

**TOWN OF ASTATULA
MAYOR AND TOWN
COUNCIL MINUTES**



**PRELIMINARY BUDGET HEARING
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 2020
TOWN HALL**

Having been duly advertised as required by law, Mayor Mitchell Mack called the Preliminary Budget Hearing to order at 7:03pm. Mayor Mack gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present:

Mitchell Mack, Mayor
Kimberly Kobera, Vice-Mayor
Stephen Cross
Gayle Sikkema
Orita Issartel

Also Present:

Graham Wells, Town Clerk
Walter Hoagland, Police Chief

Roll Call was performed, and it was determined that a quorum was present.

This public hearing is for the purpose of announcing the percentage by which the millage rate differs from the rolled-back rate; and for Council to adopt a tentative millage rate by Resolution. Council will also adopt the tentative budget for Fiscal Year 2020-21 by fund department.

RESOLUTION 2020-13 - DETERMINING THE AMOUNT AND FIXING THE RATE OF AD VALOREM TAXATION

RESOLUTION 2020-13 - A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ASTATULA, FLORIDA, DETERMINING THE AMOUNT AND FIXING THE RATE OF AD VALOREM TAXATION; LEVYING THE ANNUAL PROPERTY TAXES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 FOR THE TOWN OF ASTATULA, FLORIDA; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor Mack read the resolution title and announced the following information as required by Florida Statutes:

- The Taxing Authority is the Town of Astatula
- The Rolled-Back Rate is 6.8061 mills
- The Percentage over the Rolled-Back Rate is 10.2 percent
- The Millage Rate to Be Levied is 7.5000 mills

At this point the Mayor opened up the meeting for public comment on this issue only; there being no residents present he closed public comment.

It was then opened up for Council discussion. There being no questions, the Mayor called for a motion to approve Resolution 2020-13.

MOTION by Councilman Cross to approval Resolution 2020-13; SECONDED by Councilwoman Issartel

A roll call vote was requested

Councilman Cross - YES

Councilwoman Kobera - YES

Councilwoman Issartel - YES

Councilwoman Sikkema - YES

Mayor Mack - YES

MOTION CARRIED 5-0

RESOLUTION 2020-14 - ADOPTING A TENTATIVE BUDGET, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2020, AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2021

RESOLUTION 2020-14 - A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ASTATULA, FLORIDA, ADOPTING A TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR THE TOWN OF ASTATULA, FLORIDA, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2020, AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2021, AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor Mack read the resolution title and announced the following information as required by Florida Statutes:

The Tentative Budget for the Town of Astatula for Fiscal Year 2020-21 to be adopted by Fund Department is as follows:

- General Fund – In the amount of \$1,198,765.00
- Transportation Fund – In the amount of \$66,780.00
- Infrastructure Fund – In the amount of \$144,000.00
- TOTAL ALL FUNDS - \$1,409,545.00

At this point the Mayor opened up the meeting for public comment on this issue only; there being no residents present he closed public comment.

It was then opened for Council discussion. Mayor Mack gave an overview that there were two budgets for consideration, one being without any payroll increases and one with them included. He said that he was adamant that the proposed increases should be included in the budget. It was explained that the resolution remained unchanged; only the budget was different. The salary increases would reduce the carry forward figure to future years.

Councilman Cross recalled that the increases were not going to be included in the budget because of COVID-19 and could be approved at a later time as a budget amendment when the revenues were clearer. He stated that with the increases included in the budget, he would not be able to vote to approve the budget proposal.

Mayor Mack explained that the Clerk had updated the anticipated revenues since the workshop, based on what was currently being received and this improved the carry forward figure considerably. Councilman Cross added that COVID-19 has had an impact on some of the residents and felt that it was inappropriate to give raises to the town employees at this time.

Councilwoman Sikkema stated that during the workshop she was not opposed to increases but wanted to think about it more before making a decision. In the intervening time she said that she had enquired how much the police officers were earning and how long they had been with the town. She was surprised how low the salaries were and felt that it should not be considered a raise but a step to bring them in line with what she felt they should be paid. Councilwoman Issartel agreed. Councilman Cross understood what they were saying but did not agree with them from a market standpoint. They can choose whether they want to move elsewhere for a better salary if it is available.

Councilwoman Kobera said that she was thankful that there was not a high turnover of officers. The Chief had provided her with a salary comparison with the Sheriffs Department, Cities of Eustis and Tavares and our officers make less than they do. Clerk Wells said that the total increase for everyone of \$13,182 includes F.I.C.A and pension contributions. He had polled most of the cities in Lake County and 75% were offering a 3% increase, some more and some at 2%. There were only two cities that were not going to give increases. The \$1,800 put in last year for the Christmas bonus also had been removed which mitigated part of the increase.

There being no further discussion, Mayor Mack requested a motion to approve Resolution 2020-14 adopting the budget that included the salary increases as proposed.

MOTION by Councilwoman Issartel to approve Resolution 2020-14 with the salary increases as presented; SECONDED by Councilwoman Sikkema

A roll call vote was requested

Councilman Cross - NO

Councilwoman Kobera - YES

Councilwoman Issartel - YES

Councilwoman Sikkema - YES

Mayor Mack - YES

MOTION CARRIED 4-1

The Mayor announced that the final budget hearing would be on September 24, 2020 at 7:00pm at Town Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Mitchell Mack, Mayor

ATTEST:



Graham Wells, Town Clerk & Finance Officer

