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MINUTES
City of Cocoa
Budget Hearing

September 3, 2024

A City Council Budget Hearing was held on Tuesday, September 3, 2024, in Cocoa City Hall, in City Council Chambers, located at 65 Stone Street, in Cocoa, Florida, 32922, as publicly noticed.

Opening Matters:

Mayor Blake called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Deputy Mayor Hearn provided the invocation and Councilwoman Koss led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Recording Secretary took the roll.

PRESENT:	Michael C. Blake	Mayor
	Lavander Hearn	Deputy Mayor
	Patricia Weeks	Councilmember - *via phone*
	Lorraine Koss	Councilmember
	Kristin Eick	Asst. City Attorney – *via phone*
	Stockton Whitten	City Manager
	Lori Chabot	Recording Secretary
NOT PRESENT:	Alex Goins	Councilmember

OTHER STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Abby Morgan, Public Works Director; Rebecca Bowman, Finance Director; Anthony Marchica, Police Lieutenant; Jack Walsh, Utilities Director; Tammy Gemmati, Administrative Services Director; Samantha Senger, Communications & Economic Development Director; Corbin Gilbert, Help Desk Support Tech.

I. Public Hearing:

1. Conduct a Public Hearing on the Tentative Millage Rate and Tentative FY25 Budget and:

   (a) Adopt Resolution No. 2024-083 adopting a tentative millage rate of 6.9532 mills, for the City of Cocoa, commencing on October 1, 2024, and ending on September 30, 2025.

   (b) Adopt Resolution No. 2024-084 adopting the FY2025 tentative budget and CIP for the City of Cocoa Fiscal Year, commencing on October 1, 2024, and ending on September 30, 2025.

   Mayor Blake introduced the item and Director Bowman provided a presentation. She first discussed the millage rate, noting the tentative millage rate cannot exceed the rate of 6.9532 approved by the City Council on July 23, 2024. She discussed the comparison of Cocoa to other municipalities and added that the rate is the same as 2024. She also discussed the budget and departmental budgets with comparisons from one year to the next.

   Councilwoman Koss commented on where Cocoa lies within the County.

   Councilwoman Weeks asked about the red writing and if that represented shortfalls and how would that be covered. In response, Director Bowman explained it is not shortfalls, but highlights the difference from one year to the next.

   Mayor Blake opened the item to the public for comments or questions.

   No public comments on the millage rate.

   Mayor Blake closed the item to the public.

* **MOTION by Mayor Blake; Seconded by Deputy Mayor Hearn, to adopt Resolution No. 2024-083 adopting a tentative millage rate of 6.9532 mills, for the City of Cocoa, commencing on October 1, 2024, and ending on September 30, 2025.**

AYES: Blake, Hearn, Koss, Weeks

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (4-0)

Director Bowman presented the FY25 Tentative Overall Budget. She also discussed the departmental budget and funds identifying changes from one year to the next.

The Mayor reopened the hearing to the public.

Steven Murphy, Cocoa, mentioned the decrease in water and that he disagrees with that. He explained that could be beneficial if projected grants were not received or would help with funding if the septic to sewer moves forward.

Jeffrey Brown, Cocoa, spoke about charges for services like waste management listed in the budget and on his tax bill and is confused about the charges and would like an itemization. City Manager Whitten explained how those dollars on his tax bill are divided between services such as fire, police, public works and the generally funded services.

Mayor Blake closed to the public and returned to Council.

Councilwoman Koss asked for clarification if Council was voting on septic to sewer. In response, Mayor Blake stated no, they were not.

Director Bowman announced the second and final public hearing would be on September 17, 2024. Mayor Blake reiterated that Council cannot change the millage rate of 6.9532 and Director Bowman confirmed.

* **MOTION by Mayor Blake; Seconded by Deputy Mayor Hearn to adopt Resolution No. 2024-084 adopting the FY2025 tentative budget and CIP for the City of Cocoa Fiscal Year, commencing on October 1, 2024 and ending on September 30, 2025.**

AYES: Blake, Hearn, Koss, Weeks

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (4-0)

Director Senger gave a quick update regarding the Amazon Center and that it would be opening very soon. She added that there should be information next week with regard to hiring the 300 plus positions.

II. Adjournment:

* **MOTION by Mayor Blake; Seconded by Deputy Mayor Hearn, to adjourn the 1st Budget Hearing of September 3, 2024.**

AYES: Blake, Hearn, Koss, Weeks

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (4-0)

The meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

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Michael C. Blake, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Monica Arsenault, City Clerk
(Transcribed by Lori Chabot, Recording Secretary)