

CITY OF PALM BAY, FLORIDA
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING 2024-23

Held on Thursday, the 12th day of September 2024, at the City Hall Council Chambers, 120 Malabar Road, SE, Palm Bay, Florida.

This meeting was properly noticed pursuant to law; the minutes are on file in the Office of the City Clerk, City Hall, Palm Bay, Florida.

The meeting was called to order at the hour of 6:04 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

MAYOR:	Rob Medina	Present
DEPUTY MAYOR:	Donny Felix	Present
COUNCILMEMBER:	Kenny Johnson	Present (Late)
COUNCILMEMBER:	Philip Weinberg	Present
COUNCILMEMBER:	Vacant	
CITY MANAGER:	Suzanne Sherman	Present
CITY ATTORNEY:	Patricia Smith	Present
DEPUTY CITY CLERK:	Terri Lefler	Present

CITY STAFF: Joan Junkala-Brown, Deputy City Manager; Juliet Misconi, Deputy City Manager; Angelica Collins, Assistant Finance Director; Gabriel Bowden, Utilities Director.

COMMENTARY BY STAFF:

1. Statement regarding tax rate for Fiscal Year 2025.

Ms. Sherman announced that the City had tentatively adopted an operating millage rate of 7.0171 for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2025. The tentative operating millage rate of 7.0171 exceeded the Truth in Millage (TRIM) current year aggregate rolled-back rate of 6.5627 by 6.92%. The percentage increase being above the 3.0% cap was caused by new construction being excluded from the 3.0% cap.

Mr. Johnson joined the meeting at this time.

Contributing to the operating millage rate increase over the rolled-back rate was:

- Anticipated health insurance benefit associated expenditure increases of 5.0%
- Funding required Police and Fire Pension Contribution Obligations of \$9.6 million resulting in a 29.9% increase from the previous fiscal year

- \$1.7 million in high priority funding needs including contractual obligations requiring payment
- Road Maintenance Fund investments totaling \$3.25 million
- \$4.0 million in personnel adjustments including 35 additional full-time employee (FTE) positions for the Fire and Police Departments; and seven (7) additional FTE positions for Internal Service Departments to support the City's growth

The City had also tentatively adopted a debt millage rate of 1.1210 for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2025. The tentative debt millage rate shall generate estimated revenues totaling \$10,013,557 based on the gross taxable value certified by the Property Appraiser's Office assuming an estimated 96.0% collection rate. These revenues were restricted and were designated for payments of the General Obligation Bonds, Series 2019 debt service payment totaling of \$3,525,250; the General Obligation Bonds, Series 2021 debt service payment totaling \$3,447,650; and the General Obligation Bonds, Series 2023 debt service payment totaling \$3,040,825, all due in the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget year.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Discussion of tentative millage rate for Tax Year 2024 and City Manager's summary of proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

The public hearing was opened. Ms. Collins provided an overview of the proposed budget. She responded to questions posed by councilmembers.

Individuals commented and asked questions regarding the proposed budget. A resident suggested re-establishing the Citizens' Budget Advisory Board.

Mr. Johnson supported the rollback millage rate of 6.5627; all other councilmembers supported a millage rate set at 6.7339, which was a reduction from the previous year of 7.5995.

Ms. Sherman responded to comments regarding line items of the budget.

The public hearing was closed.

BUSINESS:

1. Consideration of the tentative millage rate for Tax Year 2024; re-computation, if needed, and announcement of tentative millage rate and percentage increase over rolled-back rate.

Motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Deputy Mayor Felix, to set the tentative millage rate at 6.5627 (rollback rate).

Mr. Johnson said that between pension increases over the next few years and requests for staff positions, Council should look at more options such as outsourcing. He said there were many positions that were sitting vacant and some of which that were not necessary, in addition to salary increases being given to some employees. Mr. Johnson said he would entertain a Budget Advisory Board if parameters were established, such as an education in finance or having a financial background. He felt there were more wants than needs in regard to budget requests from the departments.

Deputy Mayor Felix did not want to exceed the cap and supported a millage rate of 6.7339. He also supported a Budget Advisory Board if it was used for the right purpose and its members were experts in the financial field.

Motion failed with members voting as follows:

Mayor Medina	Nay
Deputy Mayor Felix	Nay
Councilman Johnson	Yea
Councilman Weinberg	Nay

Motion by Deputy Mayor Felix, seconded by Mr. Weinberg, to set the tentative millage rate at 6.7339.

Motion carried with members voting as follows:

Mayor Medina	Yea
Deputy Mayor Felix	Yea
Councilman Johnson	Nay
Councilman Weinberg	Yea

2. Ordinance 2024-49, amending the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 200, Utilities Code, by adjusting the rates, fees and charges for the City's utilities system and services, first reading.

The City Attorney read the ordinance in caption only.

Ms. Sherman presented the request to Council.

Motion by Deputy Mayor Felix, seconded by Mr. Weinberg, to approve Ordinance 2024-49. Motion carried with members voting as follows: Mayor Medina, Yea; Deputy Mayor Felix, Yea; Councilman Johnson, Yea; Councilman Weinberg, Yea.

3. Ordinance 2024-50, amending the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 201, Sewer Use, Subchapter 'Miscellaneous Provisions', by adjusting the permit fees and other charges related to the City's utilities wastewater system, first reading.

The City Attorney read the ordinance in caption only.

Ms. Sherman presented the request to Council.

Motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Deputy Mayor Felix, to approve Ordinance 2024-50. Motion carried with members voting as follows: Mayor Medina, Yea; Deputy Mayor Felix, Yea; Councilman Johnson, Yea; Councilman Weinberg, Yea.

4. Ordinance 2024-51, amending the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 202, Reclaimed Water, by adjusting the rates, fees, and charges for reclaimed water, first reading.

The City Attorney read the ordinance in caption only.

Ms. Sherman presented the request to Council.

Santa Isabel Wright, resident, questioned why the City did not have free rain barrels for its residents. Ms. Sherman said the City did have a program in partnership with Brevard County. Staff would research further and provide information to Ms. Wright.

Susan Connolly, resident, supported the rain barrels and said the City should have a program and a rebate for same.

Motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Weinberg, to approve Ordinance 2024-51. Motion carried with members voting as follows: Mayor Medina, Yea; Deputy Mayor Felix, Yea; Councilman Johnson, Yea; Councilman Weinberg, Yea.

5. Ordinance 2024-52, adopting the final budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025, first reading.

The City Attorney read the ordinance in caption only.

Ms. Sherman presented the request to Council.

Motion by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Weinberg, to approve Ordinance 2024-52.
Motion carried with members voting as follows: Mayor Medina, Yea; Deputy Mayor Felix,
Yea; Councilman Johnson, Yea; Councilman Weinberg, Yea.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at the hour of 7:57 P.M.

Rob Medina, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Terese M. Jones, CITY CLERK