

**MINUTES OF THE HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD OCTOBER 24, 2016**

**Mayor Sears** called the Town Council Meeting of October 24, 2016 to order at 5:30 p.m.

**Mayor Sears** led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**Public Services Supervisor Ernest** led the Invocation.

Present: Mayor Sears, Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel, Councilor Conroy, and Councilor Kearney.

Also Present: Town Engineer Ern, Police Chief Thomas, Library Director Hall, Public Services Supervisor Ernest and Administrative Assistant II Burke.

Absent: Councilor Mabry, Excused

**Mayor Sears** announced Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and there was cake to celebrate.

**BOARD REPORTS**

**Library Board Minutes** – No comments

**Mayor Sears** moved item No. 5, fax fees up to the next item on the agenda.

**Library Director Hall** gave background on this item and asked for the fees to be reduced.

*Mayor Pro-Tem Nebel, seconded by Councilor Conroy, moved to reduce the fax fees for the Library and approved the Staff Report submitted by Town Hall. Motion carried 5-0 with a roll call vote.*

**Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Report & Grant Report – Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Member Macfarlane** gave a power point presentation and gave background on this item. She requested that Town Clerk Brasher continue to provide the Board with their expenditures and to be provided with all expenditures.

*\*Please Note\* The \$3,000 expenditures for the restroom screen was not included in the executed grant submittal so it was not necessary for Town Clerk Brasher to make contact with FDEP to approve the changes. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Member MacFarlane has been made aware of this.*

*Councilor Kearney, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel, moved to approve the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board grant changes. Motion carried 5-0.*

**Planning & Zoning Board Minutes** – No comments

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Discussion: Future Downtown Development Plan**

**Rob Ern with BESH** gave detailed background and update on the water system.

**Rob Ern from BESH** turned over the presentation to Michael Pape for further discussion.

**Michael Pape** gave detailed background on information he was provided Town streetscape. He said the landscape plans would make the Town more of a walkable community by adding seven foot sidewalks with two foot overhangs and creating eighteen-foot parking stalls. The landscape plans included a pocket park which would create attractiveness for all the surrounding commercial buildings. He further explained the concept for the intersection of Palm Avenue and Central Avenue, which is to include bump-outs to create an area for landscape and also creates a safer, open area for pedestrians to cross the intersection. He then added that some of the plans would take some ownership involvement to make the ideas happen. He provided two ideas for a gateway sign for entering the Town and gave detailed background.

**Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel** said that he liked the ideas but thinks that reducing the parking spaces by the rental properties will get some push back. He then stated that with adding a fountain or flag thing would look nice but it will limit the Town with available space for the Christmas Festival or other festivities that are held. **Mr. Pape** said the plat of the rental properties there are ample opportunities to re-create and revamp parking around the area for them. **Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel** then added that he does not think the eighteen wheelers would like the idea of the bump-outs when they are turning onto Central Avenue to head to the citrus plant. He said that several years ago, they were trying to direct the trucks down Florida Avenue and maybe with using the bump-outs it will inadvertently get them to use Florida Avenue. **Mr. Pape** said that they would have to work with BESH on the concerns.

**Chief Thomas** then said that with the bump-outs the trucks would have to turn into oncoming traffic or parking spaces to be able to turn. **Mr. Pape** replied that they would have the same amount of space to turn as they do in other small towns all around central Florida.

**Councilor Conroy** said that he liked all the green space. He asked if he worked with the Town Planner on creating the ideas. What will make merchandise want to buy property here? **Mr. Pape** said that a building can't be built into the right away so the green scape gives the merchandise an opportunity to use the space for outside seating or dining. **Councilor Conroy** said there have been countless hours spent with changing the parking from straight to diagonal and now the parking spaces are straight again. **Mayor Sears** then gave detailed background on the reasoning as to why the parking idea was being changed again.

**Councilor Conroy** said that the Town Council needs to get together and come up with a ten-year plan for what they would like to see happen to the Town such as if Town Hall and the Police Department are staying where they are currently located, sell the property and move Town Hall to the Lake, going to sell all the property and build a building for both departments? **Mayor Sears** said the whole idea of the street scape plans are to try and help the business owners soften up their look and invite other businesses to open.

**David Kilmartin, 128 E Laurel Avenue**, asked if Michael Pape gave any thought to the space down by the boat ramp. **Mr. Pape** replied that there are no changes made to the boat ramp.

## **Discussion: Holiday Staff Report & Calendar**

**Mayor Sears** gave background on this item.

The Town Council agreed to have the meeting on November 28, 2016 but to cancel or reschedule the December 26, 2016 meeting when it was closer to time.

## **OLD BUSINESS – None**

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

#### **Code Enforcement/Police Department Report**

**Chief Thomas** said that they are going to pursue to the special magistrate on a case in Town. **Councilor Conroy** said thank you.

#### **Finance Report**

**Councilor Conroy** asked how come the Police Department Retirement Revenues is year to date \$173,219.24, estimated revenue is 284,994.00 and at 61% received. **Councilor Conroy** said that he would wait on an answer as Town Clerk Brasher was not at the meeting. **Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel** said some part of it could be to Curtis Robbins retiring. **Mayor Sears** asked Administrative Assistant II Burke to ask Town Clerk Brasher to email the answer to Councilor Conroy's question out to the Town Council.

#### **Impact Fee Balance**

**Mayor Sears** gave detailed background on the agreement between Venezia and the Town to upsize a line. The agreement is that Venezia would pay for the upsize of the line and the Town would pay them back. He then added that if the council would agree to putting an amended agreement on the next agenda to be looked voted on.

**Councilor Conroy** asked if it would be easier to have him plant the trees as in the agreement now. **Mayor Sears** said no, due to all the equipment and other factors that may occur. **Councilor Conroy** said he counted 20 lots being built on and is only counting 14 lots on the impact fee sheet. **Mayor Sears** said that what is on the impact fee sheet is correct. He then explained that developers can defer their impact fees until the end of the project.

#### **Library Director Report – No Comment**

#### **Public Services Report**

**Mayor Sears** gave thanks to Public Services Supervisor Ernest for a wonderful re-opening of Sara Maude Nature Preserve.

**Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel** said that the builders in Venezia are stealing water from the Town and if they continue to do so both the builder and developer should be fined.

**Mayor Sears** said that he called Jerry from Dream Finders and explained to him what was happening in the subdivision. He said that Jerry would take care of the problem and he believed that Jerry would. **Mayor Sears** then added that he expressed to Jerry that the next line of defense is police action. He then asked Public Services Supervisor Ernest to verify that there were three problems in Venezia and two were Pathfinder and one Dreamfinder.

**Public Services Supervisor Ernest** replied yes

**Town Hall Report- No Comment**

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

**Mayor Sears- No Comment**

**Mayor Pro-Tem David Nebel- No Comment**

**Councilor Conroy** expressed his concern about Town Hall staffing. He also stated that Martha Macfarlane offered to help revamp the Town Website. He then expressed his other concerns about what he thinks is going on at Town Hall. Public Services Supervisor Ernest expressed his concern with meter reading errors.

**Councilor Kearney- No Comment**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**John Scott, 503 N Palm Avenue**, expressed his concern with the rate of pay at the Police Department and Town Hall.

**Peggy Ernest** wanted to credit the Garden Civic Club for all their help with the opening of Sara Maude Nature Preserve.

**Ed Smith, 305 N Palm Ave.** voiced his concerns with a Police Officer acting as the Code Enforcement Officer.

**Mayor Sears** said he has talked to multiple people about the situation and it ultimately comes down to being able to fund that position.

The meeting adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

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Chris Sears, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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Dairian Burke  
Administrative Assistant II