



City of Ormond Beach

City Commission Workshop

City Hall Commission Conference Room
22 South Beach St., Ormond Beach FL 32174

July 22, 2025, 5:30 PM

*Jason Leslie, Mayor
Lori Tolland, Zone 1
Travis Sargent, Zone 2
Kristin Deaton, Zone 3
Harold Briley, Zone 4*

Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Leslie called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Mayor Jason Leslie, Commissioners Lori Tolland, Travis Sargent, Kristin Deaton, and Harold Briley, Budget Advisory Board Members Rick Boehm, Josh Pringle, Troy Railsback, and John Olivari, City Manager Joyce Shanahan, Assistant City Managers Claire Whitley, and Shawn Finley, City Attorney Randy Hayes, Finance Director Kelly McGuire, and Assistant Finance Director Chris Byle.

2. DISCUSSIONS

A. Operating Budget

Ms. Joyce Shanahan, City Manager, thanked Finance staff for their work on the budget. She stated the proposed budget was based upon the Commission's Strategic Plan. She noted staff would need direction on the millage rate and explained the tentative millage rate would be set at the Commission meeting that night.

Ms. Kelly McGuire, Finance Director, thanked the Budget Advisory Board members for their work on the budget. She noted staff would need direction on the millage rate, and explained the tentative millage rate would be set at the Commission meeting that night and could be finalized at a lower rate at the September meetings, but could not be higher.

Ms. Shanahan clarified the city was on track to remain the second-lowest mileage in Volusia County, only behind Debarry, whose main tax revenue came from two power utility generating companies.

Ms. McGuire explained the budget was a proposed tax millage increase. She discussed the need for the increase, reserves, and negotiations around the Collective Bargaining agreements. She reviewed the increases to the Halifax Humane Society agreement, proposed staffing, and city software such as security and stormwater.

Commissioner Briley and Commissioner Deaton inquired about the Humane Society contract and what other municipalities plan to do about the changes; whereby, Ms. Shanahan stated nothing was solidified yet and discussed dangerous dogs within the city, what other municipalities had planned, and explained she was looking into

alternative resources.

Ms. McGuire reviewed where the increased millage was being applied and the voted debt service millage. She discussed the percentage and dollar amount that would change on the average home and showed the comparison among other Volusia County municipalities.

Commissioner Deaton inquired if she could reach out to the Ormond Beach Police Foundation to see if they would be willing to purchase one of the proposed items for Public Safety.

Commissioner Tolland expressed concerns regarding the funds of the Foundation if used on a big purchase.

Commissioner Briley noted the increased cost of vehicles and expressed support of the proposed budget.

Mayor Leslie explained the cost of everything had gone up, and shared thoughts about the city being rated top in the country, each commissioners opportunity to review with staff, and the need to be competitive with employee compensation.

Commissioner Tolland stated her comfort with the proposed budget. She explained Commissioner Deaton's idea of asking the Foundation for assistance with purchasing a Public Safety item was creative but was not enough to significantly lower the budget to see a difference in the millage.

Commissioner Deaton explained she thoroughly reviewed the budget and asked lots of questions. She noted many items were needed to be in the budget, noting she would prefer to see a reduction in the millage. She inquired about Mayor Leslie's thoughts on how to lower the tax bill for residents.

Mayor Leslie discussed the budget noting \$2.8 Million was for staffing including public safety. He stated public safety was the backbone of the community and without strong public safety the city would not maintain low crime and a good quality of life. He agreed with Commissioner Tolland on the small cost item for public safety being funded by the Foundation was thoughtful, noting it would not make an impact on the budget. He noted the need for reliable vehicles, suggesting leasing vehicles, and explained the need for insurance. He felt if the city was not self-insured, it could potentially save money.

Commissioner Deaton inquired if companies leased fully outfitted police vehicles; whereby, Mayor Leslie stated he believed there was. He explained the non-police city vehicles would not need to be outfitted and could potentially be leased. He reminded the Commission of Commissioner Sargent's prior suggestion of having a local dealership handle routine maintenance to reduce costs.

Ms. Shanahan stated the city had over 200 vehicles and about half made up of police vehicles.

Commissioner Sargent suggested adjusting some Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects including the downtown public art, downtown traffic calming, neighborhood traffic calming, Riveria fishing pier, and Nova Recreation Field 1 (Field 1). He clarified traffic calming would be more effective with an officer writing tickets and a survey should be sent to the residents on what should be at Field 1.

Commissioner Deaton inquired if the public art project was a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) fund item; whereby, Ms. McGuire stated it was. Commissioner Deaton inquired about the CRA fund if the dollars were not used; whereby, Ms. McGuire stated the public art and downtown traffic calming projects were funded from the CRA fund and explained the CRA funds could only be used within the CRA district, noting the projects could be eliminated however the funds would fall into the CRA reserves to be reallocated for future projects.

Commissioner Briley confirmed the unused CRA dollars would not be returned to the general fund.

Commissioner Tolland voiced support for the public art project, noting the desire of the residents. She agreed with Commissioner Sargent's suggestion of an officer writing tickets while also supporting the traffic-calming program. She voiced concerns about removing the parks projects from the budget. She reiterated the city was the second lowest millage in the county and supported the projects as residents previously expressed support.

Commissioner Briley inquired about Field 1; whereby, Ms. McGuire discussed the funds for the project were from the dedicated millage set by the Commission.

Commissioner Deaton discussed the Field 1 issues and the softball field improvements needed. She inquired how many requests for speed tables were received by the city; whereby, Mr. Finley stated roughly one to two a month. She questioned if they were necessary and if the traffic-calming program was redone recently; whereby, Mr. Finley stated all were not necessary and stated he was hoping to bring an updated traffic-calming plan back to the Commission within the next few meetings. She stated she was comfortable removing traffic calming from the budget.

Commissioner Sargent voiced concerns about the downtown traffic-calming when the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) was working in the area renovating the roadway.

Commissioner Deaton questioned if residents knew the public art came from their tax dollars, noting she would support a year of no public art dollars.

Commissioner Sargent expressed support of the temporary statues within the downtown area that were mainly funded by businesses and private citizens; whereby, Commissioner Tolland discussed the differences between the statues and public art.

Commissioner Briley noted the public art dollars were from the CRA fund, and would not change the general fund or millage rate.

Ms. McGuire explained the CRA dollars could not be cut, noting if projects were removed, the funds would be put into the CRA reserves.

Commissioner Deaton stated she did not support the downtown traffic-calming, understanding it was CRA funds; whereby, Commissioner Tolland, Commissioner Briley, and Mayor Leslie agreed.

Mayor Leslie clarified the street-sweeper purchase.

Commissioner Deaton inquired the Commission's thoughts on Field 1 as \$900,000 was a lot of money; whereby, Commissioner Sargent reviewed proposed projects, suggesting delaying the Field 1 project another year until a plan was in place.

Commissioner Deaton recommended allocating a small dollar amount for staff to get bids; whereby, Mr. Finley suggested utilizing a vendor on a continuing contract for construction management.

Commissioner Tolland questioned the total funds needed; whereby, Mr. Finley stated conservatively under \$200,000.

Commissioner Sargent suggested the Commission provide ideas individually to staff, approve the millage at the City Commission meeting as presented, and allow staff to come back at an upcoming meeting with a revised budget and millage.

Commissioner Deaton agreed and discussed Field 1.

Ms. McGuire stated if millage was removed from Leisure Services, it would need to be added back next year due to Commission direction for the dedicated millage. She suggested, if the Commission's desire was to lower millage, to look into the general vehicle fund, noting the reserves could potentially be utilized for the larger purchases.

Commissioner Briley asked to hear from the Budget Advisory Board members.

Mr. John Olivari, Budget Advisory Board (BAB) member, inquired if the Field 1 project was moved, would the Volusia County ECHO grant still be available.

Commissioner Deaton noted she wanted to see an option for a batting facility in place of Field 1.

Commissioner Sargent inquired if the batting facility was in addition to a new field or in place of a new field; whereby, Commissioner Deaton indicated support for either option.

Mr. Rick Boehm, BAB Member, indicated there was no supporting documentation and did not support the funds set aside for Public Art, Traffic Calming, and Field 1; suggesting the Commission consider a Miracle Field for special populations on the site. He continued to discuss the need for support documentation when budgeting funds.

Mayor Leslie stated the Miracle Field received feedback to not be next to a busy road in relation to Field 1; whereby, Commissioner Deaton and Commissioner Tolland noted that was the feedback from the state legislature.

Commissioner Tolland inquired how there were ECHO funds for Field 1 if there was no supporting documentation, according to Mr. Boehm; whereby, Mr. Carolin explained Field 1 had a study budgeted and approved, noting the proposed funds set aside were based on other similar projects. She questioned if there would be a new field, whether at Field 1 or somewhere else; whereby, Mr. Carolin confirmed.

Commissioner Sargent agreed with Mr. Boehm's statement noting there were bids in place on the traffic-calming.

Mr. Josh Pringle, BAB Member, noted the work the board put into reviewing the budget. He stated his support of the general vehicle items to show support to the employees.

Commissioner Deaton indicated an issue with the proposed millage was the attempt to make up for prior Commissions putting off items that were needed. She explained she did not want to continue that trend, and wanted to see other options to fund the items needed.

Commissioner Briley stated Ms. McGuire suggested using reserves to fund some of the vehicles.

Ms. McGuire clarified if the Commission did not make the recommended increase, some funds could be used from the General Funds Reserves. She reviewed the impact of the change on the proposed millage.

Commissioner Deaton stated the biggest impact on the budget came from Public Safety and she did not want to touch that.

Commissioner Sargent inquired if the reserves would remain at 15 percent; whereby, Ms. McGuire stated she expected the reserves to be at 13 percent.

Commissioner Tolland stated she was happy with the proposed budget, noting the importance of public safety and the lack of impact CRA dollars had on the budget. She explained she was comfortable removing the downtown traffic-calming item, noting the importance of all other projects.

Commissioner Briley voiced support of the public safety items, noting the importance of the related items. He stated the budget addressed many items the Commission wanted while keeping the millage the second lowest in the county.

Commissioner Deaton agreed with Commissioner Tolland and Commissioner Briley stating she would not vote to pull funds from the first responders. She explained she would love to save money for the residents, noting it may not be the right time, and stated she would support the millage rate.

Commissioner Sargent stated public safety was the number one priority as elected officials. He discussed the staffing improvements since the pay raises at the Police Department and noted his support of all city employees. He stated he would support the tentative millage rate.

Commissioner Briley inquired if the general vehicles were to be funded by the reserves what percentage the reserves would be; whereby, Ms. McGuire stated it would be around ten percent. He indicated he would not object to funding the vehicles out of the reserves.

Commissioner Tolland clarified the Commission had a 15 percent benchmark and inquired what other city's used; whereby, Ms. McGuire stated coastal cities typically had closer to 25 percent in reserves.

Commissioner Sargent discussed the importance of the reserves.

Mayor Leslie shared comments regarding the future of FEMA, having reserves, and debris cleanup.

Mr. Finley reviewed the relationships built with the debris haulers and the city.

Commissioner Deaton discussed the importance of education for the residents on the increased millage; whereby, Ms. McGuire agreed education was important.

Mayor Leslie clarified if the millage rate was adopted at the Commission meeting, it could be lowered at the time of budget approval.

Ms. McGuire confirmed the Commission was agreeable to setting the millage at the proposed rate noting a future meeting could be set to further discuss any requested changes; whereby, Ms. Shanahan added the advertised rate would be what was approved at the Commission meeting, and clarified it could be lowered later.

Ms. McGuire reviewed a slide of proposed utility rate increases, noting a workshop could be held to discuss further.

Commissioner Deaton voiced concerns regarding increased utilities and would like to schedule a workshop to further discuss, providing suggestions to lower rates for fixed income and senior residents.

Commissioner Tolland suggested instead of a senior rate, a rate for those on a fixed income; whereby, Ms. McGuire stated staff had concerns regarding verification of financial information for residents.

Ms. McGuire stated there were other rate structure options that would be brought back for review.

Mayor Leslie requested a workshop with utility rate options.

Commissioner Sargent inquired about the rate value for utilities for Avalon Park; whereby, Mr. Randy Hayes, City Attorney, stated he was working on it and would schedule a meeting with updates on the topic.

Commissioner Tolland supported a stormwater rate increase.

Ms. McGuire noted she heard a consensus to remove the downtown traffic-calming; whereby, the Commission agreed. She clarified the tentative millage would remain unchanged for the meeting.

Ms. Shanahan stated the advertised notice would be the tentative millage and the Commission could lower at a later date.

Mayor Leslie thanked those in attendance.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Prepared by: Taylor Lochert