

Town of Pomona Park – First Budget Hearing Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 9, 2020 (5:30 pm) This meeting was held at Town Hall for Council only and for Public VIA TELECONFERENCE. Call 1-888-204-5987 Access Code is 3674654#

Mayor Joseph Svingala presided. Council present were Dr. Robert Warren, Lynda Linkswiler, CarrieAnn Evans, Patricia Mead, James Griffin, and Victor Szatkowski were all present. Attorney Sherar, Clerk Donna Fontana and Treasurer Kelly Krupski were present.

Mayor Joseph Svingala led in the pledge to the flag. There was a moment of silence for residents Virginia Butler and Sharon Johnson.

The Mayor asked all council members if they were comfortable with all the notice provisions set forth and these uniform rules of procedures we have established for this virtual meeting? The Mayor took a roll call and it was unanimous that all council approved.

Public Hearing items:

Clerk read Ordinance 2020-6 AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF POMONA PARK, FLORIDA, IN PUTNAM COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE LEVYING OF AD VALOREM TAXES FOR POMONA PARK FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor said, we're going to get into some, I'll call it minutia stuff this evening. I'm choosing not to do it. For 3 years, almost I've been requesting that we have a workshop based on employee manual and the Charter where it has anything to do with Town employees at all. We haven't had it because of what's going on and everybody doesn't know everything, and you don't need to know everything tonight, there's no reason for it. I got to wait for Donna, I have to DEMAND, Donna, we need to set up a date right now for budget workshop for employee's manual and the charter where the employees are affected. Can we set a date up for that? Clerk said, absolutely. Councilwoman Mead said, for a budget workshop? Mayor said, certain people wanted to discuss certain things tonight. I asked not to so we wouldn't interfere with the budget. Councilwoman Mead said, but the workshop you're requesting is a budget workshop? Mayor said, no, no, its employee manual. Clerk said do you want to do it for next month? Mayor said, yeah you can't do it this month you won't have time. I know that. Clerk said, I'm still doing stuff in the beginning of October for this. Mayor said, then set it up for November. Clerk said, ok, I'll just look at some dates and I'll provide them to you, and I'll send them out and see if everybody is available then. Mayor said, that's fine, and along with that which is all part of what was going to go on tonight that's not going to. I would request that somebody from the Council make a Motion we put \$5000 in the budget for any possible merit increases. If its not in there we can't spend it, if its in there it doesn't mean we have to spend it, like every other line item that's in the budget. Clerk said, this is for the millage so that would be for the next Ordinance. Mayor said, ok well I said, I'll say it again that's all. Councilwoman Evans made a Motion that we adopt Ordinance 2020-6, Councilman Griffin seconded the Motion. There was no discussion. Mayor took roll call vote.



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	YEAS	NAYS	ABSENT OR NOT VOTING
PASSED ON FIRST READING:	<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Council woman Evans Yay, Councilman Griffin Yay, Councilman Warren Yay, Councilwoman Linkswiler Yay, Councilwoman Mead Yay, Councilman Szatkowski Yay, Mayor Yay.
 Unanimous vote to approve Ordinance 2020-6 first reading.

Clerk read Ordinance 2020-7 AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF POMONA PARK, FLORIDA, IN PUTNAM COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING THE FINAL BUDGET FOR POMONA PARK FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021.

Councilwoman Evans made a Motion to adopt Ordinance 2020-7, Councilman Griffin seconded the Motion. Mayor asked for discuss from the Council. Councilwoman Evans asked, so you're requesting us to amend this? Mayor said, yes. I was just waiting to see if anybody had anything on these numbers. Again, I'll just reiterate what I had said. I'm requesting that somebody make a Motion, we get a second and discuss, I would like to put \$5000 in here for any possible merit increases for anybody. If its in there it does not mean we have to spend it just like every other line item that we have, but if its not in there we can't spend it which would mean we can't as a Council hold up to our responsibilities to employees that's reflected in the manual. Again, it does not have to be spent but if its not there it can't be spent. Clerk said, Mr. Sherar, please correct me if I'm wrong. I believe even if its not in the budget as long as we don't go over our fund balance then the Council can approve an additional raise during the year. That's what the Auditors tell us, that we don't have to amend the budget unless your fund balance is going to over. I'm just trying to save all the work that this is going to create. Attorney said, I heard that you can change the amounts in the category without amending the budget but you can't, you can change the allocation in the categories but you can't change. I've got to look for it but somewhere I know I read that we can change what's in the category, but you can't increase the category without doing a budget change. Clerk said, that's not what the Auditors told us. Kelly said, I know its something about the fund balance but I don't know if we have to, I know the whole budget can't go over but I don't know if we have to amend it if a bucket goes over. Clerk said, no he said we could go over in the different buckets or categories, but we can't go over in the overall amount for the fund balance. It's the whole fund balance. Councilwoman Evans said, I'm sorry, but \$5000 sounds like an awful lot of money to be putting in. Mayor said, I, CarrieAnn its just something I threw out. That's open for discussion, anything, just as long as the time comes we can hold up our end of the bargain. Attorney said, I would remind everybody that in the employee manual the certain raises only can go or certain salary increases can only take effect October 1, so anything that you do now, could not go into effect until October of 2021. Clerk said, no sir, in the employee manual it says something to the regard that at the discretion of the Mayor and the Clerk, that a merit increase could be given. Attorney said, it says merit increases, 8.04a, merit increases become effective on October 1 and are based on employee's performance evaluation. Clerk said, once again there are discrepancies in the employee manual, under 8.04 salary increases b. other salary increases. Participation in and successful completion of special training courses may be considered in making salary adjustments. Salary adjustments shall not be automatic but shall depend upon increased value of the employee to the Town as exemplified by recommendations, length of service, performance

records, special training undertaken, increased responsibilities or other pertinent evidence. Subject to the availability of funds. Salary adjustments may be made on the recommendation of the Supervisor and approval of the Town Council. Attorney said, right but if you look at a above, which deals with merit increases. I agree what you're reading says what it says but then if you look at a above, it says merit increases, so if you do a merit increase it says, merit increases become effective on October 1st and are based on employee's performance evaluations. Clerk said, so then we wouldn't call it a merit increase. Attorney said, well you could call a duck a chicken if you describe it that way. I'm just saying, yes you're right, if you don't call it a merit increase then it becomes this, but then the question becomes, in subsequent years when you do something now you've set a pattern of calling maybe something that its not. Clerk said, all I know is it says that we can give other salary increases during the year. Attorney said, yes but then if you want to give a merit increase you can only give it on. That's all I'm saying. I'm not saying that there's, if somebody is trying to get a merit increase it goes under a, if its under a general salary increase it goes under b. Clerk said, so we can do it. Councilman Warren said, I think you're accurate, I believe that there was a discussion we had about salary and categories and you can outside of the category as long as you don't go outside the full amount. I agree with you remembrance and recollection of the category issue whether we could go out. I spoke to them directly about it and yes, we can. Mayor said, Craig, do we have a general consensus on that? Clerk said, I'm saying we could do it this way for 2 reasons. One is, its going to save me a tremendous amount of work not to have to amend this and set up another meeting for you guys to come to and advertisement, cause we'll have to pay for that advertisement. Mayor said, a lot of money. Clerk said, the other thing is that way it gives us the opportunity to, if our revenues are coming in just fine, then this is something that you may be able to revisit at a different time. Mayor said, I agree. Clerk explained to the people on the phone that Attorney Sherar was looking up information in the codes just to make sure that we are accurate in what we're thinking. Councilman Warren asked if the two meetings planned the employee manual and the charter, are they informational meetings or are they to change them, to make changes in them. Clerk said, it will be more like a workshop. Whomever wants to attend it and we'll be reviewing the employee manual to go over what kind of changes we think need to be done. I've got a list of some things that I've seen in it and I'm sure of you have already seen some things that need to be changed, so the first thing we do is to have the workshops and then once we get to the point of amending it, then we will do an Ordinance to amend it. Mayor said, generally Doc, its to get everybody at the table and the Town's workforce all on the same page. Along with some things have to be fixed but the main thing for me is that we're all on the same page and there's no more bickering. Councilman Warren said, well I think that's a very positive idea. Clerk said, Mr. Sherar, just to put everyone at ease, we have another option that we can do. Just to make it, if you find later on that what we're doing we really can't do, then we can amend the budget in the future. That's going to make it easier for our TRIM timetable. Attorney said, well I'm not finding it so maybe my recollection is incorrect but yeah, you guys can proceed the way you're doing and then, cause we've done it in the past. When we thought we were going out, remember with Joan there was a big issue with whether or not she was moving money around in appropriately and I thought as a result of that discussion we determined that you couldn't move it without a budget amendment but it's no big deal if we have to make a budget amendment we can do it next. We generally end up with more money in the categories anyway. How much didn't we spend this year? Clerk said, there's plenty that we didn't spend this year. Mayor said, there's quite a bit Craig, for the simple fact that we've been holding off waiting on the grant and the



grant's just not coming, and we're holding and holding. Attorney said, but traditionally we've always ended up with extra money in the budget, with a surplus. If Joe's talking like \$5000, we've never been in that situation when we're that tight on the budget. We could go ahead and do it that way and if I find something later on, we just make a budget amendment. It just takes one more step than it would be if you didn't have to do it. Clerk said, right and I don't think it's something that will be done right away until we know what kind of revenues we're getting in, so we've got time to make sure that we're doing the right thing. Mayor said, CarrieAnn had discussion? Councilwoman Evans said, I don't know what you're talking about, I already made a Motion. I wanted to know what you were asking about and now we're discussing it. Mayor said, I thought you had some consideration on the \$5000? Councilwoman Evans said, well I don't think you need that much. I thought we already had everything set. Mayor said, we can't set because we don't know what's going to happen as per the employee manual, we don't know what's going to happen during the year. What we do as of October 1st has nothing to do with this here. Judy said, don't you have to have a Motion before you have all those discussions? Clerk said, there was already a Motion and a second on the Ordinance. Judy said, I guess I missed that. Mayor said, then we need to have a Motion and a second to amend, right, yes, no? Clerk said, no we're going to let it go and then we're going to make sure, if you're talking about ok our revenues are getting good we want to talk about giving someone more of an increase, then we will if we have to amend it we will amend it at that time, but I don't think we have to amend it. Mayor said, so a later date's not a too late of a date, ok, I'm fine with that. Clerk said, no we can amend the budget anytime we want its just a pain. Mayor said, ok, no more discussion is there anybody on the phone lines any discussion, he called for 2nd time.

	YEAS	NAYS	ABSENT OR NOT VOTING
PASSED ON FIRST READING:	<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

Roll call vote, Seat 6 yes, Seat 5 yay, Seat 4 yay, Seat 3 yay, Seat 2 yay, Seat 1 yay and the Mayor is yay. Unanimous Donna. Thank you everybody.

Clerk said, thank you our next and final reading will be on August 21st at 5:30pm.

Attorney said, Donna you and I need to talk about this but take a look at 5.03 last sentence, that's the one we've got to figure out. We don't need to do it now, but that's the sentence that creates the issue. I'm not saying what the resolution is but that's the issue.

Councilwoman Evans made a Motion to adjourn at 5:54pm.

