

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



**FINAL BUDGET HEARING  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2024  
TOWN HALL**

Having been duly advertised as required by law, Mayor Mitchell Mack called the Final Budget Hearing to order at 7:01pm. The Mayor gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Members Present:**

Mitchell Mack, Mayor  
Stephen Cross, Vice-Mayor  
Zane Teeters

**Also Present:**

Jennifer Tucker, Deputy Town Clerk  
Walter Hoagland, Police Chief

**Members Absent:**

Jeanne Quiros

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

The Department of Revenue Executive Order to allow remote voting of a council member was read and discussed due to Council Member Quiros being out of town due to the Hurricane. After conferring with the Town attorney, the decision was made not to allow Councilor Quiros to vote via Zoom call.

**1. Consideration and Approval: Resolution 2024-19 – Final Millage Rate**

Mayor Mack read Resolution 2024-19 aloud by title only and the following statements:

**RESOLUTION 2024-19 - A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ASTATULA, FLORIDA; ADOPTING A FINAL MILLAGE RATE OF 7.1500 FOR THE TOWN OF ASTATULA FOR AD VALOREM TAXES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

- The Taxing Authority is the Town of Astatula
- The Rolled-Back Rate is 6.8410 mills
- The Percentage over the Rolled-Back Rate is 4.52 percent
- The Millage Rate to Be Levied is 7.1500 mills

Mayor Mack opened the meeting for public comment for this item only.

**Vic Stone** – stated the current millage rate was too high, he feels funds aren't being spent except for pay increases. He asked questions to clarify how impact fees work and stated he would have more residents attend future meetings. Mayor Mack answered Mr. Stones questions and explained it was his suggestion to lower taxes to 7.0, however, council had chosen to only reduce it to 7.15 from 7.5. Revenue from annexing property into the town can be used to lower millage rate and still cover the cost of budget expenditures. Mr. Stone wants the millage rate lowered to 7.0%.

**Hector Garcia** – stated his confusion about why taxes needed to be increased with increased revenue in the Town due to new developments.

Mayor Mack closed public comment and opened for Council discussion.

Vice-Mayor Cross stated he would like to have the millage rate reduced to 7.0%. Mayor agreed the rate should be reduced, but department increases would be affected.

There being no further comments, Mayor Mack called for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-19.

Motion made by Vice-Mayor Cross to set the millage rate at the roll back rate of 6.8410%. With no second on the motion, the proposed motion failed.

Councilor Teeters inquired of the impact on the proposed budget if the millage rate was reduced to 7 percent.

Mayor Mack called a 10-minute recess at 7:30pm to adjust the figures of the proposed budget.

Mayor Mack reconvened the meeting at 7:38pm, then reported that the fiscal impact to the proposed budget by reducing the millage rate to 7.0 percent would be a reduction of \$20,161.00.

**Motion by Vice-Mayor Cross to approve Resolution 2024-19 with an amended millage rate of 7.000 percent; seconded by Councilor Teeters. Motion approved by roll call.**

Councilor Teeters – Yes

Vice-Mayor Cross – Yes

Mayor Mack – Yes

**Motion Carried: 3-0**

## **2. Consideration and Approval: Resolution 2024-20 – Final Budget**

Mayor Mack read Resolution 2024-20 aloud by title only and the following statements:

**RESOLUTION 2024-20 - A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ASTATULA, FLORIDA, ADOPTING A FINAL BUDGET FOR THE TOWN OF ASTATULA, FLORIDA, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2024, AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2025, AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

The Final Budget for the Town of Astatula for Fiscal Year 2023-24 to be adopted by Fund and Department is as follows:

- General Fund – In the amount of \$2,554,537.00
- Transportation Fund – In the amount of \$88,600.00
- Infrastructure Fund – In the amount of \$285,000.00
- Enterprise (Utility) Fund – In the amount of \$278,242.00
- TOTAL ALL FUNDS - \$3,206,379.00

At this point the Mayor opened the meeting for public comment on this item only.

Councilor Teeters ask for clarification on figures read. Mayor Mack read amended amount for the General Fund – in the amount of \$2,534,376.00.

There were no public comments or questions. Mayor Mack closed public comment for this item.

Mayor Mack opened the floor for Council comments and discussion.

Vice-Mayor Cross stated he was not present for the budget workshop and would like to go over some figures. Discussion continued between Vice-Mayor Cross, Councilor Teeters and Mayor Mack clarifying figures for new office positions, new public works positions, pay increases of cost-of-living allowance (C.O.L.A.) plus \$1.00, police chief salary increase of C.O.L.A. plus 5-percent, which Councilor Teeters stated increases should be COLA plus a percentage based on merit. Vice-Mayor Cross stated that with the large pay increase the prior year and the holiday back pay that was paid more than what was required, he didn't feel that pay increases for the police department are needed this year, nor that more officers were needed. Chief Hoagland stated that state statute requires two or more officers on shift at all times. Further discussion on Public Works positions, Parks and Rec position, and items included in the infrastructure budget.

Motion by Mayor Mack to approve Resolution 2024-20 as amended; with the lack of a second on the motion, the proposed motion failed.

Motion by Vice-Mayor Cross to amend the proposed budget to remove the police chief's salary increase and hiring two additional police officers and supporting equipment, Seconded by Councilor Teeters. A roll call was requested but interrupted by Lt. Brown who boisterously expressed his displeasure with Vice-Mayor Cross and the former Town Clerk.

Councilor Teeters – Pass

Vice Mayor Cross – Yes

Mayor Mack – must vote at the end

Councilor Teeters – No

Mayor Mack – No

Motion Failed.

Councilor Teeters cannot agree to forgo hiring new officers. Mayor Mack reminded the council that the current proposed budget is not set in stone, it can be amended at any time in the future if needed. Councilor Teeters requested a 10-minute recess. Mayor Mack granted the recess at 8:47pm.

Mayor Mack reconvened the meeting at 8:58pm.

**Motion by Councilor Teeters to approve the budget as written, with the exception of the police chief salary increase to only be C.O.L.A., not the additional 5-percent; Seconded by Vice-Mayor Cross. Motion approved by roll call vote.**

Councilor Teeters – Yes

Vice-Mayor Cross – No

Mayor Mack – Yes

**Motion Carried 2-1**

Mayor Mack requested a motion to approve Resolution 2024-20.

**MOTION by Councilor Teeters to approve Resolution 2024-20 as amended; SECONDED by Vice-Mayor Cross. Motion approved by roll call vote.**

Councilor Teeters – Yes

Vice-Mayor Cross – No

Mayor Mack - Yes

**MOTION CARRIED 2-1**

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Mitchell Mack, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Jennifer Tucker, Deputy Town Clerk