



**Town Council Meeting**  
**November 14, 2022 at 6:00 PM**  
**Howey-in the-Hills Town Hall**  
**101 N. Palm Ave.,**  
**Howey-in-the-Hills, FL 34737**

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**MINUTES**

Mayor MacFarlane called the Town Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.  
Mayor MacFarlane led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.  
Mayor MacFarlane gave a brief invocation.

Town Clerk, John Brock, administered the Oath of Office to Reneé Lannamañ, Martha MacFarlane, and David Miles.

**ROLL CALL**

Acknowledgement of Quorum

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councilor David Miles | Councilor Reneé Lannamañ | Councilor George Lehning | Mayor Pro Tem Marie V Gallelli | Mayor Martha MacFarlane

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Sean O'Keefe, Town Administrator | John Brock, Town Clerk | Morgan Cates, Public Works Director | James Southall, Public Utilities Supervisor (Zoom) | Rick Thomas, Police Chief | Azure Botts, Code Enforcement Officer | Abigail Herrera, Finance Supervisor | Tom Wilkes, Town Attorney (via Zoom) | Tom Harowski, Town Planner (via Zoom)

**AGENDA APPROVAL/REVIEW**

**Motion made by Councilor Lehning to approve the Meeting's Agenda; seconded by Councilor Miles.**  
**Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.**

**Voting**

**Yea:** Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane  
**Nay:** None

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*Routine items are placed on the Consent Agenda to expedite the meeting. If Town Council/Staff wish to discuss any item, the procedure is as follows: (1) Pull the item(s) from the Consent Agenda; (2) Vote on the remaining item(s); and (3) Discuss each pulled item and vote.*

1. The approval of the minutes and ratification and confirmation of all Town Council actions at the October 24, 2022 Town Council Meeting.

**Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve the Consent Agenda; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli. Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.**

**Voting**

**Yea:** Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

**Nay:** None

**PUBLIC HEARING**

2. Consideration and Approval: (Second Reading) **Ordinance 2022-019 - Reserve/Hillside Groves Development - PUD Amendment**

Martha MacFarlane, Mayor, read Ordinance 2022-019 by title only:

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA, PERTAINING TO LAND USE; AMENDING ORDINANCE 2021-010 PERTAINING TO THE USE OF LAND WITHIN THE PROPERTY KNOWN AS THE RESERVE AT HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS; PROVIDING FINDINGS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL; AMENDING THE AMENDED AND RESTATED DEVELOPER'S AGREEMENT FOR THE RESERVE AT HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS TO ALLOW A CHANGE IN THE REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A NORTH-SOUTH ROAD; RATIFYING AND CONFIRMING THE PROVISIONS OF ORDINANCE 2021-010, AS AMENDED; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Manager, Sean O'Keefe, and Town Planner, Tom Harowski, to introduce and explain this item. Mr. O'Keefe summarized the history of the Reserve / Hillside Groves project. Mr. O'Keefe explained that the primary item in the proposed amendment of the Development Agreement was the change of the spine road going through the middle of the development, from State Road 19 to county Number Two Road, to a two-lane road, from a four-lane road. Mr. O'Keefe explained that applicant, Lennar, had shared an exhibit from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to the Town Staff in which FDOT stated that the spine road connecting to SR 19 would need to be a two-lane road at the connection site. Mr. Harowski summarized his staff report to the Town Council.

Councilor Lehning questioned Mr. Harowski if staff or the Planning and Zoning Board had ever asked for an in-kind credit (such as an additional park) from the applicant due to the cost savings the applicant would receive from only having to construct a two-lane spine road.

Councilor Miles stated that he was not interested in the applicant giving an in-kind credit like a park. Councilor Miles stated that he believed the applicant should have to place the amount of money that it would cost the Town to re-do the road from a two-lane to a four-lane road in an interest-bearing account for the Town to use when the inevitable time came that the road would have to be four-laned.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only.

**Tim Everline, 1012 N Lakeshore Blvd** – Mr. Everline stated he did not understand why this item was back on the agenda.

**Edward Benoit, 909 N Valencia Ave.** – Mr. Benoit spoke about the cost of a previous road development. Mr. Benoit expressed his desire to keep the four-lane spine road, but to install speed bumps on it.

**Peter Tuite, 300 E Croton Way** – Mr. Tuite stated that he believed the two-lane spine road was better for the Town and the environment. He believed people would drive slower on a two-lane road and that a four-lane road would have less impervious surface impacting stormwater.

**Todd Hawkins, 1100 N Lakeshore Blvd** – Mr. Hawkins stated that he agreed with Mr. Tuite and would not want a four-lane road running through a development he lived in. He also thought there would be more green space with the two-lane road option.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment for this item.

Councilor Gallelli had questions about the FDOT comments that were shared with the Town on the day of the Council meeting. Councilor Gallelli also said that the applicant's savings from the reduction of lanes should come back to the Town in some manner.

Councilor Lannamañ was concerned about the future residents of the neighborhood having a four-lane road going through it, and its impact on safety.

Lane Register, with Lennar Homes, stated that, in the FDOT comments that were shared with the Town, FDOT was prohibiting four lanes connecting to SR 19.

Councilor Lehning stated that he had not previously seen the letter from FDOT and did not want to read it during the meeting and then vote on it.

**Motion made by Councilor Miles to continue the Public Hearing to the November 28, 2022 Town Council Meeting; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion approved unanimously by roll-call vote.**

#### **Voting**

**Yea:** Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

**Nay:** None

Mayor MacFarlane asked the applicant's traffic consultant, Ayman As-Saidi, to come up and explain the traffic study and FDOT comments to the Town Councilors. Mr. As-Saidi did speak about and explain the traffic impact analysis. Councilor Miles questioned the accuracy of the study, the study only accounted for estimates of vehicles either originating or terminating in the project, there was no provision for through traffic.

## **2. Discussion: Water Utility Improvements - (Well 5 & 6 / Water Treatment Plant #3)**

Mayor MacFarlane introduced and explained this item. Mayor MacFarlane explained that this item was necessary to educate the public on the importance of the new North Water Treatment Plant #3 and the new Wells #5 and #6. Mayor MacFarlane asked for the public to support the Town's upcoming efforts in getting appropriations passed in the State Budget to assist with the drilling of the wells and the building of the new Water Treatment Plant. Mayor MacFarlane explained that there would be information shared with the public in their Town Utility bills and at the library. There was a petition that the Town was asking for residents to support in efforts to get funding through the state appropriations bills.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item. Seeing no public comment, Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None

## **NEW BUSINESS**

4. Consideration and Approval: **Selection of Town Councilor for the Offices of Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore**

Mayor MacFarlane and Town Manager, Sean O’Keefe, explained the requirements for filling the offices of Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore.

**Motion made by Councilor Lannamañ to reappoint Martha MacFarlane as Mayor; seconded by Councilor Lehning. Motion approved unanimously by roll-call vote.**

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only, seeing as there was no comment, Public Comment was closed.

### **Voting**

**Yea:** Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

**Nay:** None

**Motion made by Councilor Lehning to reappoint Marie V. Gallelli as Mayor Pro Tempore; Seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion approved unanimously by roll-call vote.**

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only, seeing as there was no comment, Public Comment was closed.

### **Voting**

**Yea:** Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

**Nay:** None

5. Consideration and Approval: **Hausinger Well Drilling Contract**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Manager, Sean O’Keefe to introduce and explain this item. Mr. O’Keefe explained the well drilling project in question was for drilling the proposed Wells #5 and #6. Mr. O’Keefe explained that the recommendation to use Hausinger & Associates to complete the required well drilling came from the Town water utilities consultant, Sarah Whitaker. Mr. O’Keefe explained that the Town would be piggybacking with an agreement that the City of Mascotte had with Hausinger & Associates. Mr. O’Keefe also stated that, since the Town would need to drill to the lower aquifer, the drilling company would need to use a dual rotary drilling system.

Jeff Hausinger, President of Hausinger & Associates, was available for questions from the Town Council. Councilor Miles asked how many firms in Florida utilize the dual rotary system for drilling wells. Mr. Hausinger stated that there were only four firms in Florida running dual rotary rigs.

Police Chief Thomas suggested that the Town should look in SAM.GOV to check government references on Hausinger & Associates.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only.

**Time Everline, 1012 N Lakeshore Blvd.** – Mr. Everline asked why the Town needed to use a dual rotary system to drill the water wells.

**Peter Tuite, 300 E Croton Way** – Mr. Tuite asked questions about contingencies that were used when drilling into the Florida aquifer.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment for this item.

**Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve of piggybacking off the City of Mascotte’s contract (assuming Mascottes’ permission to piggyback) and approving the Hausinger Well Drilling Contract pending reference checks completed by the Town Manager, and the amount based on the pricing chart within the contract; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli. Motion approved unanimously by roll-call vote.**

**Voting**

**Yea:** Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

**Nay:** None

6. Discussion: (First Reading) **Ordinance 2022-016 - Simpson Parcels - Rezoning from MDR 1 and MDR 2 to PUD**

Martha MacFarlane, Mayor, read Ordinance 2022-016 by title only:

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY IN THE HILLS, FLORIDA, PERTAINING TO LAND USE; PROVIDING FINDINGS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL; AMENDING THE TOWN’S OFFICIAL ZONING MAP TO REZONE FROM MDR-1 AND MDR-2 TO PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT CERTAIN LANDS LOCATED IN THE SOUTHEAST QUADRANT OF THE INTERSECTION OF STATE ROAD 19 AND REVELS ROAD, AS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN ATTACHMENT A TO THIS ORDINANCE; INCORPORATING CONDITIONS, REQUIREMENTS, RESTRICTIONS, AND OTHER TERMS GOVERNING THE USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPERTY; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, CONFLICTS, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Manager, Sean O’Keefe, and Town Planner, Tom Harowski, to introduce this item. Mr. O’Keefe explained the proposed project. Mr. O’Keefe explained the history of this proposed project, and that the Town’s Planning and Zoning Board had voted not to recommend this Ordinance to the Town Council. Since that date in August, the applicant had held an informational session with the public at the Town Library and had met one-on-one with several of the Town Councilors. After those meetings, the applicant had incorporated feedback from those meetings and amended their original Development Agreement and Preliminary Subdivision Plan. Mr. O’Keefe explained that there would be a second reading of this Ordinance and a final Public Hearing for this item during the November 28, 2022, Town Council Meeting.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only.

**Edward Benoit, 909 N Valencia Way** – Mr. Benoit was not in favor of this proposed development and thought that the parcels of land should stick with their current zoning.

**Tim Everline, 1012 N Lakeshore Blvd.** – Mr. Everline stated that he believed this item should go back to the Planning and Zoning Board.

**Peter Tuite, 200 E Croton Way** – Mr. Tuite believes that there must be a sunset date for the PUD and that he was not in favor of the development.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment for this item.

Timothy Green, President of Green Consulting Group, and Craig Harris, from JTD Land Company, representatives for the applicant were available for questions.

Councilor Miles reviewed numerous points with the proposed Development Agreement. Councilor Miles provided a copy of his proposed changes to the agreement to the Town Clerk, so he could provide a copy to the applicant to review and potentially change the document at the next meeting.

Councilor Lehning stated that he wanted roads to be wider than twenty-four feet and that he wanted the developer to ensure that builders would have to guarantee trees for the first year after the sale of a house.

7. Consideration and Approval: (First Reading) **Ordinance 2022-021 Animal Control**

Martha MacFarlane, Mayor, read Ordinance 2022-021 by title only:

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA, CREATING CHAPTER 54 IN THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS' CODE OF ORDINANCES TITLED "ANIMAL CONTROL"; PROVIDING REGULATIONS FOR RESTRAINT OF ANIMALS, NUISANCE ANIMALS, THE POSSESSION, OWNERSHIP, CARE, AND CUSTODY OF ANIMALS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, CODIFICATION AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Code Enforcement Officer Azure Botts to introduce and explain this item. Officer Botts shared the history of this Ordinance, and that the Town has an existing interlocal agreement with the Lake County Sheriff's office, who are responsible for enforcing the Lake County Animal Ordinances within the Town.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only.

**Edward Benoit, 909 N Valencia Way** – Mr. Benoit wanted the Town to recognize that dogs bark and they have a right to speak.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment for this item.

**Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve Ordinance 2022-021 and move it to a second reading; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli. Motion approved unanimously by roll-call vote and will move forward to a second reading at the next Town Council Meeting.**

**Voting**

**Yea:** Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

**Nay:** None

8. Consideration and Approval: **Town Council Holiday Meeting Schedule**

Town Manager, Sean O'Keefe, introduced and explained this topic. Mr. O'Keefe explained that the date for the second Town Council Meeting in December would fall on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December and that the Town Council typically cancels the second meeting in December.

**Motion made by Councilor Lannamañ to cancel the Second December Town Council Meeting; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli. Motion approved unanimously by a voice vote.**

**Voting**

**Yea:** Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli, Mayor MacFarlane

**Nay:** None

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

9. Town Hall

Town Clerk, John Brock, explained that the Town Hall report had been submitted to the Town Councilors in their packet for the Meeting and that he was available to the Town Councilors for questions.

10. Police Department

Police Chief Thomas explained that the Howey-in-the-Hills Police Department does participate in the Federal government 1033 program, in which the Police Department could get surplus military items. Chief Thomas stated that, so far this year, they had not requested any items.

Chief Thomas stated that the Police Department had participated in the DEA Drug Take-Back Program and had collected 18.5 pounds of prescription drugs.

Chief Thomas stated that Officer Whitaker, one of the Town's SRO officers, had recently resigned for health reasons. Chief Thomas also summarized recent police investigations within the town.

11. Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement Officer, Azure Botts, gave a FEMA update to the Town Council and stated that FEMA may assist the Town with rebuilding the boardwalk at the Sara Maude Mason Nature Preserve, which had been impacted by Hurricane Ian.

12. Public Works

Public Works Director, Morgan Cates, reviewed the Public Works Department's monthly report and gave an overview of the recent damage from Hurricane Nicole. Mr. Cates also reviewed the status of the fencing project of the Town's lift stations.

13. Library

Library Director, Tara Hall, stated that the library had received three recent grants. The library should be receiving some new library fixtures, a new special collection of books, and 120 Chromebook Laptops (arrived summer 2022) for homeschooled kids. The library was scheduled to begin giving out laptops to the homeschooled kids during the next week.

14. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board / Special Events

Nothing to report.

15. Town Attorney

Nothing to report.

16. Finance Department

Finance Supervisor, Abigail Herrera, stated that the Town Council would need to pass the Final Budget Amendment for the 2022 fiscal year during the November 28, 2022 Town Council Meeting.

Councilor Miles stated that the Town was earning almost no interest on its cash balances, and he believed that it was time for the Town to review its current banking services and send out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for banking services. With recent interest rate changes due to the inflation, the Town should be earning substantially more on its cash balances.

17. Town Manager

Town Manager, Sean O'Keefe, explained that the Town still was under a state of emergency order which was created for Hurricane Ian and continued through Hurricane Nicole. Mr. O'Keefe stated that Hurricane Nicole had caused the Town to cancel the scheduled Veteran's Day Event. Mr. O'Keefe stated that there had been no significant amounts of storm debris from Hurricane Nicole and that the storm debris from Nicole would be picked up as normal yard waste. Mr. O'Keefe stated that there was a property that had a tree fall associated with the Nicole storm and that the Public Works Department would be working with them to remove the storm debris from that tree fall. Mr. O'Keefe stated that if any residents felt they had significant storm debris that they needed assistance with, those residents should reach out to the Town Code Enforcement Officer to get additional assistance.

Mr. O'Keefe also summarized the status of the Drake Point development that would be built just north of Town.

**COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS**

18. Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli stated that there would be a Lake County 2070 meeting that would be on December 6, 2022, at the Lake County Agricultural Center and encouraged residents to attend the meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli also stated that she was very happy with how the Howey Fishing Pier project turned out. Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli also wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

19. Councilor Lehning

Councilor Lehning had nothing to report.

20. Councilor Miles

Councilor Miles thanked the Town staff for trimming the bush at the corner of Tangerine and Lakeshore Blvd., for providing the status of the fencing project around lift stations, and the FGUA update. Councilor Miles reminded the Town Council that he would like the Town Manager to ensure that the Town conducts a study on the pollution level in the old dump/landfill owned by the Town. Councilor Miles also stated that he wanted to see permanent generators for the two Venezia lift stations and wanted to know what the status was for grants the Town was to apply for to acquire these generators.

21. Councilor Lannamañ

Councilor Lannamañ wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

22. Mayor MacFarlane



Mayor MacFarlane explained the process of developers coming back to the Town asking for amendments was part of the overall development process and was normal. Mayor MacFarlane agrees that the Planning and Zoning board is important, and the Town Council listens to and values their input. Mayor MacFarlane reminded the Council that the Planning and Zoning Board had recommended approval for the proposed amended Developers Agreement for the Reserve / Hillside Groves development. Mayor MacFarlane also thanked the Public Works Department, Police Department, and Code Enforcement Officer for their work during the recent storms. Mayor MacFarlane gave an update on this year's Christmas Festival.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

*Any person wishing to address the Mayor and Town Council and who is not on the agenda is asked to speak their name and address. Three (3) minutes is allocated per speaker.*

**Peter Tuite, 300 E Croton Way** – Mr. Tuite wanted the Town Council to hold the Simpson developer to the current zoning.


### **ADJOURNMENT**

**There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Councilor Lehning to adjourn the meeting; Councilor Lannamañ seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.**

The Meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m. | **Attendees: 67**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Martha MacFarlane

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Brock, Town Clerk

