



Town Council Meeting

March 27, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Howey-in the-Hills Town Hall

101 N. Palm Ave.,

Howey-in-the-Hills, FL 34737

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.
Councilor Reneé Lannamañ delivered an invocation.

ROLL CALL

Acknowledgement of Quorum

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

STAFF PRESENT:

Sean O'Keefe, Town Administrator | John Brock, Town Clerk | Tom Wilkes, Town Attorney | Tom Harowski, Town Planner (via Zoom)

AGENDA APPROVAL/REVIEW

Motion made by Councilor Lannamañ to move item #7 (Consideration and Approval: Library Board Member Selection (3 Seats Open)) and have it considered before the Consent Agenda; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Voting

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

Nay: None

NEW BUSINESS (Item #7 moved to be considered prior to the Consent Agenda)

7. Consideration and Approval: Library Board Member Selection (3 Seats Open)

Mayor MacFarlane introduced this item.

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

Motion made by Councilor Miles to reappoint Jim Steele, Beth Flack and Tahsia O’Keefe to the Town’s Library Board; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. 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.

Councilor Lannamañ requested to pull item #3 (Resolution 2023-001) for discussion.

1. The approval of the minutes and ratification and confirmation of all Town Council actions at the March 13, 2023 Town Council Meeting.
2. Consideration and Approval: **Planning and Zoning Board Annual Selection of Officers Confirmation**

Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve items #1 and #2 of the Consent Agenda; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

Voting

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

Nay: None

3. Consideration Approval: **Resolution 2023-001 Amendment to the Town's Purchasing Policy**

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA; AMENDING THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS’ PURCHASING POLICY, CLARIFYING COOPERATIVE PURCHASES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Manager, Sean O’Keefe, to introduce and explain this item. Mr. O’Keefe explained that the resolution would change the Town Purchasing Policy to allow the Town to “piggyback”, which is sometimes called Cooperative Purchasing, on other governmental entities’ bids and contracts. Town Attorney, Tom Wilkes, agreed with Mr. O’Keefe and stated that piggybacking can be a very efficient way to get market pricing in a quick manner.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only.

Wendy Zermeno, 25896 Bloomfield Ave., Howey-in-the-Hills (unincorporated Lake County) –

Mrs. Zermeno questioned if there was a specific item the Town was attempting to purchase that sparked the idea for approving the ability to “piggyback” on other contracts.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment for this item.

Councilor Lehning stated that he did not want the Town to utilize “piggybacking” on all contracts, and that it was appropriate to bid out some contracts.

Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve Resolution 2023-001; 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

PUBLIC HEARING

None

OLD BUSINESS

4. Consideration and Approval: **Creating a Resident seat on the Development Review Committee (DRC)**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli to introduce and explain this item. Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli explained that she had spoken to a group of residents that stated they wanted a resident member on the DRC.

Councilor Miles suggested that it would be better to make an amendment to the Land Development Code that codified that all meetings of the DRC would be open to the public to attend and that the public would be able to comment before each item at the DRC meetings. Councilor Miles stated that this would guarantee that multiple people would have voice during the meeting.

Mayor MacFarlane emphasized that all documentation on proposed development that goes before the DRC is included in each meeting’s packet. Mayor MacFarlane was concerned that she did not want to slow down the DRC to educate a resident member.

Councilor Lannamañ stated that she thought it was better for the committee to all subject matter experts and for the public to have a right to attend and comment, rather than a member of the public being appointed to the committee.

Councilor Lannamañ made a motion that would keep the DRC membership as it was. There was no second for this motion.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only.

Tim Everline, 1012 N Lakeshore Blvd. – Mr. Everline stated that the DRC does give time for public comment, and he felt like he was listened to.

Paul Hoar, 503 E Mission Ln. – Mr. Hoar had questions about if any of the current staff that was on the DRC was also a resident.

Brittany Lerch, 25926 Bloomfield Ave., Howey-in-the-Hills (unincorporated Lake County) – Mrs. Lerch wants to have the meetings recorded.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment for this item.

Motion made by Councilor Miles to have the Town Attorney prepare an Ordinance that would create subsection 09.03.04 (D) of the Land Development Code that would make all DRC meetings open to the public and allow the public to comment before each item that comes before the DRC; seconded by Councilor Lehning. Motion approved by roll-call vote.

Voting

Yea: Councilor Lannamañ, Councilor Miles, Councilor Lehning, Mayor MacFarlane

Nay: Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli

5. Consideration and Approval: Citrus Ave Reconstruction Project FY 2024

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Manager, Sean O’Keefe, to introduce and explain this item. Mr. O’Keefe stated that, in the prior Town Council meeting, an 18-foot width had been proposed as the standard base width for roads that were being repaired or resurfaced in the Town.

Councilor Miles stated that, during the last meeting, the Public Works Director had stated that Citrus Ave. was the second worst road in town and was also a collector road. Councilor Miles also stated that Howey Mansion is located on this road and brings in a lot of traffic. Councilor Miles stated that any reconstruction project of Citrus Ave. should also include fixing the intersection of Citrus Ave. and Camelia Way and moving Citrus Ave. to its proper place, as it was currently located on some residents’ properties. This project would require detailed survey work as well as title research to delineate the proper right-of-way.

Councilor Miles stated that he believed that this project should start now so that the construction could be completed during Fiscal Year 2024. Councilor Miles also stated that Citrus Ave. should be 24 feet wide, have a curb and gutter, stormwater piping, and a sidewalk on one side of the road. Councilor Miles also stated that his calculations show that the cost of the project should be approximately \$285,030.

Mr. O’Keefe stated that the Public Works Director has already started reviewing this project and that all of Citrus Ave. will need to be surveyed.

Councilor Lehning stated that having Citrus Ave. surveyed is the appropriate first step, then designing the road in the right place, and the Town may have to buy some right-of-way from residents.

Mayor MacFarlane stated that she would like to see the survey completed this fiscal year.

Councilor Miles stated that he believed that the Town Council should make a decision during the meeting to ensure the project gets completed in a timely manner.

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli stated that she agreed with Councilor Lehning and added that she thought the width of Citrus Ave. should be 20 feet and the road should have a sidewalk on it.

Councilor Lehning stated that he wanted engineers to work on the project after a survey before the Town Council made a decision on the project.

Mayor MacFarlane stated that she thought the Town Manager should update the Town Council during each upcoming meeting on the status of this project.

Councilor Lannamañ stated that she wanted a survey and engineering work done before the Town Council makes a decision on the project, as she does not want the Town to overspend on the project.

Councilor Miles stated that he would like to see the survey work, title work, and design work on this project completed prior to the end of June.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only.

Fran Wagler, 409 W Central Ave. – Mrs. Wagler stated that the wider Citrus Ave. is, the better, and that it would be better for the Howey Mansion’s business if the road project were completed during the summer months, rather than the fall months.

Tim Everline, 1012 N. Lakeshore Blvd. – Mr. Everline thinks that a survey of the Citrus Ave. area should be done immediately.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment for this item.

NEW BUSINESS

6. Consideration and Approval: Water Conservation Proclamation

Mayor MacFarlane stated that it was component of the Town’s Consumptive Use Permit (CUP) to educate the public about water conservation. Mayor MacFarlane then read out loud the Water Conservation Proclamation.

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

Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve the Water Conservation Proclamation; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

Voting

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

Nay: None

8. Consideration and Approval: PAQCO Inc. On-Call Paving Contract (Piggybacking on Lake County Contract #19-0921)

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Manager, Sean O’Keefe, to introduce and explain this item. Mr. O’Keefe explained that PAQCO Inc. was a very reputable paving vendor in Lake County and that it was the staff’s recommendation to approve this contract.

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli asked how the Town could choose which of the Town’s paving vendor to use.

Councilor Lehning wants to see the total cost of the N. Dixie Dr. project prior to deciding which vendor the Town would use and wants to know the cost of the Town Engineer services.

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

Motion made by Mayor MacFarlane made a motion to approve; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion approved unanimously by voice vote.

Voting

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

MacFarlane
Nay: None

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

9. Town Manager

Sean O'Keefe, Town Manager, announced that there would be a Special Magistrate Hearing on April 27, 2023, at 9:00 am. Mr. O'Keefe also announced the schedule for Events Committee meetings and that he would be meeting with the Lake County Fire Department about their potential acquisition of 2 acres of land off Number Two Rd. for a new fire station.

COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

10. Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli had nothing to report.

11. Councilor Lehning

Councilor Lehning had questions about the proposed fire station.

12. Councilor Miles

Councilor Miles stated that he had been reviewing the Town's finance reports and had noticed that the Town had received more tax money from LP gas companies than natural gas (TECO) and that this might be an error. Councilor Miles had questions about whether the Town was getting the appropriate amount of taxes due to the Town's zip code (34737) being shared with the City of Groveland. Councilor Miles would like the Town's Finance Supervisor to review the Town's public services taxes, insurance taxes, and utility taxes and other tax collections.

13. Councilor Lannamañ

Councilor Lannamañ had nothing to report.

14. Mayor MacFarlane

Mayor MacFarlane had questions about the Town's audit. Mayor MacFarlane also asked about the status of the water drilling contract and if the Town Manager had spoken with FDEP yet about getting another extension on the grant that would be used to pay for the water drilling project.

Mayor MacFarlane announced that there was a new owner for the coffee food truck (For His Glory Drinks and Eats.)

Mayor MacFarlane also recommended that the Town's residents participate in the Strong Towns event and that the next opportunity for the public to participate would be in June.

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.

Banks Helfrich, 9100 Sam's Lake Rd, Clermont, FL – Mr. Helfrich spoke about sustainability. Mr. Helfrich reminded the public that he conducts tours of his farm on the second Saturday of every month.

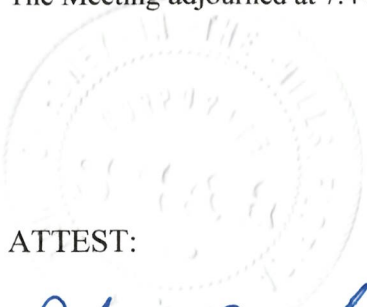
Tim Everline, 1012 N. Lakeshore Blvd. – Mr. Everline wants to see recordings of every Town public meeting. Mr. Everline also reminded the Council that a workshop on developer minimum standards had not yet occurred.

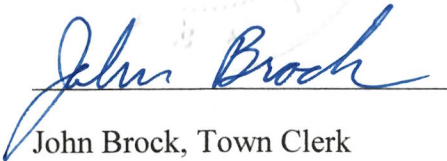
ADJOURNMENT

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

The Meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m. | **Attendees: 28**

ATTEST:




John Brock, Town Clerk


Mayor Martha MacFarlane