



City of Margate

5790 Margate Boulevard
Margate, FL 33063
954-972-6454
www.margatefl.com

Meeting Minutes City Commission Budget Hearing

Mayor Arlene R. Schwartz
Vice Mayor Antonio V. Arserio
Commissioners:
Anthony N. Caggiano, Tommy Ruzzano, Joanne Simone

City Manager Cale Curtis
City Attorney Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman
City Clerk Jennifer M. Johnson

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

5:01 PM

Commission Chambers and Zoom.us

Webinar ID: 856 4742 1525

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85647421525>

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Present: 5 - Commissioner Tommy Ruzzano, Commissioner Anthony N. Caggiano, Commissioner Joanne Simone, Vice Mayor Antonio V. Arserio and Mayor Arlene R. Schwartz

Commissioner Simone attended the City Commission meeting via telephone.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1) PUBLIC HEARING(S)

- A. [ID 2025-227](#) PUBLIC HEARING ON TENTATIVE BUDGET AND PROPOSED MILLAGE RATE.

There was no public discussion.

2) RESOLUTION(S)

- A. [ID 2025-226](#) APPROVING THE PROPOSED MILLAGE RATE FOR THE CITY OF MARGATE FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026 IN THE AMOUNT OF 7.5378 MILLS PER THOUSAND DOLLARS OF ASSESSED VALUATION (WHICH INCLUDES 0.4207 FOR VOTED DEBT SERVICE); THAT THE OPERATING MILLAGE RATE OF 7.1171 IS 7.47% HIGHER THAN THE ROLL-BACK RATE OF 6.6221.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Arserio, seconded by Commissioner Caggiano, that this Resolution, should be approved. This carried as follows:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Ruzzano, Commissioner Caggiano, Commissioner Simone, Vice Mayor Arserio and Mayor Schwartz

Discussion ensued.

- B.** [ID 2025-210](#) ADOPTING A TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR THE 2025/2026 FISCAL YEAR AND AUTHORIZING THE ADMINISTRATION TO OPERATE ON SAID TENTATIVE BUDGET AS AMENDED PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTE UNTIL ADOPTION OF THE FINAL BUDGET FOR SAID FISCAL YEAR.

A motion was made by Commissioner Caggiano, seconded by Vice Mayor Arserio, that this Resolution should be approved. This carried as follows:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Ruzzano, Commissioner Caggiano, Commissioner Simone, Vice Mayor Arserio and Mayor Schwartz

3) ORDINANCE(S) - FIRST READING

- A.** [ID 2025-211](#) ADOPTING AN OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA, FOR THE PERIOD BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2025 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2026; PROVIDING FOR A BUDGET FOR THE GENERAL FUND, SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS, DEBT SERVICE FUNDS, CAPITAL PROJECTS FUNDS, ENTERPRISE FUNDS, AND AN INTERNAL SERVICE FUND; PROVIDING FOR A MILLAGE RATE; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Arserio, seconded by Commissioner Caggiano, that this Ordinance, First Reading, should be approved.

VICE MAYOR, ANTONIO V. ARSERIO, questioned which department would be organizing the median improvements.

CITY MANAGER, CALE CURTIS, confirmed that this would be led by the Parks and Recreation Director, Jones.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO thanked the City Commission for approving median enhancements throughout Margate starting with Rock Island Road where he asked at a recent meeting to increase the budget by an additional \$250,000. He met with the representatives of Legacy Residential (LR) who were building on Coconut Creek Parkway. He said that there was approximately 700 acres of nursery space that LR use for their projects and an offer was made that they conducted donations.

Discussion ensued.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS explained the budget attachment.

COMMISSIONER TOMMY RUZZANO thanked everybody for their input in the budget.

MAYOR, ARLENE R. SCHWARTZ, discussed the new rescue truck and thanked staff for

the great job they did with the budget.

This carried as follows:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Ruzzano, Commissioner Caggiano, Commissioner Simone, Vice Mayor Arserio and Mayor Schwartz

COMMISSIONER, ANTHONY N. CAGGIANO, discussed paperwork that was not completed for an Item that was discussed at the last City Commission meeting.

CITY ATTORNEY, DAVID N. TOLCES, explained that it would need a motion for reconsideration at this point as this was the next meeting after that action took place.

A motion to reconsider a contribution made to the Pepe family was made by Commissioner Caggiano, seconded by Commissioner Simone.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO, explained that at a recent City Commission meeting, he mentioned prayers for a Margate family whose son was murdered. He said that at the following meeting, he learned that he still had \$2,000 in his donation account which he could utilize. He sought advice from the City Attorney prior to the City Commission meeting and was informed to raise that proposal at the next one. He was transparent as he could be as he thought everyone knew which person they were referring to.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ, indicated that there was a misunderstanding as she was informed that two weeks ago, there was a 14 year old who was stabbed to death in a home in Oakland Park whose Mother lived in Margate and that was where she thought the contribution was going to be donated to.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO said that the donation was intended for the Pepe family and apologized if he mislead any of the City Commissioners.

VICE MAYOR ARSERIO, explained that he did not have any problem with the contribution and was aware of who Commissioner Ruzzano was referring to.

COMMISSIONER CAGGIANO explained that he did not raise this issue to cut the money but to ensure that in the future, it was set up appropriately and that the paperwork was completed in the first instance.

COMMISSIONER, JOANNE SIMONE, explained that she had no idea who the son was and thought it was a child. She also thought that the money was going to help the family pay for the funeral. She did not believe full transparency was given because after the fact, she heard it was a man who was in his 30s who never lived in Margate. She further alleged that the funeral expenses were paid by the State as well as a Go Fund Me page was set up in his honor. She explained that whatever the City Commission did with their money was not her business but said that those donations were from tax payers' money. She requested more information in future prior to voting, which would allow time for

research and consideration and she did not want to be put in that position again. She also wanted to retract that vote.

Discussion ensued.

MAYOR SCHWARTZ assumed moving forward, that paperwork was completed in advance so they had something to read. She asked if they were going to continue with the donation as originally stated or whether they were going to bring the Item back for discussion and wanted to conduct a poll.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO, expressed that he was trying to do the right thing as he did not say that the family was anonymous but did not want to ask them to visit City Hall to complete the paperwork. He continued in his explanation and said there was no ill intent.

Discussion ensued.

CITY ATTORNEY TOLCES, advised that in future, the documentation would be required to be completed prior to any request being made. He indicated that the poll was that the request which was approved by CONSENSUS at the last City Commission meeting would move forward.

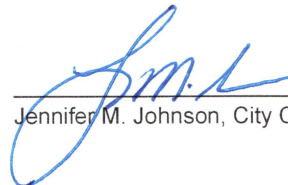
Commissioner Ruzzano - Yes
Commissioner Caggiano - Yes
Commissioner Simone - No
Vice Mayor Arserio - Yes
Mayor Schwartz - Yes

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Transcribed by Salene E. Edwards



Jennifer M. Johnson, City Clerk

Date: 10/15/2025

PLEASE NOTE:

If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the City Commission with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, the person will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. Anyone desiring a verbatim transcript shall have the responsibility, at his/her own expense, to arrange for the transcript.

[Appendix A – Zoning – Section 3.3] Any representation made before any City Board, any Administrative Board, or the City Commission in the application for a variance, special exception, conditional use or request for any other permit shall be deemed a condition of the granting of the permit. Should any representation be false or should said representation not be continued as represented, same shall be deemed a violation of the permit and a violation of this section.

Any person with a disability requiring auxiliary aids and services for this meeting may call the City Clerk's office at (954) 972-6454 with their request at least two business days prior to the meeting date.

One or more members of the City of Margate advisory boards may be in attendance and may participate at the meeting.

Members of the public are invited to view this meeting through Zoom using Webinar ID: 856 4742 1525 or can listen via telephone by calling one of the following phone numbers: US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 205 6099.

- A copy of the Agenda for this Meeting is posted on www.MargateFL.com and on the main bulletin board outside City Hall located at 5790 Margate Blvd, Margate, FL 33063.

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