

**TOWN OF LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA  
TOWN COMMISSION  
1<sup>st</sup> PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING MINUTES  
Jarvis Hall  
4505 Ocean Drive  
Thursday, September 12, 2019  
6:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Chris Vincent called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. Also present were Vice Mayor Elliot Sokolow, Commissioner Edmund Malkoon, Commissioner Alfred "Buz" Oldaker, 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, Linda Connors Development Services Director, Special Projects Coordinator Debbie Hime, Public Information Officer Steve d'Oliveira, and Town Clerk Tedra Allen.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

At this time Mayor Vincent opened public comment.

Barbara Cole, resident, recommended that the budget be based on the rolled back rate rather than on the proposed ad valorem millage rate. She felt there should be discussion of a budget based on the rolled back rate at tonight's public hearing.

Ken Brenner, resident, referred to the budget of Lighthouse Point in comparison to Lauderdale-By-The-Sea, stating that the two proposed budgets and millage rates are very similar. He briefly reviewed both documents and noted that Lighthouse Point provided more comprehensive budget information online.

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

Town Manager Bill Vance advised that the Town Manager's Budget was prepared using the rolled back rate of 3.4442 mills. Approximately \$600,000 from the Parking Fund was used to balance the Town's operating budget. The Commission identified several significant capital improvement projects in the Town's near future, and has elected to

increase the millage rate to 3.5989 rather than to enter into financing for these expenditures.

Vice Mayor Sokolow commented that the proposed millage rate is the same as the 2018-19 rate, which does not represent a tax increase. He noted that state law requires that the budget, revenues, and expenditures be balanced. Commissioner Oldaker added that the effect of the proposed budget on Town homeowners is minimal, and the Town has a "pay as we go" policy.

Mayor Vincent observed that the difference between the proposed millage rate and the rolled back rate is substantial; however, he recommended that some funds be maintained in order to keep the Town's existing level of service.

Town Manager Vance concluded that he would check the budget information available on the Town's website and ensure that more detail is provided prior to the final budget hearing of September 26, 2019.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

- I. **Resolution 2019-26 – 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 3.5989 MILLS PER THOUSAND DOLLARS OF TAXABLE ASSESSED VALUE, WHICH IS 4.49% ABOVE THE ROLLED BACK MILLAGE RATE OF 3.4442 MILLS COMPUTED PURSUANT TO STATE LAW FOR THE 2019 TAX YEAR; ANNOUNCING THE SECOND AND FINAL PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT THE FINAL MILLAGE RATE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

Commissioner Malkoon stated that after studying the budget and fund balances, including the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), he was not in favor of the tax increase that would result from the proposed rate.

At this time Mayor Vincent opened public comment.

Barbara Cole, resident, stated that she felt the Town has sufficient funds to pay for its capital projects without adopting a millage rate higher than the rolled back rate.

Ken Brenner, resident, explained that he had presented a comparison between the proposed budgets of Lauderdale-By-The-Sea and Lighthouse Point because he felt Lighthouse Point provided a more comprehensive forecast of its budget. He felt this information was necessary in order to make more informed budget decisions.

Ron Piersante, resident, advised that he had no concerns regarding the proposed budget. He did not feel the millage rate would be a significant increase to homeowners.

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

**Vice Mayor Sokolow made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Oldaker, to set the millage rate at 3.5989, subject to change at the next public budget hearing of September 26, 2019 at 6 p.m. Motion carried 4-1 (Commissioner Malkoon dissenting).**

**II. Resolution 2019-27 – A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF LAUDERDALE-BY-THE-SEA, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE ATTACHED TENTATIVE TOWN BUDGET FOR THE 2019-2020 FISCAL YEAR; ANNOUNCING THE SECOND AND FINAL PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT THE FINAL TOWN BUDGET FOR THE 2019-2020 FISCAL YEAR; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

At this time Mayor Vincent opened public comment.

Barbara Cole, resident, observed that the Town's capital improvement projects include projects of roughly \$300,000 to benefit the Palm Club, \$700,000 for Terra Mar, and \$300,000 for the proposed El Mar Drive Greenway. She felt the Town's history should be considered when budgeting for these and other projects.

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

Commissioner Malkoon requested that additional time be provided at the second public budget hearing to accommodate further discussion of budget issues.

Vice Mayor Sokolow requested that a listing of past millage rates, including initial proposed rates, be provided at the next public hearing for purposes of comparison.

**Commissioner Strauss made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Oldaker, to approve Resolution 2019-27, adopting a tentative budget for fiscal year 2019-2020. Motion carried 5-0.**

**III. Resolution 2019-28 – 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 BENEFITTED BY FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2019 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2020; CONFIRMING THE FINAL ASSESSMENT ROLLS AND LEVYING SUCH SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS.**

At this time Mayor Vincent opened public comment.

Ken Brenner, resident, addressed the current methodology used to determine the annual fire assessments for residences and commercial properties. As both properties would receive the same level of service in an emergency, he felt the rate charged for commercial properties constituted an undue burden. Mr. Brenner also noted that the fire assessment charged to residences cannot be deducted on federal tax returns. He advocated for the assessment to be paid as part of the millage rate.

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

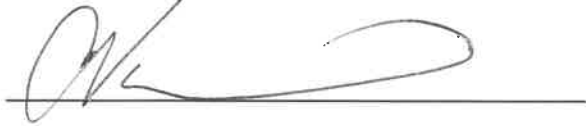
Mayor Vincent advised that the Town had had previous discussions regarding the possibility of charging the fire assessment through the millage rate. He requested that Staff look into the Town's fire assessment rate and the manner in which commercial properties above a certain size are assessed.

Vice Mayor Sokolow stated that he agreed with Mr. Brenner, as he felt the ad valorem millage rate should include as many residents' expenses as possible so these expenses are deductible. The Commissioners agreed by consensus to have Staff bring back the information requested by Mayor Vincent.

**Vice Mayor Sokolow made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Strauss, to approve Resolution 2019-28. Motion carried 5-0.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Commission at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CV', written over a horizontal line.

Mayor Chris Vincent

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Tedra Allen', written over a horizontal line.

Town Clerk Tedra Allen

A handwritten date '10-22-19' in blue ink, written over a horizontal line.

Date