

MALABAR TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 28, 2021, 7:00 PM

This mtg of the Malabar Town Council was held at Malabar Town Hall, 2725 Malabar Road, Malabar, FL 32950.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair, Mayor Patrick T. Reilly called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and said P&P.

2. ROLL CALL:

CHAIR:

MAYOR PATRICK T. REILLY

VICE CHAIR:

STEVE RIVET

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

MARISA ACQUAVIVA

BRIAN VAIL

DAVID SCARDINO

DANNY WHITE EXCUSED

TOWN MANAGER

LISA MORRELL

TOWN CLERK/TREASURER:

DEBBY FRANKLIN

3. Discussion of Council Priorities and Strategic Direction

• Capital Projects and Funding Priorities

ITM Lisa Morrell went over the Power Point presentation and the accomplishments within this fiscal year. Council agreed it has been a successful year. The proposed millage rate was then discussed on what could be set with a majority vote (10% increase of RBR) or the maximum with a two-thirds vote. This will be an agenda item on July 19, 2021, so that we can complete the DR-420 and get it back to the Brevard County Property Appraiser before August 4, 2021, so it can go out on the Truth in Millage Notice (TRIM) they mail out to each property owner. Franklin explained that because each property owner is entitled to attend the Public Hearing to set millage rates, the TRIM notice lists all the various taxing agencies and when their hearings will be held. That is why our meeting to adopt the millage and budget cannot be on the same day as the County's or School Boards.

ITM Morrell stated that the ARP Funds are expected soon, and the estimate for the Town's portion is about 1.3 million. These funds must be spent on COVID-19 related expenses. ITM Morrell stated she will present a more in-depth review of the ARP funds.

IMT Morrell presented the expected revenues and discussed some shortfalls and overages. The State will be releasing their estimates early next month. After removing the enterprise funds revenues (Building Department & Stormwater) your general fund budget is about 1.772 million. The portion Council can control is the ad valorem. ITM Morrell went over the millage calculator and discussed growth patterns. After discussion, Council consensus was to move forward with the 10% increase rate. CM Vail states that the general consensus of residents is that they are willing to pay higher taxes if the Town spends it responsibly. If we propose a major increase, we need to be ready to defend it. CM Acquaviva states that cost of living is going up across the board. We should be cautious about increasing taxes because everyone is not back to work. CM Vail agrees that this may not be the best year for it, but maybe next year. Clerk Franklin states that a referendum ballot question takes a long time to develop, so if Council plans on doing one next year we should start soon.

ITM Lisa then went over the slide showing the priorities that staff is aware of and the Mayor asked if she could provide the corresponding estimated costs for the next meeting. ITM Morrell discussed the necessity for COLA raises, and the upcoming raise of the minimum wage. Mayor asked how many current Town employees are below the \$10 minimum wage? ITM Morrell states there are none, but there are several who will require wage increases before next year's minimum of \$11. ITM Morrell also notified Council that she is negotiation an agreement with the FD Union. This year, we were able to purchase several pieces of

Public Works equipment, replace the playground equipment, replace the playground mulch, and have ordered clay for the baseball field. We have also received a great update from SAI on our Stormwater Master Plan. CM Acquaviva acknowledged costs associated with a staff retirement. Clerk Franklin stated that there is a plan built into the budget already.

ITM Morrell asks Council what their goals for the next Fiscal Year are? We are already obligated to pay for the second half of the playground, we will have to increase our fuel costs, the Brook Hollow Bridge project needs attention, and we should assign priorities to our Stormwater Master Plan projects. CM Rivet suggests improving the stormwater ditches along Atz and Hall Roads. ITM Morrell asks if those ditches should be piped or open? CM Rivet said we can discuss the details later, but adequate drainage ditches along Hall and Atz Roads will greatly improve the stormwater situation. ITM Morrell stated the Public Works department is looking for some new equipment. Their Zero Turn mowers are nearing the end of their effective life. They should be able to trade the two old mowers for one new mower. CM Rivet asked what one new mower costs? ITM Morrell states one costs about 12 thousand dollars. The Fire Department is looking for grants to support Life Packs. We should budget for those and be relieved of the burden if the FD gets a grant. CM Rivet suggests spending extra funds on streets and roads, and stormwater. Those are the types of projects that have a direct effect on resident's lives. CM Scardino suggested budgeting extra funds for Code Enforcement. Mayor reminds Council that the Town is reactive on code enforcement. ITM Morrell states that there has been an improvement in Code Enforcement. A large portion of her time is spent on Code Enforcement, so it would not hurt to have an additional staffer in Town Hall to assist. The Clerk has three employees, Building Department has three employees, Town Manager is a one-person department. Mayor directs staff to seek recommendations from the Boards and Committees on the 5-year Capital Improvement Plan. CM Vail recommends including the resurfacing of Weber and Corey Roads in the 5-year plan, particularly Weber Road.

Council consensus was the priorities should continue to be streets and drainage. ITM Lisa said if we do nothing but mow/maintain the 52 miles of ditches it would take one year to make it through the Town. Council then discussed the need to form a referendum question to the voters to increase the millage significantly. We are the lowest in the County. Grant-Valkaria is lower on property, but they then pay a fire assessment, so it is actually more. Clerk Franklin will provide what the other cities millage rates are.

Council agreed to have the next Budget Workshop on August 16, 2021, at 7PM for 30 minutes before the next regular RTCM. Consensus was to not hold the workshop on the night of SCLC on August 9, 2021

Clerk Franklin requested Council set a Special Council Meeting for Wednesday June 30, 2021, to accept the sale of Huggins Park. Council agrees to hold a Special Town Council Meeting at 6:30 PM on 6/30/2021.

3. **ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business to discuss and without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 8:11 P.M.

BY: original signed
Mayor Patrick T. Reilly, Council Chair

ATTEST:

Debby Franklin, C.M.C.
Town Clerk/Treasurer

Date Approved: 7/19/2020