

**MINUTES OF THE HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD JANUARY 23, 2017**

Mayor Sears called the Town Council Meeting of January 23, 2017 to order at 5:45 p.m.

Mayor Sears led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Lieutenant Roman led the Invocation.

Present: Mayor Sears, Mayor Pro-Tem Nebel, Councilor Conroy, Councilor Mabry and Councilor Scott.

Also Present: Town Attorney Blom-Ramos, Police Chief Thomas, Library Director Hall, Public Services Supervisor Ernest, Administrative Assistant II Burke and Town Clerk Brasher.

PRE-WORK SESSION 5:45 – 6:00 p.m.

Councilor Conroy announced that the Department of Transportation said the new bridge from Howey in the Hills to Tavares would project to start construction by March 21, 2017 and have it finished by mid-summer 2018. He also added that he recommends the Town Council meet with the Department of Transportation to ask for a bike lane to be added to the bridge. **Councilor Mabry** asked if the old bridge would be demolished. **Councilor Conroy** replied yes.

Councilor Scott asked Councilor Conroy which side of the existing bridge would the new bridge be built on. **Councilor Conroy** replied that it would be built on the right side of the existing bridge. **Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel** said that a fishing bridge was studied but that no department wanted the responsibilities of maintaining the bridge.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes of the January 9, 2017 Town Council Meeting

Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel, seconded by Councilor Scott, moved to approve the Consent Agenda as corrected. Motion carried 5-0 with a roll call vote.

NEW BUSINESS

Update on Water System

Rob Ern with BESH, gave an update on the water system and the sulfite levels in the water. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Discussion regarding Traffic Study on S. Florida Ave

Elwis Benson expressed his concern with the traffic on S Florida Ave and asked the Town Council to conduct a traffic study.

Chief Thomas said that his Officers work the road and that there was a traffic study done on S Florida and the results were that fifty percent of the vehicles were not speeding. **Mayor Sears** stated that a traffic study will not tell how fast a vehicle is traveling.

Councilor Mabry asked how hard it would be to install a stop sign. **Chief Thomas** said that a three-way stop sign could be installed as soon as possible.

Elwis Benson said that a three-way stop would not slow down traffic.

Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel added that a traffic study was conducted about ten-fifteen years ago, and the Department of Transportation wanted the traffic off W. Central and to reroute down S. Florida Ave. **Chief Thomas** said that he would like to move forward with installing the three-way stop sign at Lakeview and S. Florida. He added that he would ask the County if he could use their system to count cars and their speed.

Councilor Conroy, seconded by Councilor Mabry, moved to approve a Speed Study on S. Florida Ave and the installation of a three way stop sign at Lakeview and S. Florida Ave. Motion carried 5-0 with a roll call vote

Marie Gallelli, 1104 N Tangerine Ave, asked what the study will be used for. **Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel** replied that it would provide the Town Council with sufficient data for making a decision on if they will need to implement anything more than the three way stop sign.

Discussion: Capital Budget Plan

Councilor Conroy discussed the current Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in length. He said that the Town Council needs to start thinking of a three-five year plan. **Mayor Sears** replied that when the CIP was produced there was little development in Venezia. He explained that it is hard to predict how many houses would be built as the CIP was created prior to the development we have in Venezia now.

Mayor Sears recommended that the Capital Budget Plan be discussed at the second meeting of the month in February during the workshop.

Review of Mayor Sears project list and update

Mayor Sears gave detailed background on his project list and updated the Town Council on items that were in progress. He also said that if anybody had any items they would like to add to the project list to please email Town Clerk Brasher.

Discussion: Lake County League of Cities Legislative Days

Councilor Conroy said that he wanted to let the Town Council know that he would be attending Legislative Days in Tallahassee. He also wanted to inform the Town Council that the annual mandatory Elected Official's Ethic Training class is scheduled for August 11, 2017.

Discussion: Creation of Town Seal

Councilor Scott asked if the Town Council would allow him to come up with a design for the Town Seal. **Mayor Sears** said that he would work with Councilor Scott on the creation of the Town Seal.

Discussion: Cohesive Professional Appearance of Town Employees

Councilor Scott explained why he felt uniforms should be issued to Town Employees.

Discussion: Reconfiguration of Town Hall Meeting Room

Councilor Scott said that his ideas would give the Council Chambers a better appearance. He also added that the audience would be able to hear the Council Members better as they would be facing the audience. **Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel** said that if the updated the audio system the audience would be able to hear better. **Councilor Scott** replied that a technician was out that morning and fixed the audio and was getting a quote together to completely update the audio system.

Discussion regarding replacement of Police Department Vehicle

Chief Thomas gave background on the traffic accident involving one of the Reserve Officers. He said that the insurance company would be giving them a \$7,000 check for the totaled vehicle.

Mayor Sears asked the Town Council where would the money come from to replace the vehicle. **Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel** suggested that the Town put the \$7,000 down on the vehicle and lease it. **Mayor Sears** asked if every full-time Police Officer had a new car. **Chief Thomas** replied yes but that the new car would be going on road patrol. The discussion ensued.

Councilor Mabry, seconded by Councilor Conroy, moved to approve the purchase of a new Police Department Vehicle not to exceed \$40,000 from the reserve fund and to use the \$7,000 insurance claim payment. Motion carried 5-0 with a roll call vote.

OLD BUSINESS

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Report for the proposed wall at Blevins Park

Peggy Ernest read the Board Report. She told the Town Council that she had spoken with Mr. & Mrs. Blevins and they had no objections to the seven foot by fourteen foot wall. She added that the funds needed would come out of impact fees in the amount of \$2,700 if approved.

Councilor Conroy said that Blevins Park is a quiet park. He suggested a rod iron fence if the goal was to separate the property from the Blevins estate. He also added that he did not believe that was an appropriate use of impact fees. **Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel** said that it would be a price increase for wrought iron fence. **Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel** said that he recommends the Town Council review the property deed.

Kristen Sears, 100 S Island Drive, said that Parks and Recreation has done a wonderful job at Blevins Park. She added that she loved the idea of the mural but not the size of the mural.

Duncan Rose, 411 E Orchid Way, said that the Blevin's view of the park will be obstructed if the wall is built to the proposed size.

Marie Gallelli, 1104 N Tangerine Ave, asked that the wall possibly be moved to the North-East section of Blevin's Park and wall size be smaller.

Councilor Mabry said that he appreciated the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the Town Residents opinion. He agrees that other options need to be presented before the Town Council.

Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel said that he agreed with Councilor Conroy about looking into getting wrought Iron fencing. He also agreed with Councilor Mabry about coming up with other options.

Mayor Sears agreed the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board should consider other options. He also added that the Town Attorney would look into the legality of the property deed

Jenny Deschenes said that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board wanted to have the mural done before the park dedication to Mr. Blevins on his 102th birthday.

Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel replied that he believes the dedication should still happen on Mr. Blevins birthday no matter the progress of the mural.

Councilor Conroy, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel, moved to request the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board bring back more options and for the Town Attorney to review the legality of the improvements. Motion carried 4-1 with a roll call vote with Councilor Scott voting no.

BOARD REPORTS

Library Board Minutes- No comment

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Minutes - No comment

Planning & Zoning Board Minutes-No comment

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Code Enforcement/Police Department Report

Chief Thomas gave a report about his experience in Washington D.C.

Finance Report- No comment

Impact Fee Balance-No comment

Library Director Report

Mayor Sears said that the Library held a cooking class and that there was about 28 people in attendance.

Public Services Report- No comment

Town Hall Report - Councilor Scott said that he had someone come to look at the sound system and gave background. **Councilor Mabry** said that the system is not fixed and that it needs to just be replaced. **Councilor Scott** said a company is providing a quote to replace the whole system and add more speakers into the audience. **Mayor Sears** said that the cost is over \$1,000 the Town must obtain three quotes per the Town's Purchasing Policy. He then added that he would like to get the quotes into Town Hall as soon as possible to have the audio system replaced before the next Town Council Meeting.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Sears thanked the residents for coming to the meeting.

Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel-No Comment

Councilor Conroy- No Comment

Councilor Mabry stated the audio system needed to be replaced as soon as possible and thanked the residents for attending the meeting.

Councilor Scott asked the Town Council if they would consider buying new chairs for the Council and the residents who attend the Town Council Meetings. **Mayor Sears** replied that he would look into it.

PUBLIC COMMENTS- No comment

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Chris Sears, Mayor

ATTEST:

Dairian Burke
Administrative Assistant II