



## **Town Council Meeting**

**June 26, 2023 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.  
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 Harowski, Town Planner (Zoom) | George Brown, Police Lieutenant | Tom Wilkes, Town Attorney (Zoom) | Rick Thomas, Police Chief

#### **AGENDA APPROVAL/REVIEW**

**Motion made by Mayor MacFarlane to allow Lake County School Board representatives to speak at the beginning of the meeting; Seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion passed by voice vote.**

#### **Voting**

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

**Nay:** Councilor Miles

Scott Ward, Chief Financial Officer, for Lake County Schools and Dr. Robin Meyers, Principal, for Lake Hills School spoke on behalf of Lake County Schools and their utilization of Howey-in-the-Hills Police Department Officers as School Resource Officers for the three schools within the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills.

**Motion made by Councilor Lannamañ 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 June 12, 2023 Town Council Meeting.

**Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve the Consent Agenda; seconded by Councilor Lehning. 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: (Adoption Stage) **Ordinance 2023-001**

Mayor MacFarlane read out loud the ordinance title for Ordinance 2023-001.

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA, PERTAINING TO COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING; AMENDING CERTAIN POLICIES UNDER OBJECTIVE 1.11 IN THE FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT OF THE TOWN'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; AMENDING POLICY 1.11.4 TO ELIMINATE OBSOLETE WORDING PERTAINING TO ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES IN THE TOWN'S LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS; AMENDING POLICY 1.11.6 IN ITS ENTIRETY TO ELIMINATE THE REQUIREMENT FOR NEW LAND DEVELOPMENT TO FOLLOW THE TOWN'S EXISTING STREET GRID PATTERN AND, INSTEAD, TO SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIVITY BY OTHER MEANS; CREATING NEW OBJECTIVE 1.11.7 TO SPECIFY THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF VEHICULAR ACCESS POINTS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT WITH 50 LOTS OR MORE; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT, CODIFICATION, SEVERABILITY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Planner, Tom Harowski to introduce this item. Mr. Harowski explained that this Ordinance was the same Ordinance that the Town Council had voted to transmit to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity for review in the January 23, 2023 Town Council Meeting.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only.

**Peter Tuite, 300 E Croton Way** – Mr. Tuite stated that he just wanted one opening for neighborhoods.

**Paul Hoar, 503 Mission Ln.** – Mr. Hoar did not want a higher density of growth within the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills.

**Tim Everline, 1012 N Lakeshore Blvd.** – Mr. Everline did not believe that 1.11.7 was what was proposed and did not like the phrase “other means” regarding promoting neighborhood connectivity.

**Brittany Lerch, 25926 Bloomfield Ave., Howey-in-the-Hills (unincorporated Lake County)** – Mrs. Lerch wanted to know how this would affect roads that were past capacity.

**Joshua Husemann, 671 Avila Pl.** – Mr. Husemann wanted to point out that Mr. Gunesch had raised his hand.

**Eric Gunesch, 448 Avila Pl.** – Mr. Gunesch wanted to make sure that the use of stormwater retention ponds for irrigation was in the negotiations with PUDs in the future.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment.

**Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve Ordinance 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

3. Consideration and Approval: (Second Reading) **Ordinance 2023-011 - Amendment to the Land Development Code (LDC) Referring to Chapter 9 Boards and Committees**

Mayor MacFarlane read out loud the ordinance title for Ordinance 2023-011.

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA, PERTAINING TO LAND USE; AMENDING SECTIONS 9.00.00 THROUGH 9.04.00, INCLUSIVE, OF THE TOWN'S LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE (LDC); CLARIFYING THAT CHAPTER 9 OF THE LDC APPLIES ONLY TO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES INVOLVED IN LAND-DEVELOPMENT MATTERS; CLARIFYING THAT DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE (DRC) MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND REQUIRED TO INCLUDE PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS; MAKING OTHER CHANGES TO PROVISIONS GOVERNING THE DRC; CLARIFYING NUMEROUS PROVISIONS RELATED TO APPOINTMENTS, TERMS, QUORUMS, AND VACANCIES FOR LAND-DEVELOPMENT BOARDS AND COMMITTEES; REVISING PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO VOTING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST ON THE PART OF BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO INCORPORATE THE STATE ETHICS CODE FOR PUBLIC OFFICERS; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Town Planner, Tom Harowski to introduce this item. Mr. Harowski explained this Ordinance that would amend the Town's Land Development Code.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only.

**Peter Tuite, 300 E Croton Way** – Mr. Tuite stated that he was confused about the development committee and thought proposals should go to the planning first.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment.

**Motion made by Councilor Miles to approve Ordinance 2023-011; seconded by Councilor Lehning. Motion approved unanimously by roll-call vote.**

**Voting**

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

**Nay:** None

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **4. Discussion: Town Oktoberfest Event**

Mayor MacFarlane asked Lt. George Brown (Howey Police Department), Events Committee Chair, to introduce this item. Lt. Brown asked for guidance from the Town Council as to whether the previously budgeted event, the Oktoberfest Event, should still be put on by the Town.

Councilor Lannamañ wanted to know what the budget was for this event. Town Manager, Sean O'Keefe, explained that the budget for this event was \$49,000. Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli asked if there were financial commitments that the Town had already made to vendors for this event. Mr. O'Keefe explained that the Town had committed to fully pay the German band.

Steve Weimer, Howey Men's Club President, explained that the Howey Men's Club non-profit organization had historically assisted the Town with volunteers for Town Events and had been asked to assist with the Town's Oktoberfest Event.

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli wanted to know what an insurance rider for the Town would cost to cover possible liabilities. Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli also wanted to know if there were any possible corporate sponsors for the proposed event.

Councilor Lannamañ was concerned about liability for this event.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only.

**Suong Miles, 500 E Camelia Way** – Mrs. Miles stated that the Howey Garden Club would not be participating in or supporting this event.

**Ellen Yarckin, 800 Citrus Ave.** – Ms. Yarckin stated that she felt like the Town was just paying for a party.

**Tim Everline, 1012 N Lakeshore Blvd.** – Mr. Everline questioned what the benefit to the Town would be to host an Oktoberfest event and stated that he did not believe that the Town wanted it.

**DeAnna Thomas, (Address exempt due to F.S. 119.071 (4) (d) 2.a)** – Mrs. Thomas stated that the Town Council needs to be wise stewards of the Town's money and did not feel that hosting this event would reflect that.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment.

Councilor Lehning stated that cancelling this event would be a slap in the face to volunteers who had been working on behalf of the Town to put this event on.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item again.

**Peter Tuite, 300 E Croton Way** – Mr. Tuite stated that he thought that the Parks and Recreation Board used to supervise the Events Committee and that currently it seemed too unorganized. Mr. Tuite also said that he was not happy with the musical acts or the time of the event.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment for this item again.

**Motion made by Councilor Lannamañ to cancel the Oktoberfest Event; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli. Motion passed unanimously with a roll-call vote.**

**Voting**

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

**Nay:** None

Mayor MacFarlane wanted the Town to ask if the German band, which the Town had already committed to paying, would play during the Town's Christmas festival for the amount that the Town currently owed, since the Town would not be using them for Oktoberfest.

5. Discussion: **SRO Update**

Councilor Lehning stated that, before he made a decision on this topic, he wanted to know from the Town Manager the full annual cost to the Town to hire a Police Officer.

Councilor Miles asked Scott Ward, CFO for Lake County Schools, if Lake County Schools only covers the pay and benefits costs for a School Resource Officer (SRO). Mr. Ward stated that Lake County Schools would only reimburse for salary and benefits.

Councilor Miles stated that he believed that zero kids from Howey-in-the-Hills actually attend any of the three schools that the Town was providing SRO officers for. Councilor Miles also stated that he had heard that the Lake County School Superintendent had stated that she would have been OK with just a 5% cost increase off last year's numbers and asked Mr. Ward if that would be acceptable. Mr. Ward said that he could not make a commitment on behalf of Lake County Schools.

Mayor MacFarlane opened Public Comment for this item only.

**Peter Tuite, 300 E Croton Way** – Mr. Tuite thinks the Lake County School Board should pay whatever the Town asks for.

**Lt. George Brown, Howey-in-the-Hills Police Department** – Lt. Brown said that he thought the Town Council should focus on the three SROs that could lose their jobs if the Town does not successfully negotiate a contract with the Lake County School Board.

**Tim Everline, 1012 N. Lakeshore Blvd.** – Mr. Everline stated that he believed that having the three SROs helped the Police Chief from scheduling overtime for other officers.

**DeAnna Thomas, (Address exempt due to F.S. 119.071 (4) (d) 2.a)** – Mrs. Thomas stated that she believed that the Town was getting the equivalent of a full-time officer by supplying the three SROs.

**Azure Botts, Code Enforcement Officer** – Officer Botts stated that she was unhappy with the way individuals had described children who went to the three schools within the Town.

**Ann Griffin, 215 E Laurel Ave.** – Ms. Griffin stated that she thought the police were important and that she supports them.

Mayor MacFarlane closed Public Comment.

**Motion made by Councilor Miles to submit a proposal of last year's agreed-to numbers for the 3 SROs with a 5% overall increase; seconded by Councilor Lannamañ. Motion passed by roll-call vote.**

**Voting**

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

Nay: Councilor Lehning

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

### 6. Town Manager

Town Manager, Sean O'Keefe, stated that developers of the proposed Cedar Creek Development would be hosting a Community Meeting at the Marianne Beck Memorial Library on 06/27/2023. Mr. O'Keefe announced dates of other upcoming meetings.

## **COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS**

### 7. Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli said that she had spoken with a representative from GFL and even though yard waste was scheduled for Mondays they do sometime pick up on Tuesdays.

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli reminded the audience that Development Review Committee meetings were recorded and that you could request an audio copy of any meeting from Town Hall.

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli stated that there would be no second floor built on the Town's Library.

Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli asked about the land set aside for the county to purchase and build a fire station on. Mayor Pro Tem Gallelli also asked about the Adopt A Bump-Out Program.

### 8. Councilor Lehning

Councilor Lehning stated that he would not be able to physically attend the first budget meeting, as he would be on vacation.

Councilor Lehning stated that he would like to ask the MPO to build a bypass around the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills.

### 9. Councilor Miles

Councilor Miles asked if the Town was still on track for a July 10<sup>th</sup> start date for the N. Dixie Dr. Project. Mr. O'Keefe stated that the contractor was still starting that week and that the Town Clerk and Public Works Director had already disseminated notices to the affected properties along N. Dixie Dr. Councilor Miles stated that he would like a copy of the letter that was given out to be emailed to all Councilors.

Councilor Miles asked about the status of the grant application for the two generators for Venezia lift stations. Mr. O'Keefe stated that the Florida Department of Emergency Management would be scheduling a meeting with the Town's Public Works Director for some time in the future. Councilor Miles stated that he would like to be notified when that meeting was scheduled.

Councilor Miles asked about the status of the stormwater grant that was approved in May. Mr. O'Keefe stated that he would confirm with the Public Works Director and Town Engineer what the next steps would be.

Councilor Miles asked if all other Town Councilors had received copies of the letter that the Town had sent to Lake County in reference to the Town retaining its rights to provide water and wastewater

services to the Drake Point Development. Mr. O’Keefe stated that he would send that letter to all of the other Town Council members.

Councilor Miles congratulated Mayor MacFarlane for the \$4.25 million state appropriation for Water Treatment Plant #3.

Councilor Miles asked if the Town Attorney had set up a meeting with the Drake Point developers yet. Tom Wilkes, Town Attorney, stated that he had not heard back from them about that meeting.

Councilor Miles asked if all Town Councilors had been briefed on the possible acquisition of land for future wastewater parcels.

10. Councilor Lannamañ

Councilor Lannamañ stated that it was important for the Town Councilors to stay focused on the bottom line and listening to taxpayers.

11. Mayor MacFarlane

Mayor MacFarlane announced the Water Treatment Plant #3 Groundbreaking event on Thursday, July 20, 2023, at 9:00 AM. Mayor MacFarlane stated that she would like banners thanking the representatives and their efforts at the groundbreaking event. Mayor MacFarlane also stated that the Town would be looking for additional funds to support the Utility Department and would be soliciting public participation and support for those efforts.

Mayor MacFarlane explained the purpose of the Development Review Committee.

Mayor MacFarlane stated that she thought that the Town Comprehensive Plan should state that the Town only wanted to allow two lanes on S.R. 19 through the Town.

Mayor MacFarlane stated that she wanted Impact Fees, such as a potential wastewater impact fee, to be on the next Town Council Meeting Agenda. Mr. O’Keefe stated that the Town Attorney would need to be heavily involved in the impact fee effort. Mayor MacFarlane stated that she would like to see something drafted and sent to the Town Attorney, so that he could begin working on this process. Councilor Miles stated that he would like to see an October 1, 2023 start date for the potential wastewater impact fee.

### **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.*

**Andi Everline, 1012 N Lakeshore Blvd.** – Mrs. Everline thanked the Town for cleaning up the vegetation on the lakefront along Lakeshore Blvd. Mrs. Everline stated that she was in support of the Town-supplied SROs.

**Doug and Cheri Madden, 218 Messina Pl.** – The Maddens were concerned about the Annual Drinking Report that was just sent out to the residents and it stated that it was for 2022 and they wondered why it was so far out of date.

**Tim Everline, 1012 N Lakeshore Blvd.** – Mr. Everline asked about when the groundbreaking was scheduled for the Water Treatment Plant #3. It was scheduled for Thursday, July 20, 2023, at 9:00 AM.


## ADJOURNMENT

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

The Meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m. | Attendees: 66

  
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Mayor Martha MacFarlane

ATTEST:

  
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John Brock - Town Clerk

