

**TOWN OF LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA
TOWN COMMISSION
1ST PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING MINUTES
VIRTUAL MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2020
6:00 P.M.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Vincent called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Also present were Vice Mayor Alfred “Buz” Oldaker, Commissioner Edmund Malkoon, Commissioner Elliot Sokolow, Commissioner Randy Strauss, Town Manager Bill Vance, Town Attorney Susan L. Trevarthen, Assistant to the Town Manager Neysa Herrera, Finance Director Lucila Lang, Municipal Services Director Ken Rubach, Public Information Officer Steve d’Oliveira, and Town Clerk Tedra Allen.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Town Clerk Tedra Allen read the following public comments:

- Barbara Cole, resident, requested that the millage rate be set as low as possible; she felt an alternative to the addition of roughly \$5 million to the budget could be identified
- Stuart Dodd, resident, recalled the efforts taken to keep the Town’s millage rate the same in previous years, and recommended against external costs associated with the El Mar Drive project and other capital projects in order to retain a low millage rate for the next fiscal year
- Barbara Cole, resident, hopes the Commission does their due diligence and come up with an alternative to adding close to 5 million to the budget.

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.a FY20/21 Budget Presentation (Lucila Lang, Finance Director / Neysa Herrera, Assistant to the Town Manager)

Assistant to the Town Manager Neysa Herrera provided a presentation on the fiscal year (FY) 2020/2021 budget, noting some of the items prioritized in the FY 2019/2020 budget:

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- Job descriptions and classifications plan
- Replacement of Town Hall Information Technology (IT) infrastructure, including the telephone system
- Installation of new lighting in the West Commercial Plaza
- Coordination of Capital Improvement Projects, including the design of El Mar Drive improvements, design of the Palm Club sewer project, design of Terra Mar Island stormwater improvements

Two of the Town's most significant public accomplishments in FY 2019/2020 were the improved Friedt Family Park courtyard and the settlement/demolition of the former Holiday Inn property and structure. Improvements have also been made to the Jarvis Hall portico area. The Terra Mar drainage improvement project will be brought before the Commission for consideration at their September 21, 2020 meeting. If approved, this project will begin in November 2020, with construction to last four to six months. The Palm Club sewer project will be ready for bid in fall 2020, with construction expected to begin in 2021.

Construction of the A1A/Hibiscus Drive crosswalk has begun, and the Town is working with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to coordinate next steps in this process.

Other FY 2019/2020 accomplishments include:

- Bougainvillea Drive parking lot lighting
- New bicycle repair station on El Mar Drive
- Installation of an electric vehicle (EV) parking station in the A1A parking lot
- Improvement of South A1A median landscaping
- Beach maintenance plan
- Improved bus shelters in conjunction with Broward County Transit (BCT)

The settlement of the Florida Development Group (FDG) lawsuit regarding the former Holiday Inn property resulted in the payment of \$1.65 million in negotiated fines. They will also cover \$390,000 in demolition costs and \$83,750 in site restoration work.

The Town increased its online services in the wake of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic to provide the community with information on available resources. They partnered with the Lauderdale-By-The-Sea Chamber of Commerce to assist local businesses during Phase 1 openings, which will be ongoing through Phase 2. The Town has promoted its open businesses through marketing on social media.

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Public safety efforts include:

- Presence of Broward Sheriff's Office (BSO) personnel in Downtown
- Signs encouraging the wearing of masks and social distancing
- Virtual rather than in-person classes from the Community Center

Finance Director Lucila Lang showed the proposed budget for FY 2020/2021, including revenues and expenditures by fund. The recommended budget is \$24 million, with the largest portion of all funds going toward the Town's physical environment, which includes capital improvement projects. This is followed by public safety and general governmental operations.

The Town's single largest revenue source in its budget is ad valorem taxes on commercial and personal properties, followed by Florida Power and Light (FPL) franchise and utilities taxes, sales taxes, communication service taxes, waste franchise collection taxes, and municipal revenue sharing.

The Broward County Property Appraiser's Office has determined that the value of property in Lauderdale-By-The-Sea was \$2.7 billion as of January 2020. This represents an increase of 3.61% in taxable value over January 2019. The fiscal 2019/2020 millage rate of 3.5000 was the second lowest in Broward County.

Finance Director Lang reviewed the Town's millage rate history, which has either decreased or remained the same for the last 10 years. The recommended millage rate for FY 2020/2021 remains unchanged at 3.500, which will generate slightly over \$9 million in ad valorem property tax revenue. This will provide the Town with an additional \$299,000 for the budget, assuming a 95% collection rate.

The FY 2020/2021 budget is expected to remain flat or decrease for most Town Departments. Donations have increased slightly, as have allocations for the Chamber of Commerce for upgrades and maintenance. Police and Emergency Services have undergone an annual rate increase, including allocations for Police overtime in the Downtown area.

Additional items within the General Fund include:

- No recommended salary increases for the Town Manager or Town Staff in FY 2020/2021
- Health insurance increases of nearly 17%, which is the average within the industry

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- Donation request changes for three nonprofit entities, as well as an additional \$8000 request
- The Town's contracted waste/recycling coordinator has proposed a change to hourly compensation beginning January 2021

Finance Director Lang noted that the Town's Fire Fund will remain the same, with an allocation for an operational and fire assessment fee study. The most recent study was in 2007. The newly created Building Fund will track the Town's building permit and inspection revenues and expenditures. The Sewer Fund remains essentially the same, and revenues budgeted for the Parking Fund are very conservative due to the impact of COVID-19.

5. RESOLUTIONS

5.a Resolution 2020-32 - A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF LAUDERDALE BY THE SEA, FLORIDA, ESTABLISHING THE PROPOSED TOWN AD VALOREM TAX MILLAGE RATE AT 3.5000 MILLS PER THOUSAND DOLLARS OF TAXABLE ASSESSED VALUE, WHICH IS 3.61% ABOVE THE ROLLED BACK MILLAGE RATE OF 3.3781 MILLS COMPUTED PURSUANT TO STATE LAW, FOR THE 2020 TAX YEAR; ANNOUNCING THE SECOND AND FINAL PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT THE FINAL MILLAGE RATE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (Lucila Lang, Finance Director)

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

Commissioner Sokolow made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Oldaker, to approve. Motion carried 4-1 (Commissioner Malkoon dissenting).

5.b Resolution 2020-33 - A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE ATTACHED TENTATIVE TOWN BUDGET FOR THE 2020/2021 FISCAL YEAR; ANNOUNCING THE SECOND AND FINAL PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT THE FINAL TOWN BUDGET FOR THE 2020/2021 FISCAL YEAR; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE. (Lucila Lang, Finance Director)

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

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

5.c Resolution 2020-34 - 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 FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2020 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2021; CONFIRMING THE FINAL ASSESSMENT ROLLS AND LEVYING SUCH SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS. (Lucila Lang, Finance Director)

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

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

6. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Commission at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

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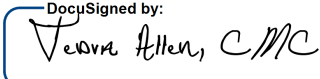


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Mayor Chris Vincent

ATTEST:

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Town Clerk Tedra Allen

10/19/2020

Date

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Barbara Cole, resident – Reso 2020-32 - Millage

Mayor, Commissioners-

Every year the Town Administration puts forth to increase the millage and almost every year since I've been around the discussion for doing so involves a small amount increase per property per the lone speakers' viewpoint on personal fiscal impact along with the administration and staff offering up the wants they have for increasing it but not the need.

Once again as a long time resident with two properties in town I ask for the millage to go as low as possible to show that the commission is cognizant and well aware of no need to increase it especially this year where a few dollars really can impact so many!

Barbara Cole, resident – Reso 2020-33 - Budget

Mayor, Commissioners-

After looking at the Town Manager Summary for the 20/21 Budget with an increase of 4.7 million to 29 million with his 3 reasons why summary-

The three largest components of the net All Funds Budget (excluding the inter-fund transfers mentioned above) are:

1. Physical Environment for 30.59% (\$7.5 million) (Capital Improvement Projects: Visitor's Center, East Terra Mar Drive, Beach Re-nourishment, Palm Club Sewer, El Mar Drive)
2. Public Safety for 28.10% (\$6 million) (Police, Fire, Emergency Medical Services and Development Services)
3. General Government at 11.86% (\$2.9 million) (Town Operations)'

I, as a constituent hope you each did your due diligence and can come up with an alternative to adding close to 5 million to our budget.

We are paying for sewers to be installed on private property with taxpayer money. After reading the years of shade sessions per public records requests it is my opinion doing so is based on false assertions and using false environmental cautions concerning septic tanks that somehow seems to bypass Sea Ranch Lakes septic tank environment located closer to old LBTS when compared to the Palm Club.

El Mar Drive does not need a 4-5 million dollar makeover as you are hearing once again from the stakeholders et al. The want and the need are the same for this historic MIMO Town owned street. Pushing up costs for design components and available grants are good for resumes but not for those who actually reside here. "Keep it Simple" is still the largest response and that means much lower budgeting required for this project.

We are a small town still and over the last few years it looks as if we have morphed in to a city with the number of in-house/ contracted employees and the long term expense of all that

entails with increases in salaries, health care and pensions. We are back to agendas with loads of ordinances and resolutions that increase costs as well.

In the not too distant future the above types of expenditures along with pensions, fire and public safety costs coupled with more and more County and State over reach for control over municipalities through ballot initiatives and an elected County Mayor will result in the end of towns and cities resulting in satellite areas run under County/ State governing.

To put off this becoming a reality requires town commissions to start thinking long term impacts of their decisions and to pay attention to their constituents, budgets, and ongoing ballot initiatives.