TOWN OF ASTATULA
TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Budget Hearing
Thursday, Sept 10, 2026 @ 5:01
TOWN HALL

Town Council Members Present
Zane Teeters, Jr. – Mayor
Cheryl Marinelli – Vice-Mayor
Kay MacQueen – Council Member
Susan Richert - Council Member
Kim Hanawalt – Council Member

Town Staff
Charles Jacien, Town Clerk
Wally Hoagland, Police Chief
David Langley, Attorney

Call to Order Invocation and Pledge

Mayor Teeters opened the hearing. Jill Lovely of Four Square Church delivered the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Present: Mayor Teeters and Council Members Marinelli, MacQueen, Richert, and Hanawalt. A quorum was declared, and proper notice of the hearing was confirmed.

Public Comment

Mayor Teeters opened the floor for public comment. No members of the public came forward, and public comment was closed.

Reason for Increase in Ad Valorem Tax Revenues

Staff explained that anticipated ad valorem revenues increased because the Town's taxable assessed value and occupancy increased. Although the proposed millage rate was reduced, growth in assessed property value generated additional revenue. Council stated its intent to keep the tax burden as level as reasonably possible while funding Town services.

Resolution 2026 16 Tentative Millage Rate

The Council considered Resolution 2026-16 establishing the millage rate for Fiscal Year 2026–2027, beginning October 1, 2026, and ending September 30, 2027. The proposed millage rate was 6.5521 mills, identified as the rolled-back rate and representing a zero-percent increase over the rolled-back rate.

A motion was made by Susan Richert and seconded by Kay MacQueen to read Resolution 2026-16 by title only. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

A motion was then made By Susan Richert and seconded By Kim Hanawalt to approve Resolution 2026-16.

Vote: Council Member Marinelli – Yes; Council Member MacQueen – Yes; Council Member Richert – Yes; Council Member Hanawalt – Yes; Mayor Teeters – Yes. Motion carried 5–0.

Resolution 2026 17 Tentative Budget

The Council reviewed the proposed Fiscal Year 2026–2027 budget with staff and Lori Brinson of James Moore & Company. Staff stated that the budget was balanced, reduced the millage rate,

and budgeted operating expenditures below the prior year. Budget authority did not require every appropriated amount to be spent.

Revenues. Property-tax projections reflected the adopted tentative millage rate and increased assessed value. Building-permit revenue was estimated conservatively. Franchise fees and State-shared revenues were reviewed. A $110,000 grant shown under the parks and trails category was clarified as Lake County infrastructure sales-tax funding, not an FDRP grant. Interest earnings reflected the Town's transfer of available funds into interest-bearing accounts.

General Government. Council reviewed personnel costs, insurance, communications, office and operating supplies, printing and binding, staff training, professional accounting services, auditing, legal services, software, and other administrative expenses. Approximately $50,000 was budgeted for software and related systems, including CivicPlus services.

Legal and Planning. The proposed legal-services budget was considered adequate based on current contractual costs and occasional outside-counsel needs. Planning and zoning review costs reflected consultant services and anticipated subdivision and development review.

Public Works and Transportation. Council reviewed personnel, building and equipment maintenance, communications, and road-related expenses. Staff explained that transportation revenues are restricted to eligible road and right-of-way work and that appropriate portions of Public Works payroll and expenses are allocated to that fund.

Police Department. The Chief's proposed salary was confirmed at $103,000, reflecting a three-percent increase from $100,000; an earlier $106,100 figure was a typographical error. Law-enforcement education was reduced from $40,000 to $25,000 to help balance the budget. School-zone camera revenue supports the Police Department budget as a whole and was not restricted to a single line item. Council also reviewed incentive pay, vehicle and radio costs, fuel, software, and permitting-inspection expenses.

Solid Waste. The vendor increase was 4.4 percent, while the budget used a five-percent estimate to allow for additional customers as new homes receive certificates of occupancy.

Cemetery. Council discussed reestablishing a cemetery committee to assist with records, plot identification, maintenance recommendations, improvements, and long-range planning. The Town's geomapping work remained in progress.

Parks and Recreation. The budget included a Parks and Recreation position to manage Community Center reservations, events, advertising, youth programming, and Town recreation facilities. Council reviewed playground mulch, facility maintenance, park restrooms, Community Center kitchen improvements and fire suppression, a generator for emergency operations, and improvements to the Oliver Building. Staff intended to use eligible restricted or infrastructure funds when possible instead of General Fund reserves.

Impact Fees and Utilities. Staff reported that the impact-fee study was moving forward with CGA and James Moore & Company and was expected to take approximately six months. Water and wastewater revenues and expenses would be separated more clearly, and rate studies were anticipated early in the fiscal year. Staff reported that utility operations were currently profitable.

Special Events. Council confirmed that special-event funding appeared on page 15 of the proposed budget. Planned celebrations included the Police Department's 75th anniversary during the October 2026 Fall Festival and the Town's 100th anniversary of incorporation in 2027.

A motion was made by Kim Hanawalt and seconded By Susan Richert to read Resolution 2026-17 by title only. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. Resolution 2026-17 was read by title, adopting the tentative budget for Fiscal Year 2026–2027, beginning October 1, 2026, and ending September 30, 2027.

Vote: Council Member Marinelli – Yes; Council Member MacQueen – Yes; Council Member Richert – Yes; Council Member Hanawalt – Yes; Mayor Teeters – Yes. Resolution 2026-17 was tentatively adopted 5–0.

Final Budget Hearing

The final budget hearing was scheduled for September 24, 2026. The tentative budget and hearing notice were scheduled for publication in the Leesburg Commercial on September 21, 2026, and for posting on the Town website. Council Members were asked to submit any requested changes to staff promptly before the final hearing.

Other Comments

Council Member Marinelli requested that the Town Hall flag be lowered to half-staff on September 11 in observance of Patriot Day. Staff confirmed that United States flags are directed to be flown at half-staff from sunrise to sunset on that date. No Council action was required.

Adjournment

Mayor Teeters thanked the public for attending and closed the Budget Hearing. The recording did not state an adjournment time.

10-28-26 11/3/26

Town Clerk Date Mayor Date