

TOWN OF MELBOURNE VILLAGE
MINUTES
Special Commission Meeting & Budget Workshop
Wednesday, July 20, 2022
6:30 PM – Town Office

I. Call to Order at 6:30 pm by Mayor Niemann

II. Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Niemann

III. Roll Call - Present were Commissioners Anderson, Ditty, Ingram, Jones, Murphy, and Mayor Niemann. Excused: Vice Mayor Calenda

IV. Mayor's Report- Mayor Niemann

- Tonight's workshop is not for public discussion - only Commission and department heads to discuss at budget workshop.
- Attorney Richardson has a new position starting in September. He is working to recommend a replacement.
- Office Assistant Marissa Levine began last week. She and Deputy Clerk Kelley already have a good working relationship.
- Superintendent Ward's last day was yesterday, July 19.
- There is a good Candidate for the Town Supervisor position and several other possibilities.
- Town Clerk position is listed on multiple platforms. One candidate has strong accounting experience but no government background.
- Next week the Commission will set the TRIM and preliminary millage rate for FY2023.
- Chief Loos received an offer of \$6,000 for both Crown Victoria and Ford Fusion. Commission feels offer is too low. Chief Loos has not done any listing of vehicles for sale – does not have time and is not a used car salesman. Vin.com gives \$8,000 value for Ford Fusion alone. Commissioner Anderson will meet with Chief Loos, research vehicle values, and report back on July 26 before decision is made.

V. Hurricane Tree Retainer

- Commissioner Ditty prepared a policy and RFP to get bids from contractors and proposed that the contract for 2022 hurricane season be separate from an annual contract.
- Discussion ensued regarding definition of “retainer” and “day of work” and how to ensure that work is performed per contract.
- Chief Loos said it is important to know how close in proximity contractor and equipment is to town and how quickly they can respond.
- Commission will move forward to secure an inclusive contract for the year including a contract for hurricane work.
- Commissioner Ditty will present the new proposed contract at next meeting.

VI. Adjourn 7:20 pm

Budget Workshop Commenced immediately following Special Commission Meeting

Main discussion at Budget Workshop was personnel and payroll projections for FY2023. Mary Murphy from Finance Committee was present to project budget to the screen and make adjustments to budget draft during discussion.

New Budget will reflect:

- Projected ~\$20k budget increase in salaries if going from 0% to 5% (9 full-time employees)
- Projected ~\$5k budget increase in FICA and Workers Comp (WC) if going from 0% to 5% (9 full-time employees)
- Breakout of a 5% Salary increase:

\$19,307	Based Salaries
\$5,203	FICA and WC
\$24,510	Total
- Projected ~\$40k budget increase for health insurance (9 full-time employees at +\$900/month/employee true-up; independent of salary increases)
- Potential of offering less than 100% healthcare coverage for added savings
- Following a 90-day probation period, consider offering all new employees an increase in pay for job satisfaction.
- Salary increase would annually grow exponentially. Mayor looking into possibility of using Rescue Act funds to give employees a one-time payment (can't be called "Bonus"). A program would have to be developed to use this approach.

Police Department budget is addressed:

- Current staff needs are 5 full-time (including Chief) and 2 part-time staff.
 - Coverage for Brevard County Sheriff's Office for weekend – two 12 hour/day shifts would be about ~\$130,000 (2 full-time employees). This will result in a reduction of traffic enforcement, house checks and medical calls. (Need to clarify how many hours the Sheriff's Office coverage will be and at what cost.)
 - Chief suggested that the Town pull funds from savings because Town won't exist in another 8 years due to lack of creative taxing.
 - Mayor attempting to present all of the options to Chief and Commission that we can look at for consideration and brainstorming – or the town will have to accept the fact that we will have to continually draw from savings until all savings are drawn down.
 - Reduction in coverage must be looked at.
1. Keep Police Department as is – fully re-staff the department to previous level. Even with creative taxing, current budget cannot support a 5% raise in 2023.
 2. MSTU – must dissolve Police Department and use only the Sherriff's Department. Least attractive. Budget would fall substantially and taxes would drop. Individual tax bills would go up with an equal amount coming from each household.

At approximately 8:04 pm, after considerable discussion between Commission, the Chief and some of his officers who were present at the discussion, officer Lanza stated “nobody on the council has ever come to me to chat and get to know me. The mayor has.” Discussion became heated when the Mayor said she had previously been scolded publicly in a meeting for going out of chain of command when an officer approached her instead of the Chief with a concern. Chief Loos’ wife, who was in the audience, made comments in a raised tone and would not stop speaking upon request of the Mayor. She was then asked to leave the meeting. At this point Chief Loos proclaimed, “OK, let’s go” and accompanying officers, family and children got up and abruptly left the meeting. Budget discussion resumed. Approximately 1 minute later Chief Loos reentered the room, interrupted the meeting, and pointed his finger at the Mayor loudly stating, “That’s my wife that you raised your mouth to, and it was not going to be settled tonight.” He again stormed out of the room.

Budget discussion again resumed and the mayor was able to present several options for the police department staffing/budget usage.


1. Leave Police Department as is
2. Reduce staff coverage and pay Brevard County Sheriffs department coverage for some hours.
 - a. Chief (to perform all admin duties), sergeant, 2 Full-Time day officers, 2 Full-Time night officers, and 1 Part-Time officer (a reduction of 1 part time officer)
 - b. Working Chief who covers 12 hour shifts with administrative and patrolling duty and 3 Full-Time officers.
3. Dissolve Police department and move all coverage to Brevard County.

More budget discussion ensued. Request to look into speaking with our County Commissioner to see if there is any room for negotiating help “because we are struggling.” Is there any way the County can help us? Mayor Niemann will reach out to our District 5 Commissioner, Christine (Isnardi) Zonka.


Workshop adjourned 8:55 pm

If an individual decides to appeal any decision made by the Town Commission with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, a record and transcript of the proceedings will be required and the individual will need to ensure that a verbatim record and transcript of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is based and will be acceptable in a court of law (FS286.0105). Such person must provide a method for recording and transcribing the proceedings verbatim, as the Town does not provide such a record or transcript. In accordance with the Americans Disabilities Act and Section 286.26, Florida Statutes, persons needing special accommodations for this meeting shall, within a reasonable time prior to the meeting contact the Office of the Town Clerk (321) 723-8300.

ATTEST:



David Jones, Commissioner



Tabitha Niemann, Mayor