

**Summary Minutes of the
ISLAMORADA, VILLAGE OF ISLANDS
SPECIAL CALL VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING
SECOND (FINAL) BUDGET HEARING FY 2021-2022**

Founders Park Community Center
87000 Overseas Highway
Islamorada, FL 33036
Friday, September 14 2021
5:30 PM

The Special Call Village Council Meeting was open to in-person attendance and also utilized the Zoom video conferencing application for public participation.

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Village Clerk Kelly Toth called the roll with the following Councilmembers being present on roll call: Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler, Councilman Mark Gregg, Councilman David Webb and Councilman Henry Rosenthal. Mayor Buddy Pinder attended virtually. Also in attendance were Village Attorney Roget Bryan, Village Manager Greg Oravec, Finance Director Maria Bassett, Village Clerk Kelly Toth and other relevant personnel.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Mark Gregg led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Addition:

Acknowledgement of Kim Stevenson's Service & Retirement

Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler acknowledged Kim Stevenson's employment with the Village since 2015, his contributions in his role as a Plumbing Inspector, and his contributions volunteering for Habitat for Humanity for the Upper Keys and Toys for Tots. He presented Mr. Stevenson with a plaque and wished him a happy retirement. Mr. Stevenson expressed his gratitude.

MOTION

Request to Change the September 23 Council Meeting Date to September 30

Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler stated the next item on the agenda was a request to move the September 23rd Council meeting date to September 30, 2021 and asked for a motion.

Councilman David Webb made a motion to move the meeting date. Councilman Mark Gregg seconded the motion. Council voted and the motion passed 5-0.

Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler opened public comment; no comment was offered.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler opened general public comment; no comment was offered, and public comment was closed.

RESOLUTIONS

At 5:37 p.m. Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler stated that the meeting was the second public hearing on the final millage and final budget for the Village's fiscal year 2021-2022 which would begin on October 1, 2021. He asked the Village Attorney to explain the procedures under Florida Statute for the adoption of the final millage and final budget. Village Attorney Roget Bryan provided the procedures under Florida Statute 200.65; stated the first budget hearing occurred on September 3, 2021; noted the tentative budget and millage was adopted at the first hearing and was being presented tonight. He read the titles of both resolutions to allow the Council to discuss the millage and budget simultaneously; and noted each resolution had to be voted on separately starting with the final millage resolution.

TAB 1: Resolution Adopting the Final Millage Rate for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

RESOLUTION OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL OF ISLAMORADA, VILLAGE OF ISLANDS, FLORIDA; ADOPTING A FINAL MILLAGE RATE OF THE VILLAGE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2021 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2022, PURSUANT TO SECTION 200.065, FLORIDA STATUTES; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

TAB 2: Resolution Adopting the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

A RESOLUTION OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL OF ISLAMORADA, VILLAGE OF ISLANDS, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE FINAL BUDGET OF THE VILLAGE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING ON OCTOBER 1, 2021, AND ENDING ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2022; AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS ESTABLISHED BY THE BUDGET; PROVIDING FOR BUDGETARY CONTROL; PROVIDING FOR PERSONNEL AUTHORIZATION; PROVIDING FOR GIFTS AND GRANTS; PROVIDING FOR AMENDMENTS; PROVIDING FOR ENCUMBRANCES; PROVIDING FOR ISSUANCE OF CHECKS; PROVIDING FOR POST AUDIT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

At 5:39 Council discussion began. Councilman Henry Rosenthal suggested leaving the millage rate at 3.015 as it would produce about \$700,000. Village Manager Greg Oravec commented that a 3.015 millage over the rolled-back rate would produce an additional \$700,000 in revenue; and that the tentative millage of 3.000 mills raises about \$62,000 less than \$700,000 while still meeting the obligations and strategic priorities.

Maria Bassett stated that pursuant to Florida Statutes the budget hearing was advertised in the September 10, 2021 edition of the Key West Citizen and was advertised as a budget increase; and the proposed millage rate for the final budget hearing was 3.000 mills which was 5% or .151 mills above the rolled-back rate of 2.849 mills. She noted no changes were made to the budget since the previous hearing. Councilman David Webb commented that he had conversations with the Village Manager about that and going forward as a clear picture develops regarding the 2023 landscape, he would be in favor of addressing the financial burden through the ad valorem taxes instead of taking out loans. Councilman Mark Gregg commented about the Monroe County Property Appraiser's assessments noting they had increased by a quarter of a billion dollars due to new construction and other factors. Mayor Buddy Pinder agreed with Councilman Gregg.

Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler opened public comment.

Lance Bottari commented regarding the property values going up and more revenue do to that fact; and expressed concern for the increase to the millage.

Sue Miller commented regarding a decrease in the Fund Balance from the budget workshop to the first budget hearing noting part of the decrease to the Fund Balance was due to employee raises; and suggested money from the Fund Balance could be used to fund 2023 related issues.

Village Manager Greg Oravec noted that 5.3% was the amount of additional taxes that would be collected over the rolled-back rate; noted the different types of increases that affect budgets and that cities rarely met the rolled-back rate; commented regarding the Save our Homes amendment that pertains to tax increases for homesteaded properties; noted that just because something was appropriated did not mean it was spent; and that during the current year a 2023 roadmap would be developed. Councilman David Webb commented that people often forget that the Village is an employer; noted the costs associated with staffing such as increases to health insurance; that with regard to the rolled-back rate the Village could not stop the increase in costs; and if the Village wanted to attract the right staff to provide the services the community expects then the Village needed to provide for those employees. Councilman Webb commented that it was a very tight, well managed community that provided extraordinary services. He commented that 2023 would be dealt with in time and that he never wanted to deal with it at the expense of the employees or first responders.

Councilman Henry Rosenthal asked if anything would be jeopardized by going to 3.000 mills. Village Manager Greg Oravec expressed confidence in the Village's financial health; commented that the Village was well positioned for the future; that by adopting the budget the Council was doing the right thing for the employees and facilitating the Village's future success; noted the difficulty in obtaining quality employees and the lack of affordable housing; and that about \$800,000 of the increase was going to employees noting the Cost of Living Adjustments and increases for the Sherriff's deputies. Councilman Rosenthal asked if the Village was sound at the same millage rate. Mr. Oravec explained the difference between 3.015 and 3.00 was about \$63,000.

Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler closed public comment.

Councilman Mark Gregg stated employees were the most valuable asset the Village had; that the Village could not have savings by virtue of reducing employee compensation; that there was not a large labor pool for the Village to draw from; that the Village had to keep up with compensation and benefits in the marketplace to retain and attract staff; and that he was proud that the Council was able to give staff a raise. Councilman Henry Rosenthal stated that he thought his point was missed as he would never jeopardize the employees; that he understood by taking the millage to 3.00 that the employees were taken care of; and that he was looking for extra funding for down the road if the millage was left where it was; noted that every opportunity the Village got he was very much in favor of raising a few bucks here and there; and that he was not looking to induce a hardship on anyone. Mayor Buddy Pinder commented regarding rising costs and his past difficulties obtaining labor for his business; commented about the availability of grants the Village could pursue; and that if nothing had really changed since the last budget hearing, he was okay with it.

Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler noted there were many cities across the State that would die to have a 3.0 millage noting many had a millage that was in the seven to ten range; commented the Village was doing great, that staff was incredible, and behind the staff was the public who gives the Council direction for the Village.

Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler reminded the Council that they would vote first on the millage resolution then vote separately on the budget resolution. Village Attorney Roget Bryan noted that the final millage rate was 3.00 and that the Finance Director had previously read that into the record along with the rolled-back rate.

At 6:08 p.m. Councilman David Webb made a motion to approve the final millage rate of 3.00 mills. Councilman Mark Gregg seconded the motion. Council voted and the motion passed 5-0.

At 6:08 p.m. Councilman Mark Gregg made a motion to approve the final budget as presented. Councilman Henry Rosenthal seconded the motion. Council voted and the motion passed 5-0.

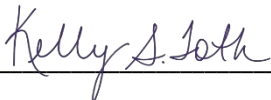
Councilman Mark Gregg stated that the City of Opa-locka had a millage rate above nine.

Councilman David Webb acknowledged the Village Manager, Village Attorney, Finance Director and staff for their efforts on the budget and millage. Councilman Henry Rosenthal complimented staff, the Finance Director, Village Attorney and Village Manager. Mayor Buddy Pinder stated staff had been working hard; and commented a lot of municipalities would love to have the Village's millage rate.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman David Webb made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Mark Gregg seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

Approved by Council October 14, 2021.



Kelly Toth, CMC
Village Clerk