



City of Margate

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

Meeting Minutes City Commission Budget Hearing

Mayor Anthony N. Caggiano

Vice Mayor Tommy Ruzzano

Commissioners:

Antonio V. Arserio, Arlene R. Schwartz, Joanne Simone

City Manager Cale Curtis

Interim City Attorney Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman

City Clerk Jennifer M. Johnson

Monday, September 11, 2023

5:01 PM

Commission Chambers and Zoom.us

Webinar ID: 886 8671 3917

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88686713917>

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

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

MOMENT OF SILENCE - INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1) PUBLIC HEARING(S)

- A.** [ID 2023-267](#) PUBLIC HEARING ON TENTATIVE BUDGET AND PROPOSED MILLAGE RATE.

A motion was made by Commissioner Schwartz, seconded by Commissioner Arserio, that this Item be approved. This carried as follows:

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

2) RESOLUTION(S)

- A.** [ID 2023-256](#) APPROVING THE PROPOSED MILLAGE RATE FOR THE CITY OF MARGATE FISCAL YEAR 2023/2024 IN THE AMOUNT OF 7.6004 MILLS PER THOUSAND DOLLARS OF ASSESSED VALUATION (WHICH INCLUDES .4833 FOR VOTED DEBT SERVICE); THAT THE OPERATING MILLAGE RATE OF 7.1171 IS 9.44% HIGHER THAN THE ROLL-BACK RATE OF 6.5031.

A motion was made by Commissioner Schwartz, seconded by Commissioner Arserio, that this Resolution, should be discussed.

COMMISSIONER ARLENE R. SCHWARTZ advised that nothing had changed this year.

COMMISSIONER ANTONIO V. ARSERIO believed that the Broward County Public Schools board had an increase. He stated that the City's overall millage and operating rates had went down.

The motion carried as follows:

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

- B.** [ID 2023-257](#) ADOPTING A TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR THE 2023/2024 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 Schwartz, seconded by Commissioner Arserio, that this Resolution, should be approved.

CITY MANAGER CALE CURTIS set out the instructions for today's hearing.

The motion carried as follows:

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

3) ORDINANCE(S) - FIRST READING

- A.** [ID 2023-258](#) ADOPTING AN OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA, FOR THE PERIOD BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2023 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2024; PROVIDING FOR A BUDGET FOR THE GENERAL FUND, SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS, DEBT SERVICE FUNDS, CAPITAL PROJECTS FUNDS, ENTERPRISE FUNDS, AND INTERNAL SERVICE FUND; PROVIDING FOR A MILLAGE RATE; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

A motion was made by Commissioner Schwartz, seconded by Commissioner Arserio, that this Ordinance, First Reading, should be discussed.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS introduced the Finance Department for a brief presentation on the budget as he advised that there were some additional information for the City Commission to consider.

Discussion ensued.

INTERIM CITY ATTORNEY, ROBERT MEYERS, introduced himself.

BUDGET MANAGER, DECIA A. SMITH-BURKE, welcomed everyone to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 tentative budget which was the first hearing. She provided a PowerPoint presentation which focused on further aspects which were also important to the budget such as the City's accomplishments in comparison to the last workshop where the emphasis was more numbered-centric. She discussed the FY2023 Year in Review where she outlined a number of initiatives made across the City including Human Resources (HR) and Information Technology (IT) and also accomplishments made by the Finance Department and the City Manager's Public Relations. She discussed the FY2024 Major Initiatives/Projects which included the Police Department, Parks and Recreation, Department of Environmental and Engineering Services (DEES) and the Fire Department. She summarized the FY2024 Total Budget and also gave a breakdown of the millage rate which had decreased to 7.6004.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS listed the FY2024 – Items to be added to the Proposed Budget where he explained that he was looking for the City Commission's support. He explained that the Items included in the document which had Total Proposed additions primarily being the Property Improvement Grant Program (PIP), which was \$585,858.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO said that he had spoken to both City Manager Curtis and the staff at length and had no issues with the Items to be added to the Proposed Budget.

VICE MAYOR TOMMY RUZZANO said that he supported the Items to be added to the Proposed Budget.

COMMISSIONER JOANNE SIMONE recommended that the JA World Item for \$3,500 be removed from the list of Items to be added to the Proposed Budget. She was aware that the City Commissioners were receiving a \$2,000 Contribution to spend as they wished and would therefore prefer to see the JA World be removed from that fund. She suggested that the City Commission could deduct \$1,000 from their \$2,000 Contribution respectively for donations instead of removing this from the General Fund. She had spoken to many residents who were looking forward to the reopening of the PIP but she disagreed with the Interim City Attorney's advice which she believed had given a safe harbor for a City Commission to be allowed to put in a bid for work to be done.

CONSENSUS was given by the City Commission to proceed with the City Manager's FY2024 – Items to be added to the Proposed Budget.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO requested City Manager Curtis to review the insurance and referenced other cities which were paying less than Margate. He said that everybody was doing a good job and that he had not received any complaints. He questioned if the four/five day work week was still a concern. He said that when this was first discussed, his concern was with the Building Department and Development Services being opened on a Friday but questioned City Hall and he appeared to be flexible if there was a change.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS indicated that the insurance could not be resolved at this budget hearing but he would discuss this matter with HR and the City's benefits consultant and see if anything could be done better. He said that they were always looking at ways the City could be efficient with time and be accessible and available to the public but currently, there was nothing on the table.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO echoed Vice Mayor Ruzzano's comments on initially operating five days per week for service-oriented departments such as the water billing. He was in favor of offering staff a four day work week where the office was opened five days per week or a hybrid schedule as he wanted the City to remain competitive with

their employees.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ echoed Vice Mayor Ruzzano's comments on insurance and believed that things to this nature should be reviewed every two years and the City could be making savings. She was against the return of a four day work week.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS believed that the current work schedule was working in all departments and appreciated the City Commission's openness and support to improve that or become more efficient and if he had any recommendations, he would bring them back.

COMMISSIONER ARSERIO said that the City did an incredible job and thought as a team, the City Commission did likewise despite their disagreements but he had seen the transformation. He compared the City Commission's pay structure to other municipalities and advised that some were receiving a higher salary. He suggested that the City Commission's salary should increase to \$45,000 per year.

VICE MAYOR RUZZANO highlighted the qualities of Margate's City Commission and believed that it was not a part-time position and also discussed the salary therein. He informed that he would support the increased salary to \$45,000 and thought it was justifiable. He said that the City Commission were targets and discussed a resident who was stalking him.

Discussion ensued.

MAYOR CAGGIANO polled the City Commission on an increased salary to \$45,000; 4 – 1 (Commissioner Simone said no). He informed City Manager Curtis that he had direction.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS concluded the City Commission budget hearing by saying that based on consent and direction to include the Items in the slide presentation as well as the City Commission salary and that they just gave CONSENSUS. He stated the second reading of the budget is scheduled for September 20th.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ applauded the presentation that they received which highlighted the celebration of their successes as she said they rarely did that. She applauded the Finance Department for an amazing budget book which she advised that this year, it actually explained the content and had a readers guide to the same.

MAYOR CAGGIANO thanked all the staff for their amazing work putting together this budget book and thanked them for being forward-thinking so that they had everything that was required for the residents. He referenced the anniversary of 9/11 and thanked the residents.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS provided advice on the motion.

A motion to amend was made by Commissioner Arserio, second by Commissioner Schwartz, to include items discussed by City Manager Curtis. This carried as follows:

- Yes:** 4 - Commissioner Arserio, Vice Mayor Ruzzano, Mayor Caggiano and Commissioner Schwartz
- No:** 1 - Commissioner Simone

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Transcribed by Salene E. Edwards

Jennifer M. Johnson, City Clerk

Date: _____

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.

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