



# City of Margate

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

## Meeting Minutes City Commission Budget Hearing

*Mayor Antonio V. Arserio*  
*Vice Mayor Anthony N. Caggiano*  
*Commissioners:*

*Tommy Ruzzano, Arlene R. Schwartz, Joanne Simone*

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

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Monday, September 12, 2022

5:01 PM

Commission Chambers and Zoom.us  
Webinar ID: 851 2287 5964

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<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85122875964>

### CALL TO ORDER

### ROLL CALL

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

### MOMENT OF SILENCE - INVOCATION

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### 1) PUBLIC HEARING(S)

**A. ID 2022-361** PUBLIC HEARING ON TENTATIVE BUDGET AND PROPOSED MILLAGE RATE.

CITY MANAGER CALE CURTIS introduced the hearing and explained that the budget process was a team effort between Department Directors and the designees, the Finance Department and the City Commission. He also introduced the members of staff from the Finance Department who would walk them through a brief presentation of the budget and thereafter, would accept questions from the City Commission.

FINANCE DIRECTOR, ISMAEL DIAZ, introduced himself as the new Finance Director for the City and welcomed everyone to the budget hearing. He informed that they would be proposing an operations and debt service millage rate in conjunction with the adoption of an upgrade in budget for Fiscal Year 2022/23.

BUDGET MANAGER, DECIA A. SMITH-BURKE, welcomed attendees to the hearing and explained that she would be presenting Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 proposed Budget. She advised that at the Budget Workshop in July, Margate presented an update of property taxes in comparison to other cities in Broward County (BC) as well as revenues and expenditures in the budget. She informed that items that were not immediately associated with the budget but equally relevant were discussed under the summary categories of FY2022 Year in Review where she outlined the City's successes and also provided a review of the FY2023 Highlights. She explained that as the visualization and

accomplishments were important, the objective of the hearing was to approve the proposed millage and FY2023 budget. She advised that the operating millage was proposed to stay the same as FY2022 at 7.1171 but said that there was a slight decrease in debt service. She outlined that their next steps were to approve the Resolution and the Ordinance, First Reading. She stated that they would publish the Budget advertisement and Notice in the Sun-Sentinel for September 16th. On September 21st at 6:00pm before the Regular City Commission, the second public hearing where the Resolution would be to adopt the final millage rate and the Ordinance, Second Reading, would be presented. She opened the floor to questions.

A question and answer session ensued between the City Commission and City staff.

COMMISSIONER TOMMY RUZZANO said it was a great budget and presentation. He highlighted the following points and requests:

- Requested the ratio of the budget for the Fire and Police; and
- Requested data to compare public services with other cities in BC to include Broward County Sheriff Officers (BSO) share; and
- Remove the Citizen's project or reallocate \$2,000 per City Commissioner for donations as needed; and
- Asked about the Community Redevelopment Agency's (CRA) new position to replace CRA Coordinator, Rita Rodi; and
- Praised the City Clerk's office for being the leanest department for the budget; and
- Compared the cost of an in-house City Attorney versus an Interim City Attorney firm; and
- He expressed his satisfaction of the Interim City Attorney, Weiss Serota Helfman Cole & Bierman;
- Provide sufficient funds for the upkeep and good maintenance of the City's parks; and
- Requested the enhancement of landscaping in the City so that they could lead by example; and
- Sought an update on Calypso Cove.

Discussion ensued on the Budget.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS, explained that the general fund dollars had stayed relatively flat which was less than one percent increase ever year. He informed that they had an increase in the total budget primarily due to Capital improvements in the enterprise fund which was their water and wastewater funds.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO continued to talk about the operational departments and said that everybody was doing a great job which he appreciated.

COMMISSIONER ARLENE R. SCHWARTZ highlighted the following areas:

- Referenced page 97 and discussed federal grants; and
- Referenced page 98 and asked about Code violations.

COMMISSIONER JOANNE SIMONE asked why the revenue had decreased for parking violations despite there being many issues.

INTERIM CITY ATTORNEY, DAVID N. TOLCES, informed that he recently had a discussion with the Chief of Police Galaska concerning parking and how they could improve the citation process to better enforce any violations with fines.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS indicated that the \$5,000 in fines for parking was just a

conservative estimate and that it could be higher than indicated.

Discussion ensued.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ referenced page 99 and discussed low interest rates.

COMMISSIONER SIMONE highlighted the following areas:

- Referenced page 94 and discussed the institution of a new software program for the Local Business Tax Receipts (LBTR) which she hoped would help the City capture those delinquent in paying for their license; and
- Referenced page 99 and sought an update on Aztec; and
- Referenced page 100 and discussed her concerns about the expenses of the Interim City Attorney and requested a breakdown of costs; and
- Referenced page 105 and spoke against sponsoring the Reading Pals program. She read a statement that the Florida Legislature passed a New Worlds Reading Initiative in 2021 which offered a similar program to Reading Pals. She asked for CONSENSUS to remove Reading Pals from the FY2023 budget.

Discussion ensued as to whether Reading Pals should be removed from the budget.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS indicated that any organization would have to come before the City Commission to seek funding.

COMMISSIONER RUZZANO discussed his change of preference in hiring a City Attorney firm over an in-house City Attorney.

Discussion ensued.

VICE MAYOR, ANTHONY N. CAGGIANO, discussed his process of preparing for the FY2023 Budget which he believed was less time consuming than raising questions on the day of the hearings.

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ raised questions pertaining to the City Attorney and overtime for the Fire and Police Departments.

Discussion ensued.

CITY MANAGER CURTIS referenced page 16 and highlighted that the City was ranked 27th in BC in terms of operating revenue per capita. He believed this was good value as they were a full service City which they provided to their residents.

Discussion ensued on the Save our Homes law pertaining to Homestead exemptions.

## 2) RESOLUTION(S)

- A. [ID 2022-358](#) APPROVING THE PROPOSED MILLAGE RATE FOR THE CITY OF MARGATE FISCAL YEAR 2022/2023 IN THE AMOUNT OF 7.6508 MILLS PER THOUSAND DOLLARS OF ASSESSED VALUATION (WHICH INCLUDES .5337 FOR VOTED DEBT SERVICE); THAT THE OPERATING MILLAGE RATE OF 7.1171 IS 11.00% HIGHER THAN THE ROLL-BACK RATE OF 6.4119.

**A motion was made by Vice Mayor Caggiano, seconded by Commissioner Schwartz, that this Resolution, should be discussed.**

COMMISSIONER SCHWARTZ stated that the City did not raise the taxes as it was the public who voted to give the Broward County School Board extra money at the Referendum in the primary election.

GABRIEL QUINTANA, 2849 NW 68TH LANE, discussed the difficulties he incurred with the increase in property taxes as a first time homebuyer.

MAYOR ARSERIO responded to Mr. Quintana's comments.

Discussion ensued on taxes.

**The motion carried by the following vote:**

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

- B.** [ID 2022-359](#) ADOPTING A TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR THE 2022/2023 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 Vice Mayor Caggiano, that this Resolution, should be discussed.**

LAUREN BERACHA, 6950 NW 14TH PLACE, discussed her experiences of working as a volunteer for Reading Pals.

**The motion carried by the following vote:**

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

### **3) ORDINANCE(S) - FIRST READING**

- A.** [ID 2022-360](#) ADOPTING AN OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF MARGATE, FLORIDA, FOR THE PERIOD BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2022 AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2023; 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 Vice Mayor Caggiano, seconded by Commissioner Schwartz, that this Ordinance, First Reading, should be approved. This carried as follows:**



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

MAYOR ARSERIO discussed resident, Mr. Quintana's situation.

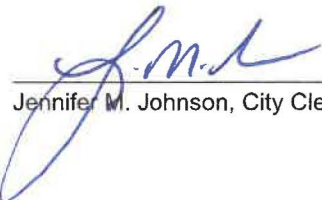
Discussion ensued on Broward County's Property Appraiser's Property Tax Estimator and a portability.

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:26pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Transcribed by Salene E. Edwards

  
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Jennifer M. Johnson, City Clerk

Date: 10/20/2022

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: 851 2287 5964 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](http://www.MargateFL.com) and on the main bulletin board outside City Hall located at 5790 Margate Blvd, Margate, FL 33063.

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Go to [www.margatefl.com](http://www.margatefl.com)

Go to "Agendas & Minutes" > Find the respective meeting date and click "Agenda Summary" to view the agenda items and see the Zoom meeting information

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**Instructions:**

Topic: "City Commission Budget Hearing"

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