

**MINUTES OF THE HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AUGUST 8, 2011**

Mayor Sears called the Town Council Meeting of August 8, 2011 to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Councilor Ernest led the Invocation.

Present: Mayor Sears, Mayor Pro-Tem Nebel, Councilor Ernest, Councilor Richardson, Councilor Hall, Town Attorney Blom-Ramos, Deputy Public Works Director Smith, Library Director Smith, Police Chief Robbins, Administrator of Financial Services Monday-Bolte and Town Clerk Brasher.

CONSENT AGENDA – Only one motion is need to approve the Consent Agenda

Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held July 11, 2011, Town Council & Planning and Zoning Joint Work Session held July 12, 2011, Town Council Budget Work Session held July 28, 2011, Town Council Special Session held July 28, 2011 and Town Council Budget Work Session held August 2, 2011.

Councilor Richardson, seconded by Councilor Ernest, moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried 5-0 with a roll call vote.

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration and Approval of Combined Voluntary Cooperation and Operational Assistance Mutual Aid Agreement Between the City of Tavares and the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills

Police Chief Robbins gave background on this item. He said Councilor Hall will need to work around his conflict with regards to the agreement.

Mayor Pro-Tem Nebel, seconded by Councilor Ernest, moved to approve the Combined Voluntary Cooperation and Operational Assistance Mutual Aid Agreement Between the City of Tavares and the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills. Motion carried 5-0 with a roll call vote.

Right-of-Way Maintenance Ordinance

Town Attorney Blom-Ramos gave background on this item and said if the Town Council agrees with the wording it can be adopted as an ordinance. Discussion ensued. **Councilor Richardson** asked for clarification about trees planted in the right-of-way by the property owners. **Police Chief Robbins** said the Town has rules against planting in the road right-of-way.

It was the consensus of the Town Council to bring back a right-of-way maintenance ordinance for adoption.

Councilor Ernest said he would like to look at a plan to make SR19 presentable. Discussion ensued. **Mayor Pro-Tem Nebel** said the Howey Women's and Garden Club spent thousands of dollars on landscaping in front of Town Hall and the Police

Department and it looks terrible. **Mayor Sears** said he has asked Town Planner Shira to look for beautification grants.

Appointment of One Elected Official to Lake County League of Cities, Who Shall Serve as the Director and Appointment of One Elected Official or Staff Member, Who Shall Serve as the Alternate Director and Vote on Behalf of the Town

Mayor Pro-Tem Nebel, seconded by Councilor Richardson, moved to appoint Councilor Hall as the Director to the Lake County League of Cities and Mayor Pro-Tem Nebel as the Alternate Director to the Lake County League of Cities . Motion carried 5-0 with a roll call vote.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion: Budget for Fiscal Year 2011-2012

Mayor Sears gave background on this item and thanked the Town Council for their due diligence with regards to the budget. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding millage rates.

Mayor Sears said the Town should have budget meetings at least one or twice a year because not only was budget discussed but operations were discussed as well.

Councilor Ernest said he thinks this is a reasonable budget and he is ready to cut the contingency down to a reasonable level. **Councilor Hall** said he is in favor of an 8.000 millage rate and **Councilor Ernest** agreed.

Mayor Sears asked if the Town Council would like to change any line items. **Councilor Richardson** discussed the following:

- Said he would like \$5,000 for tree pruning in the Parks & Recreation budget.
- Asked why police department cell phones were not budgeted and then added back into the budget.

Police Chief Robbins said it is about communication and he has no way to get in touch with the officers when they are off duty and the officers need communication with the Lake County Sheriff Department. **Councilor Richardson** asked if the police officers with a cell phone are on call and required to answer the phone.

Police Chief Robbins said they are on call 24 hours a day if they have a Town issued cell phone.

Deputy Public Works Director Smith asked for additional water testing funds for the FY 2011-2012. **Mayor Pro-Tem Nebel** said the Utility Fund got additional funds last week and now this department is asking for additional money. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding utility budget expenditures. **Mayor Sears** said he has asked numerous times for Staff Reports and documentation and he is done with verbal conversations. He said he had a meeting in January with Public Works Director Padgett and Deputy Public Works Director Smith and advised them that all additional information and money requests are to be in writing and that is not happening. He said he was very clear in the January meeting and the expectations are not being met.

Councilor Richardson said there needs to be reasonable figures and other than that, the department needs to tighten up. He said if management needs to be addressed; it needs to be done at another date.

Deputy Public Works Director Smith said James Southall is currently making less than the last person that was hired and asked for a salary adjustment. Discussion ensued. **Mayor Sears** said he will meet with the department to discuss salary adjustments. Discussion ensued with regards to CUP requirements.

Councilor Hall said the Town is paying for a professional job and the job is not being done professionally. **Mayor Sears** said he will meet with the Department Directors to discuss management issues. **Town Attorney Blom-Ramos** read information from the Charter to clarify executive officers.

Mayor Sears asked for a motion to amend the agenda to discuss the copy machine contract.

Councilor Ernest, seconded by Councilor Hall moved to amend the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Town Attorney Blom-Ramos stated she has reviewed the contract and the only issue is that the company can reassign the contract. Discussion ensued.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Richardson said the Town Council did an excellent good job with the budget.

Mayor Pro-Tem Nebel - None

Councilor Ernest said a couple weeks ago the Public Works Department went to trim some trees in a road right-of-way and the home owner ran them off and told them to bring back the police if they come back. **Police Chief Robbins** said he does not have any information to share but will bring the information back.

Councilor Hall - None

MAYOR REPORT

Mayor Sears reported the following:

- The Town received a letter from the State and the State Revolving Fund has been approved to lock into the interest rate. The plans for the water plant expansion are almost done and bids should be out in 30 days or so.
- He talked to Traffic Engineer Watanabe about the Lakeshore Blvd. project and the road project is moving forward.
- Said the Town needs to stay in compliance with the CUP and he and Town Engineer Shira will meet to discuss who is responsible for each item along with the time frame.

- Said the LDR's will roll out in late August to the Planning & Zoning Commission for review.
- Said the Town is moving forward and the job of the budget brought a lot of different items that need to be addressed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

David Nebel discussed the status of developments in the Town and passed out information regarding PUD's and additional information regarding development.

Mayor Sears said he has been discussed this with Town Attorney Blom-Ramos and information will come forward at a later date. Discussion ensued.

ADJOURNMENT AT 7:42 P.M.



Chris Sears, Mayor

ATTEST:



Brenda Brasher, CMC
Town Clerk