

MAYOR  
Hal J. Rose

DEPUTY MAYOR  
John Dittmore

COUNCIL MEMBERS  
Daniel Batcheldor  
Pat Bentley  
Adam Gaffney  
Barbara A. Smith  
Andrea Young



CITY HALL  
2240 Minton Road  
West Melbourne, FL 32904  
Phone: (321) 837-7774  
Fax: (321) 768-2390  
[www.westmelbourne.org](http://www.westmelbourne.org)

## CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

### MINUTES

July 21, 2020

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rose called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

#### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENT MEDITATION

Mayor Rose led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

#### 3. ROLL CALL

Attending in person: Mayor Hal Rose, Deputy Mayor John Dittmore, and Council Members Pat Bentley, Andrea Young, and Adam Gaffney.

Attending remotely: Council Members Barbara Smith and Daniel Batcheldor.

Also present in person: City Manager Scott Morgan, City Attorney Morris Richardson, Police Chief Rick Wiley, Finance Director Margi Starkey, Information Technology Director Tom Bradford, Human Resources Director Kimberly Gale, City Clerk Cynthia Hanscom, and members of the public.

Attending remotely: Deputy City Manager Keith Mills, Public Works Director Mark Piccirillo, Jacobs Project Manager Brian Mascher, Consulting Engineer Eric Flavell, Deputy Chief Rich Cordeau, and Planning Director Christy Fischer.

#### 4. PRESENTATIONS/PROCLAMATIONS/INTRODUCTIONS

**Proclamation for Gastroparesis Awareness Month.** Mayor Rose presented a proclamation to Mackenzie Cronin recognizing August as Gastroparesis Awareness Month.

## 5. PUBLIC FORUM

City Clerk Hanscom read aloud a written public comment from John Holton, 2203 Merlin Drive, West Melbourne, which stated that he wanted to (1) show appreciation for Council Member Young for being responsive and facilitating his question and (2) applaud the Council's leadership with the recent mask mandate. He stated the Council's policy was sound but feared the worst was yet to come and the mask mandate should be expanded.

Barbara Deeter and Carolyn Corbett, 556 Marnie Street, spoke about the drainage for Hollywood Estates. They both spoke that water was not draining correctly leaving standing water in the street which was dangerous because it attracted hornets and mosquitos. They asked that it be looked at by an engineer to come up with suggestions, possibly placing a small drain.

## 6. CONSENT AGENDA

*Council Member Young moved to approve the following consent agenda. Council Member Gaffney seconded the motion, which passed with a 7-0 roll call vote.*

- Approve the City Council meeting minutes for Tuesday, July 7, 2020.
- Authorize the City Manager to execute the professional engineering task order with Bowman Consulting Group LTD., Inc., for the Fell Road Waterline Project in the not-to-exceed amount of \$25,319.

## 7. ACTION AGENDA

**Establishment of Proposed 2020-2021 Millage Rate for Public Hearing Advertisement.** City Manager Morgan asked Council to establish a proposed millage rate and set the public hearing for the budget. He recommended a millage rate of 2.6017 per thousand dollars of taxable value, which was the current year's rate. Both September hearings were scheduled on Thursdays because the City's hearings cannot occur on the same day as either the County Commission or School Board. He reminded Council that, at the final budget hearing, a millage rate could be adopted at the same or lower rate as that advertised.

City Manager Morgan stated the increase would be about \$7-8 per property owner because of the increase in property values. He provided information in the staff report on the 10-year history of the millage rate.

Mr. Morgan stated, as requested, a list of possible budget reductions was provided should the Council select to advertise the rolled back rate of 2.5087, which would result in a budgetary difference of \$168,700.

Stephen Phrampus, 3401 Watergrass Street, encouraged Council not to raise the tax rate. He stated that many people are struggling. The City raised taxes last year and encouraged Council to approve the rolled back rate for next year.

Deputy Mayor Dittmore asked the carryover for 2018-2019 budget year and the amount expected to be left over in the current year's budget. City Manager Morgan stated that the City had achieved more revenue than budgeted and the budget may not be fully expended. However, he expressed concerns with the current recession and that funds may not be available next year.

Council Member Smith stated that keeping the current millage rate would not put a hardship on the citizens. It was only a few dollars and she wanted to keep the City solvent. She stated no residents had come before Council indicating that the taxes were too high. She believed that Council should follow the City Manager's recommendation.

*Council Member Smith moved to establish a proposed millage rate of 2.6017 per thousand dollars of taxable value for the purposes of advertising a September 10, 2020, public hearing to consider adopting a tentative budget and proposed millage rate for 2020-2021. Council Member Young seconded the motion.*

Council Member Young noted that tax rate has been the same for several years and the only reason the amount has gone up is because the property values have gone up. She stated keeping the same rate from year to year is being done in other cities.

Deputy Mayor Dittmore agreed that the change was only a few dollars. However, he disagreed with raising taxes when the City is moving funds into the reserves. The increase in taxes to the residents is not needed.

Mayor Rose asked the percentage of collection for the ad valorem. City Manager Morgan stated that it was about 95 percent. During the last recession, it was lower than 95 percent. Mayor Rose stated that he believed the City would be okay this year as the property taxes would lag. However, there could be budgetary concerns in 2021-2022 or 2022-2023. Mayor Rose also commented that he may not agree with the budget cuts as suggested by the City Manager as part of the adoption of the rolled back rate, but he would reserve comments until he sees the proposed budget.

Council Member Bentley commented that the taxes have gone up based on the value of the home. If the millage rate is not rolled back, it is considered as a tax increase. Therefore, adopting last year's rate would be proposing a tax increase. He commented that there had been increases in the City's revenues each year from the ad valorem and West Melbourne was a growing community. He also spoke that the fire assessment is paid to the County by residents but was not taken into account when considering the millage rate. He believed that it was misleading to compare West Melbourne to other cities in the County that have fire departments. He stated that the entire tax bill should be considered when considering the millage rate for the City. He commented on other

taxes that are charged to residents such as the stormwater fee. City Manager Morgan stated that the stormwater tax was increased two years ago but was still below that imposed by the County.

Mayor Rose asked the percentage increase if maintaining the current millage rate. City Manager Morgan stated, based on the revenue estimate, there would be a 3.71 percent tax increase if the same millage rate is used. If the rollback rate was imposed, there would be no increase and some property owners could see a decrease in the taxes paid to the City. Mayor Rose commented that he believed that the City would still be able to do everything that was originally proposed even if the rate was rolled back.

Council Member Batcheldor asked how occupancy rates would affect the ad valorem. City Manager Morgan stated that the property valuations are fixed as of January 1. With none of the apartments under construction being occupied at January 1, the full property value would not be imposed until 2021. Council Member Batcheldor asked about vacant single-family homes. City Manager Morgan stated that vacant homes do not affect the valuation. He noted that apartments have an income based approach which could adjust the valuation.

*Council then voted on the motion to advertise a millage rate of 2.601, which failed 3-4 in a roll call vote with Mayor Rose, Deputy Mayor Dittmore and Council Members Bentley and Gaffney opposed.*

*Council Member Bentley moved to establish a proposed millage rate of 2.5067 per thousand dollars of taxable value for the purposes of advertising a September 10, 2020, public hearing. Deputy Mayor Dittmore seconded the motion, which passed 7-0 in a roll call vote.*

**Series 2010D Revenue Bonds Payoff.** Finance Director Starkey explained that a revenue bond was issued in 2010 to pay for the Minton Road water main. Payments have been made on the bond since that time. However, in October 2020, the first opportunity to pay off that bond will be available. She was recommending that the bond be paid off using \$2.17 million in reserves. This would provide an annual cash flow savings of \$277,000 and save a total of \$544,000 in interest.

*Council Member Bentley moved to adopt Resolution No. 2020-14 approving the payoff of the Series 2010D Revenue Bonds on their earliest call date of October 1, 2020. Deputy Mayor Dittmore second the motion.*

Mayor Rose asked if these funds would come out of reserves. Finance Director Starkey explained it would come out of the enterprise fund water/sewer reserves. When asked the balance in the reserves, Finance Director Starkey explained there was approximately \$14,000,000. City Manager Morgan stated that the West Melbourne growth created a larger than normal reserve through connection fees. In addition, paying down of the liabilities would make future borrowing for the water plant easier.

Council Member Bentley asked when they would need to borrow for the water plant. City Manager Morgan expected that to occur in 2024.

*Council then voted on the motion to adopt Resolution No. 2020-14, which passed 7-0 in a roll call vote.*

**Engineering Standards Manual Revision.** Planning Director Fischer presented a modification to the engineering standards manual that was approved last year. She reminded Council that in March 2019, the technical specifications in the Code were removed and referenced a manual. The manual needed some minor modifications to clean up language. She noted that staff had worked with Consulting Engineer Eric Flavell on the changes.

*Deputy Mayor Dittmore moved to approve Resolution No. 2020-13 updating the water, sewer, drainage, and pavement technical specifications in the West Melbourne Engineering Standards Manual. Council Member Gaffney seconded the motion, which passed 7-0 in a roll call vote.*

**Annual Review of the City Manager's Performance.** Human Resources Director Gale presented the annual review of the City Manager following 11 years of employment. She noted that each Council Member had individually evaluated the City Manager's performance for an overall score of 4.57 out 5, which indicates a superior performance. She asked Council to accept the summary results and vote on a salary increase to be effective October 1, 2020.

Mayor Rose stated the City Manager had done a great job and he appreciated his 11 years of service. He also thanked the City Manager for completing his self-evaluation.

City Manager Morgan stated that his evaluation was a reflection of having a great Council and great employees, including those on the front lines. Mayor Rose agreed that it was a team effort.

*Deputy Mayor Dittmore moved to accept the summary results of the evaluation for City Manager Scott Morgan. Council Member Gaffney seconded the motion.*

Council Member Bentley encouraged City Manager Morgan to do more in the community in the form of leadership. He noted that he had received complements from individuals outside the City on the City Manager's leadership; he wanted to share that respect and leadership with other aspects of the community. He commented that the City had done better this year on responding to citizen complaints and believed that should be a continued focus.

Mayor Rose spoke on the future leadership for the City and urged the City Manager to do more with succession planning.

Deputy Mayor Dittmore agreed with the comments and noted that the City Manager's work with the policy board and comments received from representatives were positive and his opinion was well received.

*Council then voted on the motion, which passed 7-0 in a roll call vote.*

Deputy Mayor Dittmore asked that a recommendation on the salary increase for City Manager Morgan be delayed until September and Council agreed.

## **8. MANAGEMENT REPORTS**

**Chief of Police.** Police Chief Wiley presented a quarterly report of department statistics as requested by Council.

## **9. CITY COUNCIL REPORTS**

Council Member Smith thanked City Attorney Richardson for his work on the face covering ordinance. She noted that she had received several emails thanking Council for the ordinance.

Council Member Batcheldor also thanked Council and City staff for supporting the measure to require face masks.

Council Members Gaffney, Young and Bentley had no report.

Deputy Mayor Dittmore agreed that there had been positive feedback on the face mask ordinance and he encouraged the County to take action.

Mayor Rose agreed that there had been a number of calls and emails on the mask ordinance and, overall, many people think that the City took a step in the right direction. He noted there had been appreciation expressed from small businesses on waiving of the business tax receipt for the next year.

Mayor Rose noted that the next meeting of the Council would be August 11.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.