



TOWN OF GOLDEN BEACH

One Golden Beach Drive
Golden Beach, FL 33160

Official Minutes for the September 13, 2021
First Budget Hearing called for 6:00 P.M.

Zoom Room Meeting ID: 867 2360 3643 Password: 382482

For Dial In Only: Call 929.205.6099 Meeting ID: 867 2360 3643

THE PUBLIC MAY PARTICIPATE AT GOOD AND WELFARE; PLEASE HOLD ALL QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS UNTIL THEN! THE PUBLIC IS ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT ALL COMMENTS VIA EMAIL TO LPEREZ@GOLDENBEACH.US BY 2:00 P.M. MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2021.

A. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Mayor Singer called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Councilmember's Present: Mayor Glenn Singer, Vice Mayor Judy Lusskin, Councilmember Jaime Mendal, Councilmember Kenneth Bernstein, Councilmember Bernard Einstein

Staff Present: Town Manager Alexander Diaz, Town Attorney Steve Helfman, Town Clerk Lissette Perez, Finance Director Maria D. Camacho, Police Chief Rudy Herbello, Building Director Linda Epperson, Resident Services Director Michael Glidden, Public Works Director Kirk McKoy, Facilities Maintenance Director Ken Jones

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Herbello led the Pledge of Allegiance

D. ADOPTION OF PROPOSED COMBINED MILLAGE AND PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021/2022 (TIME CERTAIN ITEM)

1. **A Resolution of the Town Council Adopting the Proposed Millage Rate for the Fiscal Year Commencing October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022.**

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF GOLDEN BEACH, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE PROPOSED MILLAGE RATE OF THE TOWN OF GOLDEN BEACH FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2021 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2022 PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTE 200.065 (TRIM BILL); SETTING A DATE FOR A FINAL PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT THE MILLAGE RATE; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Exhibit: Agenda Report No. 1
Resolution No. 2763.21

Sponsor: Town Administration

Recommendation: Motion to Approve Resolution No. 2763.21

A motion to approve was made by Vice Mayor Lusskin, seconded by Councilmember Mendal.

On roll call, the following vote ensued:

Mayor Glenn Singer	<u>Aye</u>
Vice Mayor Judy Lusskin	<u>Aye</u>
Councilmember Bernard Einstein	<u>Aye</u>
Councilmember Jaime Mendal	<u>Aye</u>
Councilmember Kenneth Bernstein	<u>Aye</u>

The motion passed.

Mayor Singer read into the record that the proposed millage rate is fixed at 8.1363 mills and the roll back is 7.6344. Voted debt service millage for the fiscal year will be .2637 mills.

Attorney Helfman stated that we will read both of these items into the record and then open up the public hearing.

2. A Resolution of the Town Council Adopting the Final Budgets for the Fiscal Year Commencing October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022.

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF GOLDEN BEACH, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE FINAL BUDGETS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING OCTOBER 1, 2021 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2022 PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTE 200.065 (TRIM BILL); PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Exhibit: Agenda Report No. 2
Resolution No. 2764.21

Sponsor: Town Administration

Recommendation: Motion to Approve Resolution No. 2764.21

A motion to approve was made by Vice Mayor Lusskin, seconded by Councilmember Bernstein.

On roll call, the following vote ensued:

Mayor Glenn Singer	<u>Aye</u>
Vice Mayor Judy Lusskin	<u>Aye</u>

Councilmember Bernard Einstein	<u>Aye</u>
Councilmember Jaime Mendal	<u>Aye</u>
Councilmember Kenneth Bernstein	<u>Aye</u>

The motion passed.

Mayor Singer stated that both the millage rate and budget item would be read and reviewed at the same time. Read the millage rate into the record.

Town Manager spoke on the budget. Stated he is pleased to announce that we were able to achieve the goals that were set last year. This year we are doing a millage rate manipulation in order to achieve our spending plan. We are calling to first go through and utilize our debt service fund revenue to fund our debt service costs. Allowing us to use the debt service millage rate in a way to help fund our operating expenses. We projected a \$50-million increase to our ad valorem base. We did not achieve that, we only received \$14-million. By using the cash that we have on our debt service we are able to get more cash in our operating service. We do have a larger operating millage rate than we do our capital millage. Proposing to set the operating millage at 8.1363 mills and the debt service at .2637 mills. Proposing that we hold our combined millage rate at 8.4 mills making this our 7th year at a combined 8.4 mills. We will also be calling for a \$1.8 million infusion of cash from our debt service and capital reserves to fund our capital projects. In the 2021 budget, we budgeted \$600,000 for the Civic Center project, instead of rolling our reserves next year we are dedicating direct cash from this year's budget straight into next year's budget only for capital purposes. We are also calling for a \$404,000 cash infusion from the debt service reserve.

Town Manager spoke on the general fund balance. We have insurance savings this year of \$150,000 that we intend to grow in the fund balance but make it a restricted line item in next year's fund balance. At the April council meeting we are going to be asking you to create a new restricted account for insurance purposes, planning for a rainy day fund. Spoke on the Town's indebtedness. Stated we currently owe \$11,500,000 to our GO bond debt. We also have the \$1.7 million loan from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. We have about \$13.2 million in current debt. Have a line of credit for the civic center project. Plan to make a big draw on October 1st for \$1-million. This year's budget calls for \$9,700,000 in revenues from our operating fund. \$11-million goes towards our operating expenses. There are some assumptions that we have made that are important for the community to know. This year we have shifted our focus a little bit, so we are going to be investing in our workforce. We did provide a 2.5% COLA for all of our employees. We also have shifted our minimum salaries for our workforce. We are calling for a base minimum pay in Golden Beach to be \$17/hour. Absorbed the full cost of the CCTV integration into the Hotwire Contract. That does not mean that we have absorbed the communication cost. This budget does call for you to pass an assessment to your residents for internet services from Hotwire. It calls for a 30% funding of our pension. It provides us some breathing space as it relates to our long term needs. Also calls for 1% inflation increase to all of our line items. A 3% line increase to utility and fuel, 3% increase to all our professional services contracts, and a 4% to all of our non-health insurance needs. Those were the general broad strokes approach to the general fund of our budget. This council this year has done phenomenal as it relates to employee benefits and needs and this budget reflects those changes. We feel that the budget meets our financial obligations. We did take a conservative look at our revenues. We never want to overstate our revenues. Although,

our building department provides us with a very aggressive stream of revenue, we did not fund our budget with those dollars. The goal eventually is that we try to lower the millage rate one more time. To achieve that goal, the Mayor and I and the staff spent the summer putting together a five-year forecast. We put together a long-range financial plan for the town. Also added as part of your capital budget forecast \$7,100,000 in new spending and put together a plan to slowly start funding those projects. Mayor and I have also slowly started talking about how we can diversify our revenues. This past summer the mayor also started the effort of looking to see if there are donors amongst our residents that would like to help us with our projects. The goal is that we continue to add projects without increasing our millage rate. Also, want to remind the council that all of the real estate transactions that are happening our helpful but a lot of homes are coming off our tax rolls as they're being redeveloped. In the pipeline we have as much as 13 homes. As a trend we are seeing that it is taking anywhere from 24 to 36 months to develop a home in Golden Beach. When we refinanced our debt a couple years ago, we generated savings. We are legally not allowed to move that money out of those accounts and use them for projects. Legally we are required to pass a debt service millage rate equivalent to that to cover our debt for that year. Reviewed the proposed revenue budget summary. We are not asking today as part of our budget process to increase our stormwater fund fees. He is asking that the council allow him to work with them and the residents to put together a study as to how we should best approach our stormwater and communication fees. This summer, the Mayor and I started talking about how to create a repayment plan for the \$2-million we have owed from the stormwater fee. This brings our combined budget for this year at \$19,418,869, our largest budget to date.

Yes, the bulk of that money is for your civic center complex. In your capital budget, we are only funding civic center activities in next year's budget. That does not mean as we identify additional revenue or recapture funds for the fiscal year 2021 budget that we will not bring you a midyear budget amendment to add more money to other projects. We have three detached officers working aggressively to try to secure additional resources for the town through their activities. We are currently anticipating in the pipeline a dag, which is a commitment from the state or federal government to give us a portion of the funds we have confiscated. Our LETF budget is projected to be \$207,147. The debt service fund is our direct payment. The capital improvement fund is where I want to spend a little bit of time with you tonight. We did call for the civic center to be funded. Also asking for money for our furniture, software and equipment. We will go out with an RFP for your approval. The Mayor and I have made a commitment to the staff and ourselves that when we move into the new building, that will be the time we invest in new software for our office systems. He thinks you can see the Golden Beach of the past and the Golden Beach of the future. We have been able to leverage your money and continue to make investments. Yes, I think COVID did help with the sales we have seen, but I think also people choose Golden Beach because of the amenities and the improvements we have made. There is not a single home in Golden Beach that has not appreciated at least \$4-million in the last five years. In choosing Golden Beach as a place, our residents know that we work day and night to protect their investment.

We will deliver and finish the complex civic center, the Center Island Pump Station, the A1A bus shelters, and the Veterans Memorial. Town Manager went over the projects moving forward: the Wall at Massini, Town Wellness Center, Auxiliary Service Facility (the current Public Works yard), re-design of Tweddle Park, adding proximity detectors and cameras, Golden Beach Drive crown of the road increase, beach pavilion

modernization, and A1A lighting replacement. Took a conservative approach to our revenues but took an aggressive approach to our spending plan. We take every single one of our line items and we go line item by line item and we go over, go through, try to see where we went over and why, and adjust for that. One thing that we are working on is adding another boat to our waterways. That's not in the budget, but we are still going to be working to add that to our law enforcement trust fund dollars. Do want to talk about some of the private concerns that were raised by the individual meetings with you. One of the concerns is why we do not have additional staffing at the gatehouse. Back in 2009, the county required that all municipalities have a substation to handle all of the town's non-emergency calls. That is when the town ended its relationship with Navarro security and developed its own guardhouse staff. We are required to take all of our non-emergency calls that means that our guard cannot leave the gatehouse to be outside. Our policy today is if someone stops at the gatehouse, the guard interacts with them. Every night at 1:00 am every car that goes through the guest lane is stopped and registered. As well as every car that comes in after 1:00 am gets followed to its destination by one of our police officers. Every car that leaves town gets stopped by a police officer to make sure it is the guest that is leaving. For us to add a second greeter to greet our guests would cost the town an additional \$200,000. We do not feel that is a good way of allocating our resources. We do value the concerns of our residents that we should offer a more white glove service. Therefore, during our peak times between 7:00 AM-9:00AM and 4:00PM-6:00PM we have officers that add an additional layer of presence so that our residents and visitors see manpower. At the beach pavilion we staff the beach 365 days. It is staffed from 9:00AM-7:00PM at this time and 8:00AM-6:00PM during the winter months. Every person that comes to the beach gets greeted by a beach attendant. The police are called to remove people from the beach if they need to be removed. Like with any organization sometimes staff becomes complacent and do not follow our policies to the letter of the law. Understand that we have some short-comings, we can do better and we will do better. Throwing money at an issue is not always the right solution. It is making sure the policies and programs we have in place are followed. Thinks that we have met the challenge that the council has presented to him in creating our Resident Services Department. Our level of community with our residents has grown 1000%. This year we are bringing back in-person events with a resident's only Halloween event and a scaled back new year's eve event. Humbly, asks the Council to approve the budget we have presented to you. Know that we have been forward thinking, and future focused on delivering the expectations you have set forth.

Mayor Singer commended the Town Manager and Maria Camacho for doing a phenomenal job on this year's budget. Everything was taken into consideration.

Vice Mayor Lusskin stated that it is a job well done, impressed that we are looking into not just this year but five years into the future.

Councilmember Bernstein stated that he went through all of it and all of his questions with the Town Manager.

Councilmember Mendal asked about the long-range financial plan, the LETF monies that are scheduled to come in. Asked if any of those funds have come in.

Town Manager stated that we do intend to use LETF dollars for this building. We will if needed pledge those dollars and take out a note to actually deliver this building. I can

use LETF dollars to create new recreational crime prevention spaces that keep our youth engaged in our community and label it a recreational facility. Part of how we intend to deliver this building is with LETF dollars and taking out additional DAGS.

Councilmember Mendal stated that for year 2 there is a transfer from the fund balance of ½ million dollars - why is that there?

Town Manager explained that we pledged for our repayment for our \$4 million note that we start using LETF dollars to repay that note.

Councilmember Mendal asked that the variance reports only had expenditures – asked for the revenues.

Town Manager stated that they intentionally left the revenues out because we are doing really well this year. Did not want for us to think we should start spending those dollars today. The goal is to grow our fund balance and take a measured approach to how we are going to allocate them.

Councilmember Mendal asked for a line item for whatever money we are raising from the fee that was passed in the building department.

Town Manager stated that he is required to show you in your financials that we have set those aside. We will show you where we set that aside.

Councilmember Mendal stated that in the finance part of it; saw that the line item for audits is the same. Are we looking for another auditor?

Town Manager stated that the Town is looking to put together an auditing committee. Will create an audit team comprised of residents to go out to bid for an auditing company.

Mayor Singer stated that they have gone through this and every time they go through this, they do not have many takers because it is really a non-money maker for the auditors.

Town Manager stated that although we haven't switched auditing firms we do get new auditing teams that come in every year so that it's a new set of eyes. Stated that for the first time ever the budget is now introducing a new fraud policy and whistleblower policy to make sure that people feel comfortable reporting issues of fraud. Every dollar that we spend requires at a minimum three signatures and every check that we sign gets two signatures, and every month you are provided with the financials. Also, we have a prohibition on ACH's.

Councilmember Mendal asked about resident services, but we got to see where this variant takes us and we can scale down our parties and use those funds towards the amenities that we would like to have.

Town Manager stated that we have budgeted and plan to spend this amount for the Halloween event. We are taking the precautions to keep it safe. Mayor and I will sign an executive order not allowing guests that night.

Councilmember Einstein asked in terms of our bonds right now are we looking to refinance those again.

Town Manager stated that the Town is not in the window where we are allowed to do that right now.

Councilmember Einstein spoke on the homes coming on the tax roll.

Town Manager stated that Linda and he do look at that. Stated they do take into account what their new assed values are going to be and they factor that into their estimates. Thanked both the Clerk and Finance Director for their work on the budget book this year.

Former Mayor Michael Addicott spoke on the budget. Stated that them being on zoom really facilitates the residents participating. Golden Beach is not a country club and country club amenities should be subordinate to number one maintaining sufficient capital and debt reserves. Two, to be subordinate to a commitment to ensure the future looks great and to also perhaps reduce the stormwater assessment. Wants to make sure that we are all on the same page concerning that.

Town Manager spoke in response. Our stormwater fees have not met the growing challenge of the stormwater system that we have put in the ground. That is why this summer we explored an agreement to bring in a fee structure company to review all of our fees to look at a rate study to see if the stormwater fee does support the cost or prove him otherwise. Our general fund for the last 15 years has had to bail out our stormwater fee and that is why the stormwater system owes the general fund over \$2-million.

Mayor Addicott asked about the expense for lobbying. Has there been any push for the town's lobbyist to push for solar paneling.

Town Manager stated that our lobbyist's contract has not increased since he's been manager. It does seem like a lot of money, but it hasn't been increased since he's been hired. As it relates to our legislative priorities, no we have not asked for anything like that. Our lobbying priorities consist of our civic center and stormwater needs.

Mayor Addicott asked if the new civic center is going to have solar roof panels and battery storage.

Town Manager stated that the civic center did not call for that, but that is not something that we cannot necessarily look at in the future. We can definitely make that something as part of our future projects.

E. MOTION TO SET THE AGENDA

ADDITIONS/ DELETIONS/ REMOVAL OF ITEMS FROM CONSENT
AGENDA/ AND CHANGES TO AGENDA

F. TOWN RESOLUTIONS

3. A Resolution of the Town Council Reauthorizing the Town's Schedule of Building Permit and Processing Fees, and Establishing Town Fees.

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF GOLDEN BEACH, FLORIDA, REAUTHORIZING THE TOWN'S SCHEDULE OF BUILDING PERMIT AND PROCESSING FEES, AND RE-ESTABLISHING TOWN FEES AND ASSOCIATED FEES; PROVIDING FOR IMPLEMENTATION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Exhibit: Agenda Report No. 3
Resolution No. 2765.21

Sponsor: Town Administration

Recommendation: Motion to Approve Resolution No. 2765.21

A motion to approve was made by Vice Mayor Lusskin, seconded by Councilmember Bernstein.

On roll call, the following vote ensued:

Mayor Glenn Singer	<u>Aye</u>
Vice Mayor Judy Lusskin	<u>Aye</u>
Councilmember Bernard Einstein	<u>Aye</u>
Councilmember Jaime Mendal	<u>Aye</u>
Councilmember Kenneth Bernstein	<u>Aye</u>

The motion passed.

Mayor Singer stated that the fees all stayed the same.

Councilmember Mendal asked about the fees for seawalls with what we will be talking about next meeting, will that change anything?

Town Manager stated no because we figured whatever we propose we will do it as part of the 1st and 2nd reading.

Councilmember Mendal asked about sidewalks and gutters maintenance. Is that fee enough to cover the costs of damage we are seeing from new construction.

Town Manager stated no, but we knew that it would not cover the costs. Here is what we do, know. Whenever a contractor is being extremely reckless with the way they protect our infrastructure. Linda and him go out before we release bonds and look for ways that if someone has broken our infrastructure to secure us. We hold back bond money at CO if there has been a reckless violator.

Councilmember Mendal asked if we have been seeing people exceeding the times of the construction periods.

Town Manager said yes, especially because of covid. We have been working with the projects taking longer than expected to not hammer them with the re-processing fee. If a permit has expired Linda has been working with them. What we are seeing is contractors walk off the job because they cannot find laborers and costs have gone up. Another thing is contractors are not able to find the materials to keep their projects moving at the rate they want. Linda has worked hand in hand with our residents who have lost contractors to help find new ones, she takes that on as an additional task to help our residents.

Councilmember Mendal stated that when things settle down with covid, we need to incentivize people to build quickly.

Mayor Singer stated that everyone wants to finish building quickly. The owner is not the issue it is always the contractor, laborers, or materials.

Town Manager stated that once a home is close to completion or has been completed, Linda will issue a TCO with the property appraiser aggressively on that. To that point stated that there is a line item for another code position to make sure that we're pushing those issues along.

Former Mayor Addicott asked if the budget calls for an increase in Linda Epperson's wages, there should be. She is the backbone and interacts with all of the residents.

Town Manager stated all staff is getting a 2.5% increase. He does not like to speak on an individual employee, just know the town has made significant strides to make sure Mrs. Epperson is rewarded for her hard work and remains happy.

Mayor Addicott also asked about the other backbone of the community, the public works department and will they be getting an increase.

Town Manager stated that for the first time ever our public works staff will have a minimum salary of \$35,000 a year.

Mayor Addicott asked if there is a longevity or merit consideration?

Town Manager stated that we did away with merit increases in 2008, unless their job function changes. What we do is offer bonuses. We believe that having a compounded merit increase puts a strain on our long term financial needs.

4. A Resolution of the Town Council Awarding A Comprehensive Health Insurance Plan for the Benefit of the Town of Golden Beach Employees.

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF GOLDEN BEACH, FLORIDA, AWARDING A COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE TOWN OF GOLDEN BEACH EMPLOYEES AND ELIGIBLE DEPENDENTS; PROVIDING FOR IMPLEMENTATION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Exhibit: Agenda Report No. 4
Resolution No. 2766.21

Sponsor: Town Administration

Recommendation: Motion to Approve Resolution No. 2766.21

A motion to approve was made by Councilmember Mendal, seconded by Councilmember Bernstein.

On roll call, the following vote ensued:

Mayor Glenn Singer	<u>Aye</u>
Vice Mayor Judy Lusskin	<u>Aye</u>
Councilmember Bernard Einstein	<u>Aye</u>
Councilmember Jaime Mendal	<u>Aye</u>
Councilmember Kenneth Bernstein	<u>Aye</u>

The motion passed.

Town Manager stated that what we are calling for is a renewal with Avmed and a freeze in premiums to members. By doing a rate freeze this year, we may cause a higher rate increase in the following year, but we may switch providers if that is the case. What we are asking is that we keep AvMed, but we lock our premiums for this year and the town will absorb the increase.

G. ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Singer stated that the next council meeting is scheduled for September 27th at 6:00 p.m.

Town Manager stated that this is also our business meeting. Stated that he is in the police academy and is graduating next Wednesday.

Mayor Singer commented that our thoughts and prayers go out to Marie Talley for her loss.

A motion to adjourn the Council Meeting was made by Mayor Singer seconded by Councilmember Bernstein.

Consensus vote 5 Ayes 0 Nays. Motion passes.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lissette Perez
Lissette Perez
Town Clerk