

TOWN OF OCEAN BREEZE
MINUTES BUDGET WORKSHOP AND SETTING OF THE TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATE
Wednesday, July 26, 2023
Ocean Breeze Resort Clubhouse, Pineapple Bay Room
700 NE Seabreeze Way, Ocean Breeze, FL

1. Call to Order – President De Angeles called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

- Pledge of Allegiance – Mayor Ostrand led the Pledge of Allegiance
- Roll Call – Present Mayor Karen M. Ostrand, President Kenneth De Angeles, Council Members Kevin Docherty, Gina Kent, Sandy Keblbeck-Kelley, Elizabeth Reese
Absent – Vice President Bill Arnold
- Staff Present –Town Management Consultant, Terry O’Neil; Holly Vath Financial Consultant; Kim Stanton, Town Clerk; Administrative Assistant, Shannon Roger

2. Budget Workshop – Budget and Tentative Ad Valorem Millage Rate for Fiscal Year 2023/2024 – Holly Vath, Town Financial Consultant – Ms. Vath explained the Truth in Millage (TRIM) process and reviewed the budget summary for fiscal year 2023/2024.

Council Member Reese questioned the line item for off duty patrols in the Town and said she felt it was not money well spent, as Seawalk and Ocean Breeze Plaza were still experiencing issues with juveniles and trespassers.

Council Member Kelley concurred and commented that she did not believe that the patrols had been effective.

Discussion ensued regarding off duty patrols in Seawalk and Ocean Breeze Plaza.

Council Member Kelley inquired about the Administrative Assistant line item in the budget.

Mayor Ostrand responded that the position was held by Shannon Roger and because her duties had been expanded, she recommended that Mrs. Roger’s title be changed to Deputy Town Clerk.

Council Member Docherty questioned the line items for the Town’s insurance package and workers compensation.

Discussion ensued regarding the Town’s insurance, Florida Municipal Insurance Trust (FMIT).

Discussion ensued regarding charitable contributions made by the Town.

Discussion ensued regarding the location and cost of the Town office.

3. Resolution #337-2023 – Kim Stanton read the Resolution into record.

Ms. Vath reviewed the budget and stated that the Mayor was proposing a 1.0 Millage rate. She reminded Council Members that once the tentative Millage Rate was set at this meeting it could not be increased, only decreased.

Council Member Kelley asked if the Millage Rate could be changed during the fiscal year.

Ms. Vath explained that once the (final) Millage Rate was voted on in September it could not be changed until the following fiscal year.

Mr. O'Neil recommended that the Council approve a 1.0 millage rate. He continued that in future meetings when the Council reviewed other cost saving measures, such as discontinuing the Sheriff's Department additional patrols, the rate could be brought down below 1.0 mills and that historically the millage rate had continued to decrease over time. He added that perhaps in the future other sources of revenue should be considered, such as a utility tax.

Discussion ensued regarding the Town's reserve.

President De Angeles asked for a motion to approve the proposed millage rate at 1.0 mills.

Council Member Docherty made a motion to set the proposed millage rate at 1.0 mills, with no second.

Council Member Kelley asked if this was a tentative rate.

Mayor Ostrand confirmed that the (final) rate was not set until the final budget hearing in September.

President De Angeles asked if there were any other motions.

Ms. Vath stated that a tentative millage rate must be set before the end of the meeting.

Council Member Reese, seconded by Council member Kelley, made a motion to set the tentative millage rate at .9 mills.

President De Angeles asked for comments from the public.

Michele Gagnon-Dolan, 1434 NE White Pine Terrace, commented that .9 mills was acceptable for the time being and that this could be discussed at the September budget meetings.

Janet Galante suggested setting the millage rate at 2.0 mills and lowering it at the September Budget meetings.

Mayor Ostrand commented that the decision behind the proposed 1.0 millage rate was due to unresolved issues and legal fees related to the close out of Seawalk.

President De Angeles stated that a .9 millage rate would reduce the ad valorem tax by \$9,000.00 for the fiscal year.

President De Angeles asked for additional comments from the Council. There were none.

Roll call vote: Yes: De Angeles, Kelley, Reese, Kent; No: Docherty; Absent: Arnold; Passed: 4-1

Town Clerk, Kim Stanton, read Resolution 337-2023 into record with the proposed .9 millage rate.

Council Member Reese, seconded by Council Member Kelley, made a motion to adopt Resolution 337-2023.

Roll call vote: Yes: De Angeles, Kelley, Reese, Kent; No: Docherty; Absent: Arnold; Passed: 4-1

4. Comments from the public on topics not on the agenda – Janet Galante, 217 NE Coastal Drive, briefed the Council on issues within the Ocean Breeze Resort. She presented the Council with a copy of a letter sent to Ocean Breeze Resort Management, which was entered into the official record. Mrs. Galante then went on to say that she disagreed with cutting the additional patrols, as the Resort and Ocean Breeze Plaza had ongoing issues with juveniles.

Mrs. Galante then asked the Council to review the Town Charter and consider districting the Town.

Council Member Kelley asked Town Management Consultant, Terry O’Neil, about districting the Town.

Mr. O’Neil responded that districting would require an amendment to the Town Charter, and that to establish a district arrangement, the Town Council would have to agree to the ballot language, by way of a majority vote, which would then be decided by the voters. Mr. O’Neil explained that he did not disagree with the notion of districting, but there were always upsides as well as downsides to consider, such as the unwillingness of Town residents to run for office. He recommended further discussion by the Council before a charter amendment was placed on the ballot.

Council Member Kelley addressed Mrs. Galante to clarify that she thought the additional patrols paid for by the Town were not effective, and the regular patrols were sufficient.

Mrs. Galante asked President De Angeles if a resolution regarding districting could be on the agenda for the next Regular Town Council Meeting.

Mr. O’Neil stated that a discussion about districting could be placed on the agenda for the next Regular Town Council meeting. He went on to say that he would need to consult with the Town Attorney regarding the Town Charter and the procedures for any new ordinances regarding districting.

Discussion ensued regarding additional Sheriff’s Department patrols and juveniles in the Plaza, Resort, and Seawalk.

Discussion ensued regarding districts.

5. Comments from the Council on topics not on the Agenda – There were none.

6. Comments from Town Management Consultant Terry O’Neil – Mr. O’Neil referred to a copy of an email given to Council Members from D.R. Horton regarding a program to address the attic access and roof baffles in homes in Seawalk, and he asked that it be a part of the official record. He stated that both issues were being addressed in coordination with the Town Building Official.

7. Comments from Mayor Ostrand – Mayor Ostrand thanked the public for attending

8. Announcements – President De Angeles announced the following meetings to be held at the Ocean Breeze Resort Clubhouse, Pineapple Bay Room, 700 NE Seabreeze Way, Ocean Breeze.

- Regular Town Council Meeting Monday, August 14 at 10:30 am
- Regular Town Council Meeting Monday, September 11 at 10:30 am

- Proposed Budget and Tentative Millage Rate Hearing, Wednesday, September 13, 2023 at 6:00 pm
- Final Budget and Millage Rate Hearing, Wednesday September 20, 2023, at 6:00 pm

9. Adjourn – President De Angeles asked for a motion to adjourn.

Undecipherable motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30PM

Minutes approved: _____

DRAFT