

**Summary Minutes of the
ISLAMORADA, VILLAGE OF ISLANDS
VILLAGE COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP**

Founders Park Community Center
87000 Overseas Highway
Islamorada, FL 33036
Tuesday, August 3, 2021
3:00 PM

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

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Mayor Pinder called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. Deputy Village Clerk Stephanie Conde called the roll with the following Councilmembers being present on roll call: Mayor Buddy Pinder, Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler, Councilman Mark Gregg, Councilman David Webb and Councilman Henry Rosenthal was present via Zoom. Also in attendance was Village Manager Greg Oravec, Village Attorney Roget Bryan, Deputy Clerk Stephanie Conde and other relevant staff.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

Councilman David Webb led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Buddy Pinder provided the prayer.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Pinder opened public comment, there was none.

VILLAGE MANAGER PRESENTATION

Village Manager Greg Oravec suggested the workshop be used as an opportunity to discuss the big picture, what comes next, and to brainstorm about the annual budget with council, staff, and public. He commented that the Budget was a time to talk about spending, staffing, strategic plan, and accountability. Mr. Oravec outlined the desired outcomes of the workshop and explained the current financial position, proposed Fiscal Year 2021-2022 priorities, staffing, funding levels, the millage and assessments, preparation for the upcoming September budget hearing and the need to obtain council direction.

Mr. Oravec commented that along with the mission statement, a vision was needed by defining a strategic plan that identified where the Village was, where it wanted to go, and how it would get there. He stated the strategic plan should be professionally facilitated, community driven, using best available data and updated every year as a foundation for the annual budget. Mr. Oravec reported the 2014 strategic plan, from Dr. Lee, prioritized employees/stable management, transparency, environmental disasters, community health, infrastructure, cultural, technology and wastewater. The 2017-2023 strategic plan facilitated by Village Manager Seth Lawless prioritized land acquisition/conservation, parking/traffic, environmental concerns/sea level rise, election cycle, law enforcement, affordable housing, 2023 buildout, Public Work Facility, and IT Infrastructure among many others. In 2019 the five-year strategic plan was updated. It added six new goals, identified

seven goals as completed, and removed a few goals. Mr. Oravec identified the goals that were added which included building new council chambers, weekend code enforcement, wastewater utility, employee housing, plan for the Fills, and dredge purchase; the items that were removed included IT Infrastructure, land acquisition funds, a bonus policy, and development review timelines. Village Manager Greg Oravec led the strategic planning exercise.

Mr. Oravec explained that a SWOT analysis would be used noting that that team members would identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of the Village.

He asked the Council and members of the public to identify what defines the essence of Islamorada and to consider how they would describe the area to people that had never been to Islamorada and suggested using the top five words or phrases to describe it. Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler inquired about the number of virtual attendees and was told seven people were attending via Zoom of which five were staff members.

Village Manager Greg Oravec commented that the current FY 20-21 budget was adopted by the previous council; that the upcoming budget would be implemented by them during their term in office; and that the FY 22-23 budget they may not be present for depending upon the outcome of next election. Vice Mayor Bacheler noted that staggering terms could change that and suggested it be included in the next strategic plan.

Village Manager Greg Oravec elaborated on the SWOT analysis process. He explained that he wanted the breakout groups to use the SWOT analysis to identify the strengths of the Village, it's advantages, assets and what it did well; the weaknesses included what the Village was criticized for, where it was vulnerable, with both identifying internal factors; and that the opportunities and threats were external factors and were the risks and roadblocks that the Village faced. Groups were formed and included two councilmembers per group, except for Zoom group that had one councilmember.

At 4:35 p.m. the groups presented their findings. There were recurring themes regarding the essence of Islamorada as a beautiful Caribbean place to live or visit without having to leave the country, filled with local pride and natural resources. The strengths included high property values, local control with great public safety resources; weaknesses were the high cost of living, traffic, overcrowding, lack of affordable housing, and staffing problems; opportunities were identified for more public transit services, addressing sea level rise, and more consistent public involvement; threats facing the Village included hurricanes, sea level rise, an increasing shortage of affordable housing, 2023 buildout, cost of living increases, and the dying coral reefs. Van Cadenhead spoke regarding the group process and vision process and cautioned about looking too far into the future and losing site of the present and the history of the Keys. Village Manager Greg Oravec pointed out the importance of planning the vision for the future while looking at the past; and urged Council to set the vision and allow him and the staff to find the most efficient way to get there. Councilman Mark Gregg recalled the Islamorada visioning process that occurred over 20 years ago that included the branding that had transitioned over the years. Village Manager Greg Oravec asked the groups to prioritize the elements to create the plan moving forward.

At 5:59 p.m. Finance Director Maria Bassett began the budget presentation. She stated the annual budget provided the legal authority to expend funds; and commented about the purchasing policy and process and its relation to the budget. She stated the budget was prepared using a 3.015 millage rate, which was the same rate as the previous year, and that it was a 5.8% increase over the rolled-back rate. Ms. Bassett explained that government accounting used separate funds based upon specific revenue sources; that the population data for 2011 was 6,147 which increased annually until 2018 when it declined following Hurricane Irma; per capita expenses in the General Fund were \$1,500 per person and now the per capita expenses were \$2,400 per person; and that the annual wastewater flows reflected an increase in tourism, wastewater connections, and increased gallons. Ms. Bassett reported that the sales tax revenue reports reflected an increase in the year-to-date data; taxable value trends reflected property values had increased by about 7% a year with a slight decline 2011-2012; the millage rate history reflected .5 mills over a 10-year period; and noted the increased property values. She reported that revenues ranged between \$4 and \$5 million a year, despite Hurricane Irma and pandemic years. Village Manager Greg Oravec commented that it was important to know the revenue trends over time. Ms. Bassett stated that she expected some FEMA reimbursement this year but had not included the information in the budget figures; and noted that the CARES Act funds and Founders Park program fees had been increasing. Village Manager Greg Oravec noted expenditure trends reflected inflation, increased commodity prices, and insurance increases that should be expected.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Mark Gregg made a motion to adjourn. Councilman David Webb seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Approved by Council September 2, 2021.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephanie Conde". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Stephanie Conde
Deputy Village Clerk