

**AGENDA MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL ONE ITEM AGENDA MEETING
CITY OF ARCADIA
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2015
6:00 P.M.**

The following minutes reflect action items of the City Council of the City of Arcadia. For a verbatim copy of the minutes, you may contact City Administration to obtain a copy of the recorded meeting.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Wertz-Strickland called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m. and advised this was a public hearing meeting of the Arcadia City Council. The following members and staff were present:

Arcadia City Council

Mayor Judy Wertz-Strickland
Deputy Mayor Alice Frierson
Councilmember S. Delshay Turner

Councilmember Joseph E. Fink
Councilmember Susan Coker

Arcadia City Staff

City Administrator Terry Stewart
Finance Director Beth Carsten

City Clerk Penny Delaney

ACTION ITEMS

Resolution No. 2015-08; a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Arcadia, Florida, Setting the Final Millage Rate to be Levied by the City of Arcadia, Florida for Fiscal Year 2015-2016; and Providing for an Effective Date

Resolution No. 2015-07; a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Arcadia, Florida, adopting the Final Budget for the Fiscal Year 2015-2016; and Providing for an Effective Date

City Administrator Stewart advised Council there were two items regarding this meeting. He stated the first was the final millage rate which pursuant to Florida Statutes, it must be dealt with first before finalizing the budget. He reminded Council that the initial tentative millage rate was at the rolled back rate and Council had spoken to staff with the desire to bring it back lower, if possible. Mr. Stewart advised that staff came back with a recommendation that it be maintained at the current level which was 8.8195 which Council agreed to at the first budget hearing. He stated it was established as the tentative millage rate. He then asked the City Clerk to read Resolution 2015-08 by title only before any discussion. At this time, the Clerk read

Resolution 2015-08 by title only. Councilmember Fink made a motion to move the resolution as presented and Councilmember Coker seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Deputy Mayor Frierson casting an assenting vote, Mayor Wertz-Strickland casting an assenting vote, Councilmember Fink casting an assenting vote, Councilmember Coker casting an assenting vote and Councilmember Turner casting an assenting vote. It was approved, 5/0.

City Administrator Stewart stated that at the workshop, staff reviewed in detail their presentation of the budget and Council asked staff to make changes with no need for a second workshop. He reminded Council that they had indicated that they thought the budget was good and if the requested changes were made, Council agreed to move directly to the first budget hearing. Mr. Stewart advised the requested changes were presented to Council at the first budget hearing and that has not changed since then. He advised there were a couple of items that Finance Director Carsten wanted to review with Council and staff would restrict their initial comments to dealing with that, but if Council wanted to go over any particular section of the budget in as much detail as they wished, staff was prepared to do that. He then turned it over to Finance Director Carsten.

Ms. Carsten advised Council they had been provided with the updated budget as of September 21, 2015 and stated the only change that had been made was on page forty (40) and it had to do with the McSwain restoration. She thanked Councilmember Fink for pointing out the issue. She advised when she initially put the amount for the contributions, she put in the full amount which included the amount that was actually transferred from one of the funds of \$44,726.00. She advised it should have stated that the Mosaic contribution was \$500,000.00 and the transferred amount from Fund 107 was \$44,726.00. She advised it did not change the bottom line of the budget and the revenues and expenditures remained the same.

City Administrator Stewart asked the City Clerk to read Resolution 2015-09 by title only and the City Clerk did so. Mayor Wertz-Strickland opened the discussion for public comment. Jackie Scogin, a city resident, stated that she did not think they should get rid of the golf course, but felt they should give it a chance to turn around and it should be promoted. She then stated that she felt the 3%, 3% and 2% increases should be looked at each year. She also stated that she felt the Marshal deserved a raise, but questioned the amount. Mayor Wertz-Strickland advised that the City Administrator had formulated a plan to improve the golf course. Mr. Stewart stated that he and Mr. Kotzker will come back to Council with a three (3) to five (5) year business plan within thirty (30) days. Regarding the water rate increases, Mayor Wertz-Strickland advised a research plan had been done by a company and the City was told they were where they needed to be. Regarding the Marshal's raise, Mayor Wertz-Strickland advised that the City Administrator had reviewed the pay for Marshals in other areas, the Marshal had never asked for a raise when promoted, and he had stayed within the budget. Mayor Wertz-Strickland stated she supported the Marshal's raise.

Councilmember Coker made a motion to accept Resolution 2015-09 and Deputy Mayor Frierson seconded the motion. Councilmember Fink stated that he had no problem with the budget, but had a problem with the Council. He reemphasized, from the last budget hearing, his reasons for not agreeing to the budget due to the golf course, the rate increases regarding water

and trash, and the Marshal's salary increase. He advised that due to those reasons, he could not vote for the exceptionally fine budget.

Councilmember Turner stated that he felt the Marshal deserved the raise. He stated Marshal Anderson took on the department during a critical time and felt the Marshal was doing an excellent job.

Deputy Mayor Frierson stated that she agreed with Councilmember Turner. She advised that there had been seven (7) shootings in Lee County in one (1) day alone. She stated that we do not fear things like that here. She felt our law enforcement does an outstanding job. Regarding the water increases, she stated the City had gone so long without increasing water and garbage rates that the general fund had to supplement it. She advised when the increases went into effect; it was to make up for the past years. She admitted it was hard to make the decision, but it had to be done and it was not to be a lifetime thing which was the reason an end date was not put on it. She stated it was only meant to be until they could get the department up to where it should be and she further advised that they are getting there.

Councilmember Coker commented that the percentage increase that the Marshal had requested is not as much as the formal Marshal was making when he left office. She further commented that Marshal Anderson took on the job with no request for an increase and she did not feel that he was out of line. Regarding the golf course, she did not feel they could lose it because it brings in revenue, other business and without it, a lot of restaurant and gas station taxes would go somewhere else. Regarding the water bill, she stated she does not like paying it, but pointed out road repairs and while the City is trying to obtain grants, grants are not easily obtained. She advised staff is working hard on it, but the City still has to be run.

Councilmember Fink stated there were four (4) people who could not attend the meeting and they asked him to publicly list their names as being in support of his sight and conclusions drawn on the budget and they were as follows: Mirinda Whitmore Arrington, Janie Watson, Charles Craven and Martha Craven.

No discussion followed and a roll call vote was taken with Councilmember Turner casting an assenting vote, Deputy Mayor Frierson casting an assenting vote, Councilmember Fink casting a dissenting vote, Councilmember Coker casting an assenting vote, and Mayor Wertz-Strickland casting an assenting vote. It was approved, 4/1.

Mayor Wertz-Strickland stated that she hoped Council had made plans that will help with some of the problems that Council has suffered in the past. She stated she hoped with City Administrator Stewart's experience and background they could eliminate some of these issues from next year.

City Administrator Stewart thanked Council for being outstanding to work with and he stated he was grateful for the staff support and the work Council had done. He advised when he came on board, it was very late in the budget year for what he was used to, and he assured Council that they will not be that deep in another year before Council has a budget that they can

begin to consider. He advised that staff will begin to put together recommendations for a budget in January or February. Mr. Stewart stated that when it comes time for the workshops, a lot of the work will already be done. He informed Council that he was exceedingly impressed with the way the Finance Director had increased her knowledge base, stepped up to the plate and did a very good job in bringing the budget to Council in a way they could easily understand and be able to have a rational discussion of it. Mr. Stewart stated he was very proud of Ms. Carsten and staff who worked with Ms. Carsten to accomplish the budget. Mr. Stewart stated that as they work through the coming budget year, he felt confident they will be in a far better place. He addressed grants that had been applied for and stated staff will work to find ways to make improvements. He stated he hopefully expected to see the budget grow which is a good thing.

Mayor Wertz-Strickland expressed her appreciation for the way the City Council had worked together and she was pleased to work with them.

PUBLIC

None

ADJOURN

Councilmember Fink made a motion to adjourn and Councilmember Coker seconded the motion. No discussion followed and it was unanimously, 5/0, approved. Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:45 P.M.

ADOPTED THIS 6th DAY OF October, 2015.

By:

Judy Wertz Strickland
Judy Wertz-Strickland, Mayor



Penny Delaney
Penny Delaney, City Clerk