

**MINUTES
TOWN OF LAKE CLARKE SHORES
SECOND PUBLIC HEARING 2023/2024 TOWN BUDGET
SEPTEMBER 27, 2023
6:30 PM**

1. Call to Order

A. Roll Call

Vice Mayor Robert M. W. Shalhoub called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

The following officials were present:

Vice Mayor Robert M. W. Shalhoub
President Pro Tem Valentin Rodriguez, Jr.
Council Member Robert O. Gonzalez
Council Member Jon Maples

The following official was absent:

Mayor Gregory Freebold

B. Moment of Silence, Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance
(moved from Regular Town Council Agenda)

Vice Mayor Shalhoub requested a moment of silence for Noemi Escala, Code Enforcement Officer Eric Richwagen's grandmother-in-law and Alfred Malefatto who passed away recently.

Mr. Charles Schoech gave the invocation, then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Presentation of the 2023/2024 Town Budget

A. Joseph F. Lo Bello, Town Manager

Mr. Lo Bello noted that this is the final budget and millage rate hearing for the 2023-2024 FY Budget. He explained that there will be three items to consider during the hearing: the approval of two resolutions and the approval of the 5-year Capital Improvement Element.

He noted the taxing authority is the Town of Lake Clarke Shores, the rolled back rate of 5.7490, and the millage rate of 6.1000 which is 6.11% over the roll back rate.

He thanked the Town Council and staff for their assistance with the budget. He noted the increased costs associated with insurance coverages throughout the state and noted that the Town's property and liability insurance coverage only increased by 50%.

He noted the Resolutions are to adopt the millage rate and to adopt the 2023/2024 budget. He also noted that the Town Council needs to approve the 5-year Capital Improvement Element per State rules and so that the Town can receive additional points to help obtain grants.

3. Council Comments

Council Member Maples – thanked Mr. Lo Bello for his hard work on the budget and asked him to explain what led to the lowering of the millage rate.

Mr. Lo Bello explained that items were cut back where they could and that the increase for the insurance coverage was not as high as anticipated. He noted that increases in the State Revenue Sharing and the amount that the Town earns on investment and interest income has helped to lower the millage rate.

Council Member Gonzalez –asked Mr. Lo Bello to explain how going to the roll back would have affected the Town.

Mr. Lo Bello noted that if the Town went to the roll back rate, the Town would have to draw on reserves, which is not a prudent way to run the Town. He noted that even though the budget is at \$11,732,858, it is his job to be prudent and spend only what is needed. He also explained how the Florida 3% Save Our Homes (SOH) cap works and stated that those residents with a homestead exemption should not see an increase in the Town's portion of their taxes for the 2023/2024 fiscal year.

President Pro Tem Rodriguez – noted that the Town does not bill the residents for trash removal, that the Town pays Waste Management to remove the garbage and trash instead.

Mr. Lo Bello noted that the Town and the Town Council negotiated a very good contract with Waste Management for this service.

4. Audience Comments

Timothy Daughtry, 1410 Keller Road – thanked the Town for lowering the millage rate to 6.1000. He noted that the Town is small and most of the residents are senior citizens with a fixed budget. He noted that the Town could cut spending by reducing the number and size of vehicles the Town utilizes and not filling the vacant staff positions or create new positions. He also noted that he would like to see more specific line items in the budget so that residents would know how much is being spent on things such as pickle ball lighting and the Pine Tree Bridge.

Fran Carlton, 8432 Waterway Drive – asked what where the minor changes to the budget.

Mr. Lo Bello noted that he separated the cost for the septic to sewer professional services from the professional service line item in the Utility Fund. He also changed the word "Pension" to "Retirement Contribution" in each instance where it was noted.

5. Approval of Resolutions

A. Resolution 2023-30 – Adoption of 2023/2024 Millage Rate

A Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Lake Clarke Shores, Florida, Setting and Fixing a Millage Rate for Fiscal Year 2023/2024 at 6.1000 Mills.

Motion made by Council Member Maples to adopt Resolution 2023-30, seconded by Council Member Gonzalez; Motion approved (4-0).

B. Resolution 2023-31 – Adoption of 2023/2024 Budget

A Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Lake Clarke Shores, Florida, adopting a Budget for Fiscal Year 2023/2024.

Motion made by Council Member Gonzalez to adopt Resolution 2023-31, seconded by Council Member Maples; Motion approved (4-0).

C. Approval of 5-year Capital Improvement Element

Motion made by Council Member Gonzalez to approve the 5-year Capital Improvement Element, seconded by President Pro Tem Rodriguez; Motion approved (4-0).

6. Adjournment

Motion made by President Pro Tem Rodriguez to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 PM, seconded by Council Member Gonzalez; Motion carried (4-0).

Robert M. W. Shalhoub, Vice Mayor

Mary Pinkerman, Town Clerk