

**TOWN OF HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2024
6:00 P.M.
OFFICIAL MINUTES**

The regular monthly meeting of the Haverhill Town Council was held on Thursday, September 26, 2024, at the Town Hall, 4585 Charlotte Street, Haverhill, FL.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Foy called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Foy offered the Invocation and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Town Administrator Stevens called the roll and Council Members present were Mayor Jay Foy, Vice Mayor Lawrence Gordon, Council Member Ray Caranci, Council Member Teresa Johnson, and Council Member Dennis Withington. Town Staff present included Town Attorney John Fenn Foster and Town Administrator Tracey Stevens. With a quorum present in the Council Chambers, the meeting proceeded.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Aliddy Diaz of Imagination Kids, 1063 N. Haverhill Rd, requested that the Council re-consider its decision regarding flag banner signage in the Town. Town Administrator Stevens informed the Council that Ms. Diaz submitted an email to staff requesting temporary signage, and staff is working with her on the request.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Foy inquired if there were any additions, deletions, or modifications to the agenda, and there were none.

Council Member Withington moved to approve the agenda as submitted; seconded by Council Member Johnson. Motion carried 5-0.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of the Minutes of the August 22, 2024, Regular Meeting
2. Approval of the Minutes of the September 12, 2024, Special Meeting
3. Acceptance of the Infrastructure Surtax Committee Annual Report for FY23
4. Approval of Addendum No. 1 to Extend for a Period of One (1) Year the Professional Services Agreement between the Town of Haverhill and Blue Sky Emergency Management d/b/a The Integrity Group to Provide Disaster Recovery Performance Auditing and Management Consulting Services

Council Member Caranci moved to approve the consent agenda as submitted; seconded by Vice Mayor Gordon. Motion carried 5-0.

PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

5. Proclamation Recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month – Sponsored by Vice Mayor Gordon

Town Attorney Foster read the proclamation by title only into the record.

Council Member Withington moved to adopt the Proclamation Recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month; seconded by Vice Mayor Gordon. Motion carried 5-0.

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COMMENTS FROM THE PALM BEACH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE (PBSO)

Deputy Maldonado indicated that Deputy Schnell was unable to print the complete statistics report for the last 30 days prior to the Council meeting; however, the information available included a vehicular homicide, a vehicle burglary and a stolen vehicle recovery and arrest made.

COMMENTS FROM PALM BEACH COUNTY FIRE RESCUE

District Fire Chief Adams reported on the statistics for the last 30 days which included 11 medical calls, 8 vehicle accidents, and 3 calls listed as "other". PBCFR deployed to the Tallahassee area for the Hurricane Helene event. Chief Adams also described other activities and training events PBCFR was involved in recently.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY25 FINAL BUDGET

6. Final Budget Hearing for FY25

a. Town Administrator's Presentation of the Final Budget & Final Millage Rate for the FY2024/2025 Budget

Town Administrator Stevens presented the final budget to the Council. The balanced final budget is the same as the tentative budget that was approved by the Council at the last meeting and includes a mil rate of 4.05 which is the same as last year's mil rate. It is Management's recommendation that the Town Council adopt the balanced final operating budget in the amount of \$1,564,337; the Special Revenue Infrastructure Surtax Fund budget in the amount of \$256,000; the Special Revenue Building Department Fund budget in the amount of \$271,400; and the Special Revenue American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Fund budget in the amount of \$441,360 for the fiscal year October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025.

b. Mayor Foy announced that the Town of Haverhill Computed Millage Rate is Higher Than the Rolled Back Rate of 3.7606 by 7.70%. The millage to be levied is 4.0500.

c. Public Comment & Comments from Town Council Members

Mayor Foy called for public comments, and there were none.

d. Resolution No. 2024-09: Adoption of Final Millage Rate for FY2024/2025

Town Attorney Foster read Resolution No. 2024-09 into the record by title only.

Council Member Johnson moved to adopt Resolution No. 2024-09 at 6:14 p.m.; seconded by Council Member Caranci. Motion carried 5-0.

e. Resolution No. 2024-10: Adoption of Final Budget for FY2024/2025

Town Attorney Foster read Resolution No. 2024-10 into the record by title only.

Council Member Withington moved to adopt Resolution No. 2024-10 at 6:15 p.m.; seconded by Vice Mayor Gordon. Motion carried 5-0.

REGULAR AGENDA

7. Review Request for Waiver Extension for 4950 Luwal Drive to Allow Commercial Vehicle Parking in a Residential District

Town Administrator Stevens reminded the Council that the waiver was extended for 30 days with conditions at the last meeting to give the owner time to complete the driveway and fence installation. She noted that the driveway and fence installation is substantially completed, and all that is left to do is to re-sod the area and call for a final inspection to close out the building permits.

One of the owners of the property, Pedro Benedico, Jr., spoke to the Council and stated he was unaware that he needed to re-sod the area. Town Administrator Stevens stated that the area needs to be re-sodded to allow for proper drainage.

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There was discussion regarding how long the waiver should be extended. Town Administrator Stevens reiterated that staff cautions the Council regarding granting of waivers from the requirements of the town code, as it opens it up for others to apply for waivers which could eventually erode the neighborhood character. She asked that if the Council decides to grant another waiver extension, it includes conditions that staff may revoke the waiver at any time that the owners park their other construction vehicles and equipment on their property or in the roadway near the property.

Pedro Benedico, Sr. spoke to the Council and noted that he spent \$14,000 to improve the property to construct the driveway and fence in accordance with the original waiver. He requested a waiver for six-months to a year.

Mayor Foy called for public comments. Aliddy Diaz stated that asking Mr. Benedico to sod the area to close out the driveway permit is unreasonable since he will need to rip up part of the sod to reconstruct the fence when he decides to do so. Town Administrator Stevens reiterated that the sod needs to be installed to maintain proper drainage on the lot.

Vice Mayor Gordon moved to extend the waiver for 4950 Luwal Drive for six (6) months to allow a certain commercial vehicle to be parked in a residential district as outlined in the original waiver, with the condition that the open driveway and fence permits be closed out within two (2) weeks from September 26, 2024, and giving staff the authority to revoke the waiver immediately if any other construction vehicles or equipment owned by the property owner are parked at the residence or in the roadway near the residence at any time; seconded by Mayor Foy. Motion carried 4-1 (Council Member Withington dissenting).

8. Adopt Employee Handbook Revisions as Proposed by the Town Administrator

Mayor Foy stated that Town Administrator Stevens provided a memo detailing the request to make revisions to the employee handbook to help Haverhill attract and retain good quality employees and incentivize them to become highly skilled and trained employees.

Council Member Caranci asked that language be added to note that the monetary incentive for obtaining a professional designation is only provided after proof of certification is submitted to the Town Administrator.

Council Member Johnson asked how many weeks of vacation is granted to new employees. Town Administrator Stevens responded that a new employee receives two weeks of vacation per year until they have reached five years of employment with the town, and for an employee who has worked in government for many years, this is sometimes a big decrease in the amount of vacation they are used to having on the books. She stated that giving the Town Administrator authority to grant up to five additional days at her discretion will make the town more competitive when trying to attract talented employees. Council Member Johnson asked about the designations that are listed in the handbook, and Town Administrator Stevens stated that the designations listed in the handbook are examples and each employee has the ability to earn designations through professional associations. Council Member Johnson stated that offering incentives is a good tool to attract and retain talented employees, and thanked Town Administrator Stevens for bringing this idea to the Council.

Council Member Johnson moved to adopt Employee Handbook Revisions as submitted by Town Administrator Stevens, inserting additional language that the employee will be provided the incentive for professional designations upon presentation of the license or certification to the Town Administrator; seconded by Council Member Caranci. Motion carried 5-0.

9. Approval of Professional Services Agreement with Essential Net Solutions to Provide Information Technology Services for the Town of Haverhill for a Period of One (1) Year

Town Administrator Stevens reported that cybersecurity services have been added to the agreement, as are required by state law. She stated that the one-year agreement is within budgeted amounts for FY25. She mentioned that she is proposing a one-year agreement as opposed to a three-year agreement so the town does not have to go out to bid for the services which adds costs to an already strained budget.

Council Member Caranci moved to approve the Professional Services Agreement with Essential Net Solutions to Provide Information Technology Services to the Town of Haverhill for a period of one (1) year; seconded by Council Member Withington. Motion carried 5-0.

REPORTS

10. Town Attorney

Town Attorney Foster did not have anything new to report.

11. Mayor

Mayor Foy reported that Jeff Hmara spoke at the District II/III meeting about a diminishing remembrance of 9/11 and noted that it is an important time for Americans to be unified. Mayor Foy noted that they also spoke about the homeless bill at the meeting, along with the County transportation plan. Town Administrator Stevens stated that she included information on both of those topics in the Council packages and asked Council Members to review the materials which is very informative. Mayor Foy stated that the NPDES meeting was held last week and this year's audit does not include Haverhill. He noted that the permit reviewer is getting pressure from EPA to follow the permit requirements and standard operating procedures.

12. Town Administrator

Town Administrator Stevens noted that her written monthly report was submitted in the Council packages. She updated the Council that FPL should be finished fixing the bad lateral line that is affecting Briarwood in the next two weeks. She also mentioned that the Town will hold the annual Trunk-or-Treat event again this year on October 31st. There will be an ice cream vendor, a face painter, and balloon artist at the event.

13. Treasurer

The Treasurer's report for August 2024 was presented by Town Administrator Stevens and accepted by the Town Council.

Council Member Withington moved to receive and file the Treasurer's Report for August 2024; seconded by Council Member Johnson. Motion carried 5-0.

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14. Committee Delegates

Vice Mayor Gordon reported that the street lighting issue on County roads is up in the air. Town Administrator Stevens stated that she is still following it and it appears it is morphing into the transportation plan as opposed to a separate issue. He also stated that the Town co-sponsored the Palm Beach County League of Cities monthly meeting yesterday at the American German Club and it was a big success.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no Unfinished Business to come before the Council at this time.


NEW BUSINESS

Council Member Johnson reported that vehicles and all-terrain vehicles continue to utilize the easement area near the canal behind her house. After a brief discussion, the Council directed Town Administrator Stevens to write a letter to the Lake Worth Drainage District requesting that they provide a locked gate to the easement area.

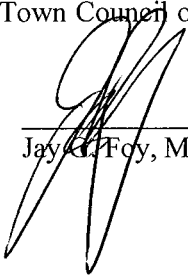
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Town Council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Town Administrator Stevens and adopted by the Town Council on October 24, 2024.

Approved: 

Tracey L. Stevens, Town Administrator



Jay G. Foy, Mayor

