



Town Council Members Present

Zane Teeters, Jr. – Mayor
Cheryl Marinelli, Vice Mayor
Councilwoman- Kay MacQueen
Councilwoman – Susan Richert
Councilwoman- Kim Hanawalt

Town Staff

Charles Jacien, Town Clerk
Wally Hoagland, Police Chief
David Langley, Attorney
Vince Tengelia Town Accountant

Call to Order:

The Budget Workshop was called to order at 5:00 p.m. Invocation was given by Pastor Steve, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. All Council members were present, and a quorum was established.

Fiscal Year 2026–2027 Proposed Budget

Mayor Teeters stated that the proposed FY 2026–2027 budget was fiscally responsible and largely complete, with only minor corrections and adjustments anticipated. The proposed budget remains below the FY 2026 adopted townwide budget and is based on a rollback millage rate of approximately 6.5521 mills. Ad valorem revenue is projected to increase from approximately \$1.17 million to \$1.317 million due to increased taxable property values.

The proposed budget includes:

- Increase in the Town Clerk’s salary from \$63,000 to \$87,000 based on expanded administrative responsibilities.
- 3% COLA for Town employees.
- Increased funding for technology, software, planning, and professional services.
- Continued full funding of public safety operations.
- Approximately \$94,000 in school zone camera revenue.
- Funding for park improvements and water system improvements, including a generator.
- Strategic use of reserves for capital improvements while maintaining adequate reserves.

General Fund / Revenues

Staff reviewed the Town’s various revenue sources, including ad valorem taxes, permits and fees, franchise fees, state revenue sharing, sales taxes, impact fees, traffic fines, school zone cameras, community center rentals, and interest income.

Approximately \$136,148 in reserves was initially proposed to balance the budget and assist in maintaining the lower millage rate. The Town currently earns approximately \$91,000 annually in interest, and staff stated reserves would remain above the Town’s target level of approximately 35%. Building permit revenue was conservatively projected at approximately \$175,000.

Budget Hearing Dates

Council discussed the statutory advertising requirements and hurricane-season scheduling concerns. The following budget hearings were established:

- First Budget Hearing: September 10, 2026, at 5:01 p.m.
- Final Budget Hearing: September 24, 2026, at 5:01 p.m.

Staff advised that statutory provisions are available if a declared emergency or hurricane affects the hearing schedule.

Budget Adjustments and Council Direction

Town Council Compensation

The proposed 3% increase that had been applied to Council compensation was removed. Council compensation will remain at approximately \$13,200 annually. No opposition was expressed.

K-9 Expenses

Council agreed to remove the \$1,000 K-9 expense line item from the Police Department budget following the K-9's retirement.

School Zone Camera Revenue

Council discussed separately identifying school zone camera revenue as restricted public safety revenue rather than simply combining it with general revenues.

After discussion, Council favored allocating the public-safety portion of school zone camera revenue as follows:

- 40% – Law Enforcement Education
- 40% – Police Fuel
- 20% – Public Safety Contingency/Other Eligible Police Expenses

Council discussed using education funds for college coursework, specialized training, and other professional development opportunities for officers. Fuel funding could support future consideration of restoring take-home police vehicles, subject to a separate policy change.

School Crossing Guard

School crossing guard revenue is separately restricted. Approximately \$12,000–\$14,000 had been collected. Council supported budgeting for a dedicated part-time crossing guard, with consideration given to having backup coverage when the regular crossing guard is unavailable.

Police Communications / Equipment

Council reviewed police communication, telecommunications, radio rental, and maintenance expenses. Questions were raised regarding approximately 21 cellular/hotspot devices currently being billed.

Staff and Chief Hoagland were directed to review the accounts, identify each device, eliminate unnecessary services, and properly categorize communication expenses before final adoption of the budget.

Staffing Corrections

Staff confirmed the Code and Zoning Officer position was included in the proposed budget. A Parks and Recreation position may have been incorrectly identified as a Public Works position and will be corrected.

The budget will also be updated to reflect the previously approved \$3.00-per-hour raises for Larry Story and Caleb Luciano.

Parks and Trails Grant / Park Improvements

Council previously approved a \$110,000 Town match for a \$110,000 Parks and Trails grant, providing approximately \$220,000 total for eligible park improvements. The proposed budget incorrectly showed \$100,000 and will be corrected to reflect the full amount.

Possible projects discussed included:

- Additional boat-ramp parking.
- Repaving and striping Kirkwood Park.
- ADA-accessible parking near the Olive Ingram Building.
- Additional Park improvements.

A restroom proposal for Kirkwood Park was discussed; the lowest quote received was approximately \$150,000 for a single-stall restroom, and staff will continue researching alternative funding and grants.

Olive Ingram Building

Council discussed the condition and historical significance of the Olive Ingram Building, constructed in 1934 as part of a WPA project and historically used for Town and community activities.

Council agreed to increase the proposed allocation to \$100,000 for repairs and improvements, with the goal of making the building safe and usable while also pursuing grants, donations, and community assistance where legally permissible.

The additional \$100,000 will be funded from reserves.

Police Chief Salary Correction

The Police Chief salary was incorrectly shown at approximately \$97,900. The amount will be corrected to approximately \$103,000, reflecting the approved 3% COLA.

Solid Waste

The proposed solid-waste increase was shown at 5%. Staff clarified the final contractual increase is 4.4%. Revenue and expenses will be adjusted accordingly, with no net budget impact.

Cemetery

Council reviewed prior cemetery expenses and determined that approximately \$46,000 previously coded to the cemetery included hurricane-related expenses, including approximately \$32,000 that was later reimbursed.

Council discussed needed improvements to the cemetery, including:

- Water and plumbing repairs.

- Restroom improvements.
- Building repairs or possible replacement.
- Irrigation.
- Roads/walking paths and future parking improvements.

Council directed that approximately \$30,000 be added to the proposed budget for cemetery improvements. Staff will prepare a list comparing repairs to the existing building with potential replacement options.

Millage Rate / Reserves

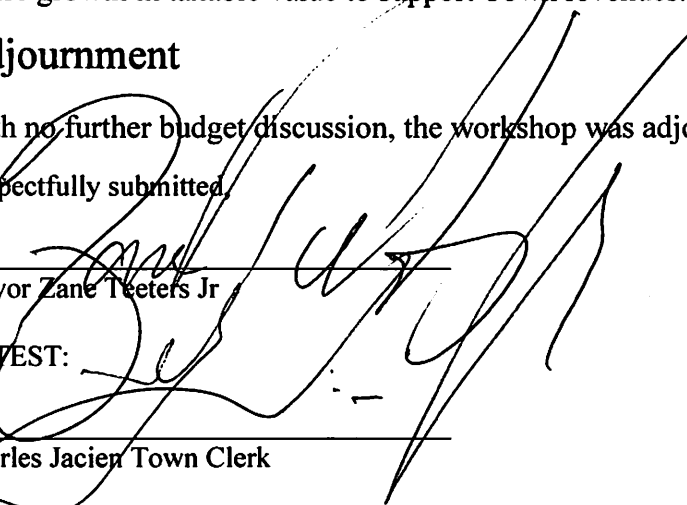
Council reaffirmed its intention to maintain the proposed millage rate at approximately 6.55 mills while using reserves primarily for one-time improvements and preservation of Town assets rather than recurring operating expenses.

Council expressed support for continuing to lower the millage rate when financially feasible while allowing future growth in taxable value to support Town revenues.

Adjournment

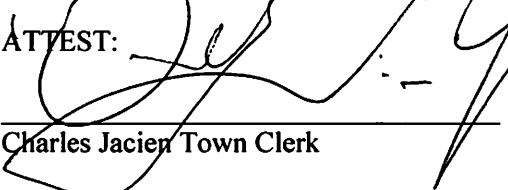
With no further budget discussion, the workshop was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mayor Zane Teeters Jr.

ATTEST:



Charles Jacien Town Clerk