

Special Town Commission Meeting of the Town of Ocean Ridge held on Wednesday, September 24, 2008 at 5:01 PM in the Town Hall Meeting Chambers

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kaleel and roll call was answered by the following:

Commissioner Bingham	Commissioner Brown
Commissioner Allison	Commissioner Pugh
Mayor Kaleel	

PUBLIC HEARING

- A. Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Budget
 - 1. Consideration of adopted tentative budget and proposed millage rate for fiscal year 2008-2009

Town Clerk Hancsak commented that the Commission had initially approved a \$5.49 tentative proposed millage rate, however, at the tentative budget adoption they lowered the millage to \$5.20 which increased the contingency account by \$90,000 and would result in total General Fund expenditures of \$5,528,484. This millage was used in the required advertisements. She advised that she also provided the required motions if they decided to lower the millage to \$5.09 (the millage required to adopt the budget and revisions made at the July 28, 2008 meeting with a total of \$5,438,484 in expenditures) or \$5.15 which would result in a \$50,000 increase in the contingency account and an overall budget of \$5,488,484.

Comm Bingham stated that she felt the Town needed to be more reserved and suggested a final millage rate of \$5.09 and reducing the COLA for the employee increases from 4% to 3%, but also fund the \$500 remainder of employee health insurance deductible. She also proposed keeping the extra funds from the COLA decrease in the budget. Town Clerk Hancsak advised that the difference between the 3 and 4% was approximately \$19,000.

Mayor Kaleel commented that the impacts of the economy are unknown and Mr. Bonfiglio made a good point at the last meeting regarding possible increased foreclosures resulting in more expenses for the Town.

Comm Brown advised that he supported the 3% COLA but also suggested the Town funding the extra \$500 deductible for the employees. He was advised that this would result in an approximate \$5,500 savings. He added that he felt the millage should be kept at \$5.20 so the reserves could be built up to assist in repaying the debt. Comm Brown also commented that he felt it was a mistake that reserve monies were used to balance the budget in the past because there are now several capital projects and debt.

Speaking from the public, Steve Greenhut and also John Wooten, 5907 North Ocean Blvd., both stated they were opposed to reducing the millage from \$5.20 and the COLA from 4 to 3%. They also stated that the insurance for the employees should be maintained by the Town, citing that they, as taxpayers, were willing to pay for the level of service they receive. They felt the increase of \$100-200 was insignificant for the majority of residents. Mr. Greenhut added that he felt the new Town Hall would be a statement for the community and feels the property values will improve. He asked and

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was advised that there was approximately \$12 million in new construction added to the tax roll.

Zoanne Hennigan, 91 Island Drive South, stated she has not analyzed the budget for the needs and wants as the Commission had but the taxes are higher than last year. She suggested compromising with a \$5.15 millage rate which would still provide some extra to the reserves.

Comm Allison commented regarding the COLA increase that she felt \$19,000 was not a lot of money considering the overall budget and a review of other municipalities and she could not support 3%. She added that she felt the employees would probably rather have the COLA than the deductible. Town Manager Schenck mentioned that the COLA would be more of a benefit to the employee because some of the employees do not utilize the entire deductible.

Nancy Hogan, 37 Hibiscus Way, stated she felt the Town over spends, the reserve is too high, the debt is unconscionable, there is no fiscal control, and the Town's rate is not even close to other municipalities of similar size. She also cited the increase in taxes over the last several years and added that the Town was increasing the millage rate and increasing 3 user fees. She concluded by stating that good government is caring for the residents' money and it is all about equitable taxation. Mayor Kaleel stated that for the record he disagreed with some of her comments.

Mayor Kaleel suggested that the Commission could compromise with a \$5.15 millage rate and 3% with the additional \$500 deductible. Comm Allison stated that she still felt the employees should receive the 4% citing that no one knows what next year may bring as far as any type of raises and all the employees wear multiple hats.

Comm Pugh commented that while he does not believe in COLA increases he did feel that the employees should be provided the additional \$500 deductible. He added that he could support the insurance with 3% COLA and a \$5.15 millage rate.

Mayor Kaleel commented that if the COLA was a "sticking point" he would suggest approving the 3% with the additional \$500 deductible and then during the year if the budgeted revenues were on tract then possibly give bonuses to the employees. There was a consensus for this suggestion.

Comm Allison moved to fund the remainder of the \$500 deductible for the employees and reduce the COLA from 4% to 3% but keeping the total expenditures the same. Comm Bingham seconded the motion.

Motion carried – Yea (5).

Mayor Kaleel announced that the millage rate of 5.1500 exceeds the rolled back rate of 4.7930 by 7.45%.

2. Adopt Resolution No. 2008-10 Making a Tax Levy Based on the 2008 Assessment Roll with a Final Millage Rate for Fiscal Year 2008-2009

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Comm Bingham moved that Resolution No. 2008-10 making a tax levy based on the 2008 Assessment Roll with a final millage rate of \$5.15 per \$1,000 of assessed value be adopted for the 2008/09 general operating revenues. Comm Brown seconded the motion.

Town Clerk Hancsak read the resolution. There was no public comment.

Motion carried - Yea (5).

- 3. Adopt Ordinance 581 Adopting an Annual Final Budget and Appropriating Funds Beginning October 1,2008 and Ending September 30, 2009; Providing for Repeal of Conflicting Ordinances; Providing for Severability; and Providing an Effective Date

Comm Pugh moved to adopt Ordinance No. 581 appropriating funds for fiscal year 2008-2009 for the Ocean Rdige Budget to be finalized at \$5,488,484 for operating expenses. Comm Allison seconded the motion.

Town Clerk Hancsak read the ordinance. There was no public comment.

Motion carried - Yea (5).

- 4. Resolution No. 2008-11; Updating funds for the Capital Projects Fund for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2008 and ending September 30, 2009

Comm Bingham moved that Resolution No. 2008-11 reappropriating funds for the Capital Projects Fund for fiscal year 2008-2009 be adopted, seconded by Comm Allison.

Town Clerk Hancsak read the resolution. There was no public comment.

Motion carried - Yea (5).

Mayor Kaleel inquired if the Island Drive Bridge Replacement Bids had gone out yet to which he was advised that the permits were just approved and the staff would be moving ahead with advertising the bid.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:53 PM

Attest By:

Town Clerk

Mayor Kaleel

Commissioner Bingham

Commissioner Pugh

Commissioner Allison

Commissioner Brown