

# TOWN OF FLORIDA BOARD MEETING

November 18, 2019

The regular monthly meeting of the Town of Florida Town Board was called to order at 7:00 pm by Supervisor Eric Mead. Also present for the meeting were Councilman Robataille, Councilman Rackowski, Councilman Alikonis, Councilman Phillips, Attorney Deborah Slezak and Town Clerk Emily Staley.

Councilman Phillips led the salute to the flag.

**Motion** by Councilman Phillips and seconded by Councilman Alikonis to accept the Agenda; all in favor and passed.

**Motion** by Supervisor Mead and seconded by Councilman Robataille to approve and accept minutes of the October 21, 2019 Board Meeting; all in favor and passed.

## Committee Reports:

### *Communications & Announcements:*

- Congratulations to everyone who ran in the Elections and won.

### *Engineering:*

- Nothing at this time.

### *Attorney:*

- The matter of Gary Francisco is closed. Paul Slansky did an inspection and the property is cleaned up considerably.
- The 4 tax grievances are moving along.
- LDM is moving forward with the deed dedicating the property of Joann Way. Waiting for the bond to be done. This will be moved to the December meeting in anticipation of receiving the bond for the roadway paving. Rich List was present and asked about a letter of credit from the bank if a bond is hard to attain. Attorney Slezak said that could be discussed.
- Attorney Mike Crowe will be contacting Attorney Slezak regarding the Article 7 with Barton & Loguidice and LS Power Grid transmission line upgrade coming through.
- Councilman Alikonis asked if Deb had an opportunity to research making the Town's sign ordinance stronger for enforcement and she said she was still working on it.

### *Planning and Zoning:*

- Paul has items John gave him to look into.
- Members of the Board asked him to look into the signs going up for high speed internet in the Town.
- Mike Taylor – Baker Subdivision has passed. Warehouse 27 project was referred to the County.
- Wendy Calabrese-Sampone was present to ask the Board about adding winery/brewer etc. to the Town's Zoning uses. Nothing in the zoning ordinance supports this type of business. The wording is not clear and Mike Taylor from the Planning Board would like to see the wording updated. Wendy explained that they will be producing, selling and will have a tasting room on premises. She and John are asking for the use to be allowed in a C1, C2 & Agricultural Zone. Attorney Slezak explained that in order to add this to the ordinance the Town Board can refer this matter to the Planning Board. This is a new up and coming use in many areas and it fits in with the farm to table initiative since they will be producing and using local product. The Town Board has no issues with adding these uses to the zoning ordinance. It was pointed out by Matt Gogis (PB) that the wording will need to be scrutinized. The Town Board agreed to refer the matter to the Planning Board for drafting.

**Motion** by Councilman Guy Robataille and seconded by Councilman Steven Rackowski to refer to the Planning Board adding winery/distillery etc. to the zoning ordinance. All in favor and passed.

- John Sampone said Dollar General is finishing up the last three buildings and will be looking for their CO. He also asked about the connection with the County database. He is done will schooling for certifications for the year 2019.
- Councilman Rackowski asked if he had taken any action on the schoolhouse in Scotch Bush that had 14 dogs removed. John stated that he just received the owners contact information and was working to get into the building.

*Building Maintenance:*

- Salt Shed building is moving along. Trusses had to be extended over the outside edge of the building to accommodate the siding; was a design flaw. Plan to be done in 3 – 4 weeks weather permitting.

*Highway:*

- New truck is in Watertown getting the plow attached. Other trucks are getting ready to go up for auction.

*Water and Sewer:*

- Nothing at this time.

*Youth:*

- Christmas Party December 14, 2019 at 1pm.

*Veterans:*

- Very nice Veteran’s Day Service. Well attended.

*Old Business:*

- Nothing at this time.

*New Business:*

The Florida Fire Department is asking in its budget proposal to the Town for a 28% increase in monies in the amount of \$54, 834.64. This is well above the tax cap. The town has 4 options; to increase the amount raised in Town & County Taxes by 2% or 3% to cover part of the amount and the rest to come from General Fund or the entire amount to be raised in the Town & County Taxes or take the entire amount from the General Fund and with no burden passed to the tax payers in the Town.

- ❖ Councilman Alikonis suggested raising 3% needed by increasing Town & County fire tax by 3% and the Town covers the rest.
- ❖ Councilman Phillips strongly suggested using the excess monies in the General Fund to cover the whole \$54,834.64. He stated the Town has the money to do this and the tax payers should not be burdened with this.
- ❖ All other Councilmen agreed with him with Councilman Robataille and Councilman Rackowski strongly suggesting that Supervisor Mead set up a meeting with the Fire Department Board to renegotiate their contract with the Town. Supervisor Mead agreed; the Town is expanding, more industry moving in, more people moving in and fire protection needs to be a priority.

**Motion** by Councilman Steve Rackowski and seconded by Supervisor Eric Mead to amend the Agenda to change **RESOLUTION #64** authorizing the Town Board of the Town of Florida to offset the Town of Florida Fire Department’s 2020 Budget of \$246,130 with \$54,834.64 from the General Fund Balance so as to keep the tax levy to the residents at a flat contribution raised by taxes to \$191,295.36. All in favor and passed.

**Adopted:**                5 Ayes    0 Nays    0 Abstentions

**Roll Call Vote:**

Councilman Guy Robataille – Aye  
Councilman Steve Rackowski – Aye  
Councilman Ronald Phillips – Aye  
Councilman Harold Alikonis – Aye  
Supervisor Eric Mead – Aye

1. **RESOLUTION #64** sponsored by Councilman Steve Rackowski and seconded by Supervisor Eric Mead to amend the Agenda to add the discussion of 2020 budget amendments, authorizing the Town Board of the Town of Florida to use the appropriated Fund Balance to offset the Town of Florida Fire Department’s 2020 Budget of \$246,130 with \$54,834.64 from the General Fund Balance so as to keep the tax levy to the residents at a flat contribution raised by taxes to \$191,295.36. All in favor and passed.

**Adopted:** 5 Ayes 0 Nays 0 Abstentions

**Roll Call Vote:**

Councilman Guy Robataille – Aye  
Councilman Steve Rackowski – Aye  
Councilman Ronald Phillips – Aye  
Councilman Harold Alikonis – Aye  
Supervisor Eric Mead – Aye

- 2. RESOLUTION #65** sponsored by Councilman Ronald Phillips and seconded by Councilman Harold Alikonis to amend the 2020 Budget as stated in **RESOLUTION #64** to take the entire \$54,834.36 from the General Fund Balance to offset the Florida Fire Departments 2020 Budget amount of \$246,130.00 so as to keep the tax levy even for 2020. All in favor and passed.

**Adopted:** 5 Ayes 0 Nays 0 Abstentions

**Roll Call Vote:**

Councilman Guy Robataille – Aye  
Councilman Steve Rackowski – Aye  
Councilman Ronald Phillips – Aye  
Councilman Harold Alikonis – Aye  
Supervisor Eric Mead – Aye

- 3. RESOLUTION #66** sponsored by Councilman Guy Robataille and seconded by Councilman Harold Alikonis to adopt the 2020 Budget as amended. Public Hearing was held on Thursday, November 7<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. All in favor and passed.

**Adopted:** 5 Ayes 0 Nays 0 Abstentions

**Roll Call Vote:**

Councilman Guy Robataille – Aye  
Councilman Steve Rackowski – Aye  
Councilman Ronald Phillips – Aye  
Councilman Harold Alikonis – Aye  
Supervisor Eric Mead – Aye

*Public Comment opened at 7:38pm.*

Carol Henderson, Town of Amsterdam, her son Steven Henderson owns property on Route 5S directly across from Dollar General warehouse site. She is speaking on behalf of the neighbors in and around the project who are concerned about the state of their homes and properties due to the dust, dirt, water and other debris from the site. They have been unable to find a point person to share their concerns with. Would like their well water tested, the air quality is poor due to dust, fumes, lime and cement. There is a lot of noise pollution. Property values are down. There have been more flags put up alongside the road and there aren't any answers as to what they are for. Same continued concerns. Have received no answers from anyone that they have reached out to. Supervisor Mead spoke and said he did respond to the latest email sent that day. The lighting issue will be taken care of with guards put on the lights. He cannot offer a solution to the dirt and dust on the homes and cars or for the well testing. That needs to be taken up with Dollar General and Prime Engineering. Grants are in the works to get municipal water hook-ups to the homes in Fort Hunter but there has been no luck so far. The project to do that would cost approximately 3 million dollars. It could be a year or 4 or more. Supervisor Mead is concerned about the tractor trailer traffic going down Fort Hunter Road and is going to speak with the Sheriff's Department regarding extra patrols to deal with that. The traffic light at the top entrance has been removed and there are no plans to put it back in at this time. The possibility for a hill climb lane has been discussed but nothing firm. Could be waiting for Vida Blends to construct their facility before putting a light in.

Elma Phillips, Pattersonville Road spoke about doing the Justice Court Audit. She no longer owns her business and there would be a fee going forward for the audit to be done. The Board agreed.

Elma also spoke up about the signage around town. She suggested drafting an ordinance to allow them with a fee. Supervisor Mead explained that the Town Board does not want the signs at all. It makes it difficult for mowing the right of ways and they are unsightly and they would still need to be policed by the Zoning officer. Attorney Slezak said they are also a distraction to drivers. The issue could warrant further discussion.

Rich List, McDougal Road, suggested a hefty deposit to encourage people to take them down after a certain time period.

Lisa Jablonski, Youngs Corners Road, was against allowing them. She feels it would just encourage littering and larger companies may not care if they lose their deposit.

*Public Comment closed at 7:58pm.*

**MOTION** by Councilman Robataille to audit and pay the monthly bills was seconded by Councilman Rackowski; all in favor and passed.

**MOTION** by Councilman Phillips to approve the Supervisor’s Report was seconded by Councilman Alikonis; all in favor and passed.

**MOTION** by Councilman Phillips to adjourn was seconded by Councilman Robataille; all in favor and passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:22pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emily Staley  
Town Clerk