

**Minutes of Special City Council Meeting
held Monday, September 18, 2017, at 6:00 P.M.
in the Council Chambers, 11 North 3rd Street,
Jacksonville Beach, Florida.**



CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Charlie Latham called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Mayor: Charlie Latham

Council Members: Keith Doherty Christine Hoffman Bruce Thomason
Lee Buck (*absent*) Phil Vogelsang Jeanell Wilson

Also present were City Manager George Forbes, Deputy City Manager Trish Roberts, City Department Heads, and City Clerk Laurie Scott.

PURPOSE OF MEETING

Mayor Latham stated that the purpose of the meeting was to:

- Adopt a Proposed Millage Rate, Resolution No. 1988-2017 and,
- Adopt an Operating Budget, Resolution No. 1989-2017 for the fiscal year 2017-2018.

Mayor Latham read the following statement:

The first item to be discussed is the Millage Rate.

- The budget for the City of Jacksonville Beach was prepared using a millage rate of \$3.9947 mills. The rolled-back rate is \$3.6060 mills. The proposed millage rate of \$3.9947 mills is 10.78% more than the rolled-back rate.

The second item to be discussed is the Operating Budget.

- The Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 is \$164,505,457.

Public Hearing

At this time, Mayor Latham opened a Public Hearing on the Millage Rate and the Operating Budget.

Speaker:

- Michael Connelly, 65 Tallwood Road, Jacksonville Beach, expressed his concerns about the increased millage rate.

Mr. Forbes summarized the breakdown of the City's General Fund, distribution of the property taxes with local and state agencies, the City's millage rate history, and provided a rate comparison to other

cities in the state. He noted that this year was the first year since the 2008 recession that property values have recovered the values that was lost during the recession.

He further explained the increase in the millage rate is primarily for adjusting the City's Public Safety employee salaries. The millage rate increase is necessary so that the City can be competitive and continue to recruit and retain Police and Fire personnel.

Mr. Forbes reported the Operating Budget had been prepared using a millage rate of \$3.9947 per \$1,000 of assessed taxable value, which is less than both the 2014 rate of \$4.0947 and the current statewide average of \$4.8178. For the past three consecutive years, the City has reduced its millage rate.

MILLAGE RATE – FY 2017-2018

Motion: It was moved by Ms. Wilson, seconded by Ms. Hoffman, to adopt the Millage Rate for Operating Purposes of \$3.9947 mills, Resolution No. 1988-2017.

Discussion:

Mr. Doherty asked about the status of labor negotiations between the Police and Fire Departments. He expressed his concerns since Public Safety was the rationale behind the increase. He remarked that decisions regarding the increased millage rate and the operating budget should not be decided upon until the outcome of the labor negotiations is known.

Mr. Forbes stated that the budget needs to be considered to conduct negotiations. He noted that the budget is an estimate of costs. He further explained that his goal is not to budget for one year but the upcoming years so to focus on the Council's request to budget sufficiently to keep our facilities and grounds properly maintained. Corrections to the budget could be made at mid-year or use the City's reserves.

Mr. Thomason stated he would support the millage rate increase and that it was the right decision based on his experience with Mr. Forbes' handling of previous City budgets.

Ms. Wilson stated she was in opposition to the millage rate increase. She stated this would be a dual tax increase for the citizens with the City increasing the millage rate and the property assessment values being higher [especially on the non-homesteaded properties].

Roll call vote: Ayes - Hoffman, Thomason, Vogelsang, and Mayor Latham
Nays – Doherty, Wilson
The motion carried by a 4-2 vote.

OPERATING BUDGET – FY 2017-2018

Motion: It was moved by Ms. Wilson, seconded by Ms. Hoffman, to adopt Resolution 1989-2017, adopting the Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 of \$164,505,457.

Discussion:

There was no discussion by staff or the Council.

Roll call vote: Ayes – Hoffman, Thomason, Vogelsang, Wilson, Doherty, and Mayor Latham
The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business coming before the Council, Mayor Latham adjourned the meeting at 6:30 P.M.

Submitted by: Laurie Scott
City Clerk

Approval:



William C. Latham, Mayor

Date: October 2nd, 2017