Trevarthen also noted that the November ballot question remains an unknown factor, as the amendment must be approved by 60% of Florida's electorate to pass; what is not unknown, however, is the change in how a municipality can adopt its millage rate, which was also determined in a special session of the Florida Legislature. A supermajority of four Commissioners is now required to increase the millage rate above the rolled-back rate. Commissioner Graziano asserted that this state mandate is an intrusion on the Town's ability to establish its own budget.

Commissioner Pouloupoulos stated that the Commission should maintain the 60/40 split at tonight's meeting and adjust later in the process if necessary or desired.

Commissioner DeNapoli asked how many commercial properties are on the Town's tax rolls. Finance Director Lang replied that there are 109 such properties. Commissioner DeNapoli suggested reducing the listed overage of \$7,487 to \$0 to prevent the government from taking anything over what is estimated for commercial properties.

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Finance Director Lang advised that if commercial properties' assessments are reduced as suggested, the result would be \$3,899,746.97, which would be roughly \$200 short of what is needed. Commercial DeNapoli reiterated his proposal to reduce the overage amount to \$0.

Town Manager Rubach asked if it is permitted to have a commercial rate including percentages of a penny. Town Attorney Trevarthen advised that she did not know whether this is allowed.

Commissioner Graziano agreed with Commissioner DeNapoli's proposal. It was clarified that the Town could still increase the General Fund portion to 80% and decrease the Fire Fund portion to 20% at a subsequent meeting.

Vice Mayor Strauss made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Pouloupoulos, to keep the division at 60/40 as presented by Staff and explore different potential configurations over the next few weeks. Motion carried 5-0.

19. QUASI JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

20. ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to come before the Commission at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.



Mayor Edmund Malkoon

ATTEST:



Melissa Vasami, Town Clerk

8/26/2026 | 1:08 PM EDT

Date