

CITY OF APOPKA

Minutes of a City Council Special meeting held on July 20, 2017, immediately following the Budget Workshop, in the City of Apopka Council Chambers.

PRESENT: Mayor Joe Kilsheimer
Commissioner Billie Dean
Commissioner Diane Velazquez
Commissioner Kyle Becker
Commissioner Doug Bankson
Glenn Irby, City Administrator
Pam Barclay, Finance Director

PRESS PRESENT: John Peery - The Apopka Chief
Reggie Connell, The Apopka Voice

CALL TO ORDER - Mayor Kilsheimer called the Special Council meeting to order at 7:18 p.m.

SPECIAL REPORTS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

Mayor Kilsheimer said in accordance with the truth in millage requirements, the City must set the proposed millage rate and advise the property appraiser of the proposed millage rate, roll back rate, date, time, and place of the tentative budget hearing. The proposed millage rate is 3.7876, unchanged from last year. The roll back millage rate is 3.4093. The tentative budget hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, September 13, 2017 at 5:01 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Mayor Kilsheimer opened the meeting to public comment.

Linda Laurendeau said she believed public safety was the absolute highest and most important thing we do. She stated both of our public safety agencies work on a shoestring. She said as a former firefighter and EMT in Texas, she knows what it is to work on a shoestring, and what it is to adhere to a sign that stated "*We have done so much with so little for so long that we can now do almost anything with nothing.*" She declared this is what these agencies do, and as a member of the Citizen Police Alumni, she sees the cars used on the streets by these agencies. She said she firmly believes that anything public safety wants they should have, and then eviscerate everything else. She stated the temporary facility at the Hospital was imperative. She said the ISO-1 rating should never be an issue. She stated we were the 5th city in the State and the 49th in the United States to obtain the ISO-1 rating.

Suzanne Kidd said this was the third year in a row she sat through every budget workshop and watched Council struggle to try and figure out how to do more with less while the growth of this City rapidly continues. She stated she looks at the cities such as Winter Garden and Ocoee that we are competing with directly. She said there was an area on Plant Street by 429 that was being cleared to create a new industrial center that will serve those two cities. She said for the

last ten to fifteen years Ocoee and Winter Garden have been leaving us in the dust. Winter Garden has kept a millage rate of 4.25% since 2011. They have close to the same population as Apopka, and she declared this millage has given them an advantage. When people compare Apopka to the services and amenities of Winter Garden, they have a valid point. She stated Council went into debt financing and reserves today, but what they didn't touch was millage. She said last year she mentioned the median home taxable value in Apopka was about \$160,000. She stated taking into account there was an 8% increase in property values in Orange County this year, that figure may now be at \$173,000 as the median point. The amount of tax based on the \$160,000 last year was approximately \$606 in taxes. If we had increased our millage rate by three tenths of a mill this year, the increase to a property owner would be about \$101 per year (\$8.40 per month). She declared people spend money on a lot of things and the very small amount extra that would have given the City so many more of the needs by the various departments is lacking because of that one extra step not being taken. She understands Council has a hard job in this, but they are the ones elected to make these difficult decisions. She affirmed she was disappointed they did not take that one extra step to set us up for success. She thanked Council for what they did and how hard they do work.

MOTION by Commissioner Becker, and seconded by Commissioner Velazquez, to set the tentative millage rate at 3.7876.

Commissioner Becker said we have a salary study coming that will likely increase operating expense across every division within the City, and there are non-safety capital needs that are in dire need. He stated he can agree an increase in millage would be a valuable tool and getting the reserve balance to a place where they can then defend it long term. He said with the homestead exemption possibly coming next year, he was not opposed to an increase and would consider this in the next budget season.

Commissioner Bankson said he was disappointed we were not setting a standard for where we need to get to and not taking those discussions of how they can get there. He stated this was an unsustainable path.

Mayor Kilsheimer said Commissioner Bankson brought something to the table that the community deserves to discuss, but they were just not there yet as a community to be able to afford what he wants to do.

Motion carried 4/1 with Mayor Kilsheimer, and Commissioners Dean, Velazquez and Becker voting aye, and Commissioner Bankson voting nay.

ADJOURNMENT - There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

ATTEST;

_____/s/_____
Joseph E. Kilsheimer, Mayor

_____/s/_____
Linda F. Goff, City Clerk