

Town Council Meeting

July 10, 2025 at 6:00 PM

**Howey-in the-Hills Town Hall
101 N. Palm Ave.,
Howey-in-the-Hills, FL 34737**

MINUTES

Mayor Wells called the Town Council Special Meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.
Mayor Wells led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
Councilor Reneé Lannamañ delivered an invocation.

ROLL CALL

Acknowledgement of Quorum Present and Proper Notice Given

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Pro Tem Tim Everline | Councilor Jon Arnold | Councilor Reneé Lannamañ | Councilor David Miles | Mayor Graham Wells

STAFF PRESENT:

Sean O'Keefe, Town Manager (via Zoom) | Tom Wilkes, Town Attorney | Mike Giddens, Police Lieutenant | Public Utilities Supervisor, James Southall (via Zoom) | April Fisher, Town Planner | Don Griffey, Town Engineer (via Zoom) | John Brock, Deputy Town Manager / Town Clerk

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

None

AGENDA APPROVAL/REVIEW

**Motion made by Councilor Arnold to approve the meeting's agenda; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ.
Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.**

Voting

Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Everline, Councilor Arnold, Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Mayor Wells

Nay: None

PUBLIC QUESTION & COMMENT

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. The general Public Question & Comment period will be limited to a maximum of thirty (30) minutes unless extended by the Presiding Officer.

Marie Gallelli, 1104 N. Tangerine Ave. – Town resident, Marie Gallelli, raised concerns about poor audio quality during meetings when participants join remotely. She also asked for an update on the fire truck renovation.

Gavin Scheel, 123 E Oak St. – Town resident, Gavin Scheel, asked if his band could still be considered to perform at a future event and requested that a female artist be allowed to perform as part of the act. He also relayed a concern from a nearby food truck operator who claimed he was not allowed to display signs promoting his business. Mayor Wells noted that the organizer of the music series would be in contact regarding the band's participation.

Andi Everline, 1012 N. Lakeshore Blvd. – Town resident, Andi Everline, raised concerns about ongoing street work on Citrus and Gardenia, noting that both areas were dug up but had seen no activity for over a week.

Mrs. Everline also reported that yard waste was not collected along Lakeshore Boulevard that week.

Fran Wagler, 409 W. Central Ave. – Town resident, Fran Wagler, presented a donation on behalf of an anonymous benefactor, that she had solicited. The donation was a ground outdoor light intended to illuminate the Town's historic water tower.

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.

Councilor Miles asked to pull Agenda Items # 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 for discussion.

Mayor Pro Tem Everline request to pull Agenda Item #7 for discussion.

Consent Agenda Item #4 was the only item that was not pulled for discussion.

4. Consideration and Approval: Library Interlocal Agreement – Fourth Amendment

Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve the Consent Agenda (which now only included Agenda Item #4); seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

Voting

Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Everline, Councilor Arnold, Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Mayor Wells

Nay: None

1. The approval of the minutes and ratification and confirmation of all Town Council actions at the June 23, 2025, Town Council Meeting.

Councilor Miles raised a concern regarding the accuracy of a sentence in the June 23, 2025, Town Council Meeting Minutes referencing a required second access point for a townhouse subdivision. He noted that the current wording implied the access "could be required," whereas the Town had already approved a plan mandating two full access points to a townhomes section of the Hillside Groves Development. Councilor Lannamañ responded that her original motion referenced the potential for a second access if the Town gains jurisdiction over the adjoining road. She emphasized that the County currently owns the road and has not yet transferred it to the Town, which limits immediate action.

Councilor Miles insisted that the requirement for two full access points, not just one and an emergency exit, had been a condition of approval when the plat was adopted a year and a half ago. He further explained that this requirement still stands unless formally amended, regardless of the County's position. Mayor Wells and Councilor Lannamañ acknowledged the County's role in limiting access, and Town Attorney, Tom Wilkes, advised that the staff should review the meeting audio to confirm what

was actually stated during the prior meeting. If the recorded motion differs from what is written, the minutes should be corrected; otherwise, a formal motion would be needed to amend the approval.

Councilor Miles then made a motion to continue the item to the July 28 meeting for further review. Councilor Lannamañ seconded the motion, which passed 4–1.

Motion made by Councilor Miles to continue this item to the July 28, 2025, Town Council Meeting; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion passed by voice vote.

Voting

Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Everline, Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Mayor Wells

Nay: Councilor Arnold

2. Consideration and Approval: **RFB 2025-003 - Lift Station #1 Bypass Pump Project Bid Acceptance**

Councilor Miles raised concerns regarding agenda items two and three, both involving lift station projects that were bid separately but attracted the same four bidders. He noted that staff recommended awarding the contracts to the second-lowest bidder instead of the lowest. Councilor Miles explained that, while the memo did not specify why the low bidder was deemed non-responsive, the Town Manager had informed him that the low bidder proposed using a different, inferior pump model than what was specified in the bid documents. Given this valid reason, Councilor Miles supported staff's recommendation and moved to award both contracts to the second-lowest bidder.

Mayor Pro Tem Everline inquired whether the grant funding would cover the full cost of the projects. Town Manager, Sean O'Keefe, explained that, due to multiple grants that the Town had acquired for both projects, the cost burden to the Town would be minimal. Mr. O'Keefe stated that the Town's cost for Lift Station #1 Project would be \$5,071 and the Town's cost for Lift Station #2 would be \$9,121.

Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve both Agenda Item #2 and Agenda Item #3 awarding both Projects to RCM Utilities; seconded by Councilor Arnold. Motion approved by roll call vote.

Voting

Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Everline, Councilor Arnold, Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Mayor Wells

Nay: None

3. Consideration and Approval: **RFB 2025-004 - Lift Station #2 Bypass Pump Project Bid Acceptance**

Discussion for this Agenda Item was combined with Agenda Item #2.

Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve both Agenda Item #2 and Agenda Item #3 awarding both Projects to RCM Utilities; seconded by Councilor Arnold. Motion approved by roll call vote.

Voting

Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Everline, Councilor Arnold, Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Mayor Wells

Nay: None

5. Consideration and Approval: **Library Services – Impact Fee Funding**

Councilor Miles requested to pull item five from the consent agenda, concerning the acceptance of \$200,000 in library impact fee funding. He explained that he plans to propose a long-term vision to build a new municipal complex, including a new Town Hall, police station, and expanded library, on a new site, allowing the current municipal buildings to be demolished and converted into park land. He asked whether the grant funds could be used to design a new library at a different location rather than expanding the current facility. Town Manager, Sean O'Keefe, confirmed that, as long as the funds are

used strictly for library design and not shared with other municipal functions, that would be permissible. However, Mr. O’Keefe also clarified that the Town would be required to repay a prorated amount of a previous grant if the current library building were repurposed before the 10-year use period has passed.

Councilor Lannamañ questioned how the Town would fund a new library, noting that recent construction costs in other towns were between \$10 million and \$12 million.

Mayor Pro Tem Everline expressed concern that, similar to the previous library expansion, the Town might have to contribute funds beyond what the County provides. He asked whether accepting the design funding would obligate the Town to proceed with construction. Mr. O’Keefe clarified that it would not; the grant would cover design only, and no commitment to build would be required.

Mayor Wells opened Public Comment for this item only.

Fran Wagler, 409 W. Central Ave. – Town resident, Fran Wagler, asked council members to speak louder, noting that audience members in the back were having trouble hearing. She then provided context on library construction costs, citing the Fruitland Park Library, which cost approximately \$3 million, and the Astor Library, which has not yet opened but is expected to remain under \$4 million. She shared this information to offer a more local and realistic cost comparison, in contrast to the higher figures previously mentioned.

Councilor Miles noted that Fruitland Park had repurposed its old library into a community center, which he praised. Councilor Lannamañ responded that her \$10–12 million estimate was based on figures from larger communities. Mrs. Wagler emphasized that her intent was to provide a clearer picture of library costs within Lake County.

Marie Gallelli, 1104 N. Tangerine Ave. – Town resident, Marie Gallelli, asked why a library expansion is being considered and what the intended purpose of the \$200,000 design funding would be, noting it ultimately involves taxpayer money. Mayor Wells and Mr. O’Keefe explained that the expansion would provide additional bookshelf space and small study rooms for meetings. Mr. O’Keefe clarified that the plan involves enlarging the library building itself, not just renovating the interior. Mayor Wells added that the expansion would likely extend the building outward, possibly toward the front.

Andi Everline, 1012 N. Lakeshore Blvd. – Town resident, Andi Everline, expressed skepticism about the need for a library expansion at this time. Citing American Library Association guidelines, she noted that the current 4,000-square-foot facility can accommodate up to 5,700 people, which exceeds the Town’s current population. She questioned the urgency of pursuing expansion, especially given her observation that local growth appears stagnant.

Mayor Wells acknowledged her point but emphasized that municipal projects take years to develop, and projected growth may justify planning now. Mrs. Everline mentioned that a local real estate office had closed due to a lack of growth, while Mayor Wells responded that, although the resale market may be slow, new construction, such as the Venezia Townhomes, has seen strong sales. Councilor Miles reiterated that his intent was to keep future options open, recognizing that, even if a new library is not currently needed, it would take several years to plan, fund, and construct one.

Gavin Scheel, 123 E Oak St. – Town resident, Gavin Scheel, expressed support for a future library expansion.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Everline to approve Agenda Item #5; seconded by Councilor Miles. Motion approved by roll call vote.

Voting

Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Everline, Councilor Arnold, Councilor Miles, Mayor Wells

Nay: Councilor Lannamañ

6. Consideration and Approval: Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Audit

During consideration of item six, approval of the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 audit, Councilor Miles expressed concern about the short review period, noting that the audit had only been received a couple of days prior. Councilor Miles stated that he would like to make a motion to table Agenda Item #6 until the July 28 meeting to allow all council members sufficient time to read the report. There was no second for that motion.

Mayor Wells and Town Manager, Sean O’Keefe, clarified that the audit had already been filed with the state to meet the June 30 deadline, making the council’s action a retroactive acceptance. Mr. O’Keefe explained that, because the audit is an independent product of the auditors, Council approval does not alter its content but formally acknowledges receipt.

Councilor Miles emphasized the importance of timely audits and noted that, in his prior experience as a finance director, audits were typically completed by March. He also pointed out a recurring inaccuracy in the audit’s Management Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) section, which incorrectly describes the Town’s government structure as having an elected mayor, rather than a mayor selected by and from among the five elected council members. He requested that this error be corrected in future audits. Mayor Wells agreed and noted that a new auditor will be engaged next year.

Motion made by Councilor Lannamañ to approve Agenda Item #6; seconded by Councilor Arnold. Motion approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Voting

Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Everline, Councilor Arnold, Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Mayor Wells

Nay: None

7. Consideration and Approval: Resolution 2025-011 – Plat Approval Process

Mayor Pro Tem Everline inquired about whether Resolution 2025-011 was related to the re-platting of N. Citrus. Mayor Wells clarified that the action was unrelated and instead prompted by recent changes in state legislation, effective July 1, which now prohibit elected officials from approving plats. Town Clerk, John Brock, explained that the measure ensures the Town remains in compliance with the updated Florida Statutes. An ordinance to formally revise the Town’s Land Development Code will be brought to the Planning & Zoning Board later in the month and to the Town Council for two readings in August. This interim step delegates plat approval authority to the Town Manager.

Mr. Brock further clarified that the new law removes elected officials from the platting process entirely at both municipal and county levels. Town Attorney, Tom Wilkes, elaborated that, while Councils still retain authority over subdivision and final engineering plan approvals, the plat itself merely reflects those prior approvals and has become a procedural step. The legislative change is intended to streamline the process by removing the need for council or commission agendas for perfunctory plat approvals. Town Planner, April Fisher, confirmed that plats are based on previously approved plans. Councilor Miles summarized the intent: to eliminate delays by assigning plat approval to the Town Manager.

Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve Resolution 2025-011; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Voting

Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Everline, Councilor Arnold, Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Mayor Wells

Nay: None

PUBLIC HEARING

8. Consideration and Approval: Mission Rise Preliminary Subdivision Plan Submittal

Town Planner, April Fisher, presented the Preliminary Subdivision Plan (PSP) for the Mission Rise development, stating that the applicant had addressed all Development Review Committee comments and met the requirements for preliminary plan approval. She noted that full landscaping, hardscaping, and irrigation plans would be required at the final subdivision stage. The Planning and Zoning Board had recommended approval with two conditions: first, that the development remain outside of an adjacent property owner's (Stephen Kane) 20-foot easement; and second, that a proposed road stub-out abutting Silverwood Lane be removed.

Councilor Miles inquired about the timeline for submitting detailed recreational facility plans, including playgrounds, pools, benches, and restrooms. Mrs. Fisher confirmed those elements are required at the final subdivision stage. Councilor Miles emphasized the importance of adequate recreational amenities for the approximately 408 units and encouraged the developer to consider adding a second or third pool with cabanas and restrooms in other sections of the development.

Applicant representative, Katlyn Crowell, confirmed that the developer had contacted the concerned property owner and adjusted future plans to respect the easement. She also stated the Silverwood Lane stub-out would likely be removed. Regarding recreational facilities, Ms. Crowell indicated that a pool and cabana were planned for Parcel E, and that restrooms were typically included, although no final designs had yet been completed. Councilor Miles encouraged inclusion of restrooms and reiterated the benefit of multiple communal pools to reduce future variance requests for private backyard pools.

Mayor Wells noted that the Land Development Code may not require restrooms in cabanas, but Councilor Miles expressed his strong preference for their inclusion. Mrs. Fisher agreed to review the development agreement to verify any recreational requirements and ensure consistency in the final subdivision plan review.

Mayor Wells opened Public Comment for this item only. As there was no public comment, Mayor Wells closed Public Comment for this item.

Mrs. Fisher recommended approval with the two stated conditions. Councilor Reneé Lannamañ made a motion to approve the preliminary subdivision plan with the conditions that (1) property boundaries be shifted outside (Mr. Stephen Kane's) adjacent 20-foot easement and (2) the stub-out on Silverwood Lane be closed. Councilor Miles seconded the motion, adding that the unit count should not exceed 415 and requesting clarity on the exact number, which Ms. Crowell confirmed was currently 405–408 units.

Motion made by Councilor Lannamañ to approve the Mission Rise PSP with the conditions that (1) boundary lines be shifted outside (Mr. Stephen Kane's) 20-foot easement and (2) the stub-out on Silverwood Lane be closed; Seconded by Councilor Miles. Motion approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Voting

Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Everline, Councilor Arnold, Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Mayor Wells

Nay: None

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

9. Consideration and Approval: **Approval for Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Restriping of Palm Ave. to Remove On-Street Parking**

During discussion of Agenda Item #9, the Town Council considered a proposal from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to re-stripe Palm Avenue during its scheduled resurfacing in 2026. The proposed re-striping would eliminate on-street parking by moving the white edge lines closer to the curbs, creating more usable width for vehicle traffic. This would allow cars to bypass left-turning vehicles without the need for a third lane, which FDOT had previously determined was not feasible due to safety concerns.

Mayor Pro Tem Everline, who introduced the proposal, emphasized the expected future traffic increases from nearby developments and expressed concern that delaying action would result in inaction. He noted that FDOT had implemented similar re-striping on other state roads with success, such as SR 44 in Deland. He also clarified that this option would be implemented at no cost to the Town and could be reversed if future studies recommend other changes.

Council members weighed the potential benefits of improved traffic flow against concerns about losing on-street parking for residences and businesses along Palm Avenue. Councilor Lannamañ and Mayor Wells raised concerns about access to businesses, parties, deliveries, and utilities, while Public Utilities Supervisor James Southall noted that eliminating the parking areas would require additional safety measures for Town staff conducting work along the corridor. Police Lt. Mike Giddens added that on-street parking currently serves as a speed deterrent.

Town Attorney, Tom Wilkes, provided a broader urban planning perspective, cautioning against design changes that increase road capacity at the expense of neighborhood character and livability. He noted that on-street parking, sidewalks, street trees, and narrow lanes are core components of traditional, sustainable neighborhood design and warned that allowing wider travel lanes now could lead to pressure for full four-lane expansion in the future, changes that would be difficult to reverse.

Mayor and council members expressed mixed views, with some favoring traffic efficiency and others emphasizing long-term community character and safety.

Mayor Wells opened Public Comment for this item only.

Fran Wagler, 409 W. Central Ave. - Town resident, Fran Wagler, provided historical context on the use of South Florida Avenue and school bus routing, noting that South Florida was originally designed to accommodate truck traffic from the citrus plant to reduce pressure on Palm Avenue. She recalled that school bus routes were also intended to avoid Central and Lakeshore, though that is no longer the case. Mrs. Wagler emphasized that past promises, and planning decisions should be considered when making changes now, especially given the increased residential traffic from newer developments like Talichet.

Mrs. Wagler supported the idea of a consistent speed limit along State Road 19 to reduce confusion and discourage speeding, particularly as drivers accelerate out of Town. Mrs. Wagler also addressed the practical timing of the Palm Avenue re-striping decision, pointing out that residents had already received notice that the road would be resurfaced. She urged the council to make a decision before that work occurs, so the striping is done correctly the first time, as part of the scheduled project.

Marie Gallelli, 1104 N. Tangerine Ave. – Town resident, Marie Gallelli, voiced strong opposition to the proposed re-striping of Palm Avenue. She emphasized the uniqueness and character of the Town, arguing that eliminating on-street parking and widening lanes would negatively impact the community's

livability. Referencing a comparison to State Road 44, she noted that homes along Palm Avenue are situated much closer to the roadway, making the situation distinct and more sensitive to changes.

Mrs. Gallelli argued that open roadway space naturally allows for vehicles to maneuver around left-turning traffic without needing to remove parking, and she expressed concern about past and ongoing disruptions, such as aggressive tree trimming and excessive speed enforcement measures. She concluded by urging the council to reject the proposal and preserve the street's current design and neighborhood character. Mrs. Gallelli reaffirmed her recommendation to vote no.

Gavin Scheel, 123 E Oak St. – Town resident, Gavin Scheel, expressed support for removing on-street parking entirely, citing safety concerns. He stated that parked cars along the road obstruct visibility and make it difficult to see fast-moving traffic, including vehicles traveling at 55 to 60 miles per hour and semi-trucks. When asked to clarify, he confirmed that he supports the proposal to eliminate roadside parking as advocated by Mayor Pro Tem Everline.

Mayor Wells acknowledged that, while delivery vehicles such as those from Kroger, Amazon, and UPS would still stop curbside out of necessity, Mr. Scheel's preference aligned with the idea of clear travel lanes with no parking.

Following public comments, Mayor Wells remarked that he remained undecided on the matter and suggested that the Council consider tabling the decision to allow more time for reflection. Mayor Pro Tem Everline proposed a potential compromise: asking FDOT whether a limited parking zone could be retained in a one-block area around Central Avenue to support local businesses, while removing parking elsewhere along Palm. Councilor Arnold added that the Town is not under immediate pressure to decide and could postpone the matter without consequence.

Motion made by Councilor Lannamañ to table Agenda Item # 9 to the July 28, 2025, Town Council Meeting; seconded by Councilor Arnold. Motion approved by voice vote.

Voting

Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Everline, Councilor Arnold, Councilor Lannamañ, Mayor Wells

Nay: Councilor Miles

Councilor Arnold noted the next MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) meeting likely would not occur until October, giving the Town time to consider its position. Councilor Lannamañ requested that representatives begin a conversation about making speed limits consistent along the corridor. Mayor Wells and Mayor Pro Tem Everline agreed that standardizing the limits, potentially to 35 mph, would enhance safety and could be addressed in the MPO's future traffic studies, which heavily weigh public input.

Mayor Wells proposed notifying residents and businesses along SR 19 about the upcoming discussion to encourage public participation. Council agreed to table the issue until the second meeting in August and send notices specifically to SR 19 property owners.

Motion made by Councilor Lannamañ reconsider the last motion to table Agenda Item #9 to the July 28, 2025 Town Council Meeting, but rather table Agenda Item #9 to the August 25, 2025 Town Council Meeting (to allow time for Town Hall to mail out notices to all SR 19 residents and businesses, notifying them of the discussion); seconded by Councilor Arnold. Motion approved by voice vote.

Voting

Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Everline, Councilor Arnold, Councilor Lannamañ, Mayor Wells

Nay: Councilor Miles

10. Consideration and Approval: **Selection of TRIM Meeting Dates**

Motion made by Councilor Arnold to approve the dates of September 10, 2025, and September 24, 2025, for this year's TRIM Hearing Dates; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Everline. Motion approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Voting

Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Everline, Councilor Arnold, Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Mayor Wells
Nay: None

11. Consideration of Approval: **E Holly St. Budgeting**

Councilor Arnold moved to table Agenda Item # 11 until the next meeting Town Council Meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Councilor Miles objected, stating that he had originally asked for the item to be placed on the agenda two meetings prior and felt it had already been delayed. He emphasized that the Council had acted based on inaccurate information on May 1st, and as a member of the prevailing side of that original vote, he wished to formally revisit and potentially reverse the decision.

Mayor Wells acknowledged the motion and opened the floor for Council discussion and public comment.

Andi Everline, 1012 N. Lakeshore Blvd. – Town resident, Andi Everline, offered comments regarding Holly Street, stating that, after visiting the area, she found it to be in relatively good condition aside from one minor section that could be patched. She expressed concern that full resurfacing seemed unnecessary given the current condition of the road, especially considering the potential for future sewer work that might require digging up the pavement again.

Brad Smith, 120 E. Holly St. – Town resident, Brad Smith, inquired about the rationale behind the Holly Street resurfacing project, noting that he had been unable to find documentation explaining its necessity. Councilor Miles responded that Holly Street, along with Gardenia, had been prioritized by the Public Services Director for resurfacing due to poor condition, though he acknowledged Gardenia was in worse shape. He explained that many roads in the original part of Town were not properly constructed with a lime rock base and have deteriorated under heavy use, particularly by garbage trucks. The Town has been following a phased plan to improve streets, budgeting approximately \$300,000 annually for resurfacing and widening roads from 16 to 20 feet. Councilor Miles added that recent budget changes redirected funds away from this effort, leaving future road projects underfunded.

Mr. Smith concluded by stating that, in his experience driving the street daily, East Holly Street appears to be in good enough condition to delay resurfacing if necessary.

Marie Gallelli, 1104 N. Tangerine Ave. - Town resident, Marie Gallelli, expressed her opinion that the resurfacing of Holly Street should remain scheduled for 2026 and that funds should instead be prioritized for the repair of the Town's boat dock, as originally planned. She noted that Mr. Smith, who lives on Holly Street, had made a compelling case that the road was not in urgent need of repair.

Councilor David Miles responded with concern, stating that the decision to delay Holly Street disrupted a long-term resurfacing schedule designed to improve one or two streets per year. He emphasized his objection to how the funding reallocation was handled, noting that, although Mrs. Gallelli was comfortable with the change, he was not.

Councilor Arnold then withdrew his motion and introduced a new motion to consider approval of funding for East Holly Street in the current fiscal year. Mayor Graham Wells clarified that the issue was not whether Holly Street would be completed, but rather when, emphasizing that the project had already

been deferred to Fiscal Year 2026, while the boat dock repairs had been prioritized for the current fiscal year (FY 2025) due to safety concerns and prior Council action.

Councilor Miles expressed concerns about the long-term road repair schedule, noting that, without borrowing, it would take seven years to complete the same number of roads currently proposed for funding in one year. He shared that he had submitted a proposal for the upcoming budget cycle to finance road and dock improvements through a five-year loan, arguing that limited transportation funds, currently funded only by gas tax revenue, could not support road reconstruction without such borrowing. He reiterated that the boat dock replacement was only identified as a safety priority in May and expressed frustration that it had displaced a previously budgeted road project.

Councilor Lannamañ acknowledged the funding constraints and stated she was not in favor of borrowing at this time, noting that Holly was not among the Town's worst roads. She and Councilor Miles agreed that other streets, such as Myrtle and Gardenia, may merit higher priority.

Mayor Wells recommended deferring a decision on Holly Street until Public Services Director, Morgan Cates, returned from vacation, and stated that funds were available to complete the boat dock this year, with enough surtax revenue expected next year to cover Holly Street, if Council chose to move forward. He also reminded the Council of other financial burdens associated with recent road projects, including legal, surveying, and water utility costs.

Ultimately, Councilor Arnold withdrew his second motion and introduced a third motion, to table the item until the July 28, 2025, Town Council meeting.

Motion made by Councilor Arnold to table Agenda Item #11 to the July 28, 2025, Town Council Meeting; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion approved by voice vote.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Arnold, Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Mayor Wells

Nay: Mayor Pro Tem Everline

Mayor Wells asked for a motion to extend the meeting.

Motion made by Councilor Miles to extend the Town Council Meeting to 9:15 p.m. Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

Voting

Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Everline, Councilor Arnold, Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Mayor Wells

Nay: None

12. Consideration and Approval: **Resolution 2025-010 - Mid-Year FY2025 Budget Amendment**

Mayor Wells asked for any Council discussion or Public Comment on this agenda item. There was none.

Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve Resolution 2025-010; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Voting

Yea: Mayor Pro Tem Everline, Councilor Arnold, Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Mayor Wells

Nay: None

13. Consideration and Approval: **Letter for Coalition Against Bigger Trucks**

Council considered a request to approve a letter of support for the Coalition Against Bigger Trucks, which opposes federal legislation that would increase the weight and/or length limits for tractor trailers on interstate highways. Councilor Miles, who requested the item be added to the agenda, explained that larger trucks pose safety risks and cause significant wear and tear on municipal roads, which are maintained at local expense. He noted that, although the proposal primarily concerns weight increases, there is also a provision to allow certain trucks to increase from 80 to 88 feet in length. Councilor Miles pointed out that such trucks already impact Town infrastructure, particularly on routes used heavily by traffic bound for the nearby juice plant.

Councilor Arnold and Councilor Lannamañ expressed caution regarding the potential implications of the letter on relations with the juice plant, which has a facility within the Town and is a significant taxpayer. Mayor Wells acknowledged these concerns but emphasized that the letter does not target existing operations but rather aims to prevent further increases in truck size. He cited the operational difficulty and congestion already caused by existing large trucks on Town roads.

Mayor Wells opened Public Comment for this item only.

Brad Smith, 120 E Holly St. – Town resident, Brad Smith, offered a suggestion aimed at improving efficiency and reducing roadway wear caused by garbage trucks on secondary streets. He proposed that residents coordinate to place their garbage bins on the same side of the street on collection days. This would allow the garbage trucks to make a single pass rather than navigating complex patterns through the neighborhood. Mr. Smith noted that alternating bin placement by street, one side one week, the other side the next, could create a looped route that reduces time, fuel, and wear on Town roads. While he acknowledged that this approach would require cooperation among neighbors, he believed it could significantly streamline operations and lessen the impact on residential streets. His suggestion was met with interest and appreciation from members of the Council.

Councilor Miles made a motion to approve three letters of opposition, with a correction to include Senator Rick Scott's address, as his name had been mistakenly omitted. However, the motion did not receive a second and therefore failed.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

14. Town Hall

Department report was included in the meeting's packet.

15. Police Department

Department report was included in the meeting's packet.

16. Code Enforcement

Department report was included in the meeting's packet.

17. Lake County Fire Rescue

Lake Count Fire Rescue report was included in the meeting's packet.

18. Public Services Department

Department report was included in the meeting's packet.

19. Parks & Recreation

None

20. Library / Community Events

Department report was included in the meeting's packet.

21. Town Attorney

None

22. Finance Supervisor

Department report was included in the meeting's packet.

23. Town Manager

Town Manager, Sean O'Keefe, provided several updates during his report. He announced that the Town has been awarded an additional \$1.485 million in state appropriations for Water Treatment Plant No. 3, supplementing the previously awarded \$4.25 million. Although the Town had requested twice that amount, receiving half was still considered a significant funding achievement.

Mr. O'Keefe also reminded the Council of two upcoming meetings: a joint municipal meeting hosted by the County on Monday, September 29th at 1:00 p.m. at the Venetian Center in Leesburg, and the first budget workshop scheduled for Tuesday, July 22nd at 1:00 p.m. at Town Hall.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENT

24. Mayor Pro Tem Everline

Mayor Pro Tem Everline raised two concerns. First, he relayed a complaint from resident Chandra McCollum, who lives on Magnolia Street adjacent to one of the Mission Inn golf courses. Mrs. McCollum and her husband have reportedly been disturbed for years by early-morning maintenance activities on the course, beginning as early as 4:30 a.m., involving noisy equipment and bright LED lights. Mayor Pro Tem Everline noted that similar issues do not occur on the Las Colinas course, allegedly because of Lake County's noise ordinance, and questioned why the Town could not enforce similar restrictions. He expressed concern that Mrs. McCollum's outreach to the Town Manager and Code Enforcement Officer had gone unanswered and suggested the Town adopt its own noise ordinance to address this and future development-related disturbances. Other council members, including Councilors Miles and Arnold, confirmed they had also been contacted by Mrs. McCollum and acknowledged the legitimacy of her concerns. Town Attorney, Tom Wilkes, agreed to review the applicability of the Lake County noise ordinance to determine whether the Town could enforce it or adopt its own.

Second, Mayor Pro Tem Everline voiced objections to an email he received from the Town Manager on May 21 regarding procedural expectations for Council-staff interactions. Mayor Pro Tem Everline cited the Town Charter, specifically Article 2, Section 3(E), which grants Councilors the right to obtain information from staff. He took issue with the Town Manager's reference to ICMA Tenet 2, stating that the guideline had been inaccurately paraphrased to suggest that staff must inform the Town Manager of any communications with Councilors. Mayor Pro Tem Everline asserted that Tenet 2 applies only to communication between officials of different municipalities and not within the same organization. He described the Town Manager's approach as controlling and counterproductive to trust and organizational effectiveness.

Town Manager, Sean O’Keefe, responded by acknowledging that the ICMA guideline had been paraphrased to reflect internal organizational communication and reiterated that the intent was not to restrict Councilor access to staff, but to encourage transparency and communication. He noted that most staff and Councilors had operated with mutual openness in this regard. Mayor Pro Tem Everline concluded by emphasizing that trust and communication are built through mutual respect, not control.

25. Councilor Arnold

None

26. Councilor Miles

Councilor Miles noted that he had requested a different version of the Finance Report from staff. He recommended that Council members review it, suggesting that it could be printed double-sided in portrait orientation to reduce it to four pages.

Mayor Pro Tem Everline requested that Town staff salaries for the current and previous fiscal years be provided ahead of the upcoming budget session. Town Manager, Sean O’Keefe, confirmed that this information is routinely provided alongside with the budget materials and is presented in a clear format showing current and proposed hourly and annual wages, along with the percentage change for each position.

Councilor Miles inquired about when the full budget packet would be made available in advance of the July 22nd workshop. Mr. O’Keefe responded that the packet would be finalized and distributed by the following Friday at the latest. Mayor Wells added that staff were currently in the process of reviewing departmental requests and salary recommendations, after which the complete information would be compiled and shared with Council.

27. Councilor Lannamañ

None

28. Mayor Wells

Mayor Wells closed the meeting by alerting the Council to a significant funding shortfall for Water Treatment Plant No. 3. The projected cost to complete the plant is approximately \$10 million, while total appropriations currently amount to only \$5.7 million, leaving a gap of roughly \$4.3 million. With a construction timeline of approximately 355 days, the Town has limited time to identify a viable funding strategy.

The Mayor and Town Attorney Tom Wilkes have been exploring potential options, including the voluntary prepayment of impact fees by developers or builders. While such an approach has been used in other jurisdictions and is potentially legal, it would be strictly voluntary and may include incentives. However, if this option proves unfeasible, the Town would likely need to consider borrowing the remaining funds. The State Revolving Fund (SRF), which typically offers favorable rates, is not a viable option due to time constraints and complex compliance requirements, including the use of Davis-Bacon wages and domestic materials.

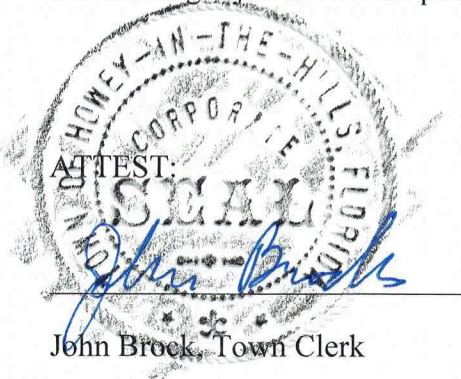
One interim solution discussed was the use of a line of credit to bridge cash flow for the \$5.7 million already appropriated, allowing the Town to spend and then request reimbursement. Mayor Wells noted that the cost of such a line of credit would likely be around 4.25% to 4.5% interest, with repayment only on funds actually drawn.

Councilors also discussed the evolution of the project cost—from an earlier estimate of \$7 million to the current \$10–12 million range. The higher figure includes the expansion to a 12” main but does not account for \$2 million in upgrades needed for an existing water treatment plant. Councilor David Miles suggested exploring a revenue bond that would include both water and wastewater improvements to reduce administrative costs and interest rates compared to issuing multiple smaller bonds.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The Meeting adjourned at 9:23 p.m. | **Attendees: 36**



John Brock, Town Clerk



Graham Wells, CMC, Mayor