

OCOEE CITY COMMISSION
Ocoee Commission Chambers
1 N. Bluford Avenue
Ocoee, Florida

September 11, 2024

MINUTES

6:00 PM

TENTATIVE BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

• **CALL TO ORDER 6:00 PM**

Mayor Johnson called the tentative budget hearing to order at 6:00 PM in the Commission Chambers of City Hall. The invocation was led by **Ages Hart**, *Ocoee Resident*, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

• **PUBLIC HEARING 6:00 PM**

A. Mayor's Announcement

This is a public hearing on the tentative budget and proposed millage rate for the City of Ocoee. Notice of this hearing was contained in the Notice of Proposed Property Taxes mailed by the Property Appraiser. The City Commission has previously set a proposed millage rate of **4.950 mills** which represents a **4.36%** increase in millage over the rolled-back rate of **4.743 mills**.

B. Briefing by City Attorney 6:01 PM

The preliminary millage rate set by the City Commission and contained in the TRIM Notice is **4.950 mills**. The maximum millage rate, which may be levied by the City by regular majority vote for the 2024-2025 fiscal year is **7.0235 mills**, such maximum millage rate having been determined pursuant to Section 200.185(3)(a), Florida Statutes. The establishment of a millage rate between **7.0236 mills** and **7.7259 mills** requires a two-thirds vote (super majority) of the membership of the City Commission (or 4 votes). The establishment of a millage rate between **7.726 mills** and **10.000 mills** requires a unanimous vote of the City Commission. Additionally, any millage rate adopted above the preliminary millage rate of **4.950 mills** would require notice by first-class mail to each taxpayer. The tentative millage rate adopted at this hearing will become the maximum millage rate which may be adopted by the City Commission at the public hearing on the final millage rate. A unanimous vote or a two-thirds vote may be required to adopt the tentative millage rate as the final millage rate. At the final public hearing, the City Commission may adopt a millage rate which is less than the tentative millage rate.

C. Briefing by Finance Director 6:02 PM

Finance Director Roberts thanked Acting City Manager Shadrix and Acting Assistant City Manager Rumer for their guidance and assistance with the proposed budget, and further presented a PowerPoint which summarized the budget priorities and commitments for FY 2024-2025. Highlights in the presentation covered:

- Economic Highlights
- Retaining Employment
- Increasing Public Safety Costs for Police and Fire
- Rising Costs of Health Insurance
- Millage Rate Trends.

Mayor Johnson inquired about the handout placed at the dais and noted that the Recreation Department was not included. **Finance Director Roberts** addressed his concern.

**Tentative Budget Public Hearing
September 11, 2024**

1. Public Comments 6:15 PM

Mayor Johnson opened the floor for public comments.

The following persons addressed the City Commission:

- **Jim Moyer**, *Ocoee Resident*, commended Finance Director Roberts and staff on a job well done on the budget. He thanked the City for flying flags at half-staff on Patriot's Day and provided a brief history overview of the day. **Mr. Moyer** requested that the City Commission earmark an amount of money, not less than \$15,000 for patriotic events throughout the year and also proposed setting aside no less than \$10,000 per fiscal year for patriotic projects for the next two fiscal years.

The Public Hearing was closed.

2. Commissioners Comments

Commissioner Oliver expressed that one major concern was public safety, and he thanked staff for being able to handle that and distinguish those concerns. He voiced that staff did a great job balancing the budget. He noted that the City already hosts patriotic events each year but expressed openness to adding more. He voiced his support for Mr. Moyer's efforts to highlight additional patriotic events.

Commissioner Firstner echoed Commissioner Oliver's comments and expressed satisfaction that the City was able to address the public safety issues. He urged the City Commission and staff to exercise caution, particularly with the Police and Fire Departments, as they are the largest departments with the biggest budgets. He also concurred that while the city celebrates patriotic holidays throughout the year, he supports adding more celebrations.

Commissioner Wilsen commended City staff for a great job on the budget. She expressed that it will be a very tight budget this year; however, the City will continue to move forward. She also thanked Acting City Manager Shadrix, Acting Assistant City Manager Rumer, and City Manager Frank for their role in putting the budget together, and keeping the millage rate at 4.950.

Commissioner Kennedy requested that Finance Director Roberts review information provided on the Fire Department. **Acting City Manager Shadrix** informed the City Commission that the fire fee has remained unchanged since its implementation, set at \$69.50 per fire protection unit. **Commissioner Kennedy** echoed the comments of the previous Commissioners and commended staff for a job well done on the budget. **Finance Director Roberts** noted that fire fees were \$710,000 in 2014, increased to \$2.9 million in 2022, and have remained flat since, with expectations of another increase in 2025.

Mayor Johnson commended the City Manager and staff on a job well done, stating that he is amazed at the great job staff does each year.

NOTE: RECESS (if needed) to recompute the proposed millage rate and rolled-back percentage increase.

**Tentative Budget Public Hearing
September 11, 2024**

D. Announcement by Finance Director: 6:29 PM

Finance Director Roberts announced the proposed millage rate remains at 4.95 mills which is 4.36 % greater than the rolled-back rate of 4.743 mills. This percentage is the proposed tentative increase in property taxes and would require a regular majority vote.

Mayor Johnson stated that Contingency Funds could be used during the requested budget cycle to help finance the patriotic events proposed by Mr. Moyer.

1. Public Comments 6:30 PM

Mayor Johnson opened the floor for public comments.

No speaker reservation forms were received; therefore, the public hearing was closed.

2. Commissioners Comments – None

E. Motion to Adopt the Tentative Millage Rate 6:31 PM

City Attorney Geller read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OCOEE, FLORIDA, ESTABLISHING A TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATE OF 4.95 MILLS FOR AD VALOREM TAXES FOR THE CITY OF OCOEE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2024, AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2025; PROVIDING FOR MILLAGE ADJUSTMENT; PROVIDING FOR COLLECTION OF TAXES; PROVIDING FOR A 4.36% IN MILLAGE RATE OVER THE ROLLED-BACK RATE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Motion: Move that the City Commission adopt the tentative millage rate at 4.95 mills for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2025, providing for 4.36% increase in the millage rate over the rolled-back rate; Moved by Commissioner Oliver, seconded by Commissioner Kennedy. Motion carried 5-0.

F. Motion to Adopt the Tentative Budget 6:33 PM

City Attorney Geller read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF OCOEE, ORANGE COUNTY, FLORIDA, ADOPTING A TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2024, AND ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2025; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

**Tentative Budget Public Hearing
September 11, 2024**

Motion: Move that the City Commission adopt the tentative budget as distributed along with the revisions resulting from the Budget Workshop for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2025; Moved by Commissioner Wilsen, Seconded by Commissioner Firstner. Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor Johnson announced the public hearing to consider the final millage rate, and final budget, is scheduled to be held Wednesday, September 18, 2024, at 6:00 PM in the City Hall Commission Chambers. The hearing has been advertised in accordance with the provisions of Section 200.065, Florida Statutes, and Section C-37 of Article VI of the Ocoee City Charter. The appropriate Ordinances necessary to adopt the Final Millage Rate and Final Budget will be prepared by City staff, and all other action necessary to comply with the requirements of Section 200.065, Florida Statutes, will be undertaken.

• ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 PM.

APPROVED:

Attest:



Melanie Sibbitt, City Clerk

City of Ocoee


Rusty Johnson, Mayor